

April 1955
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University of California
Agricultural Extension Service
Imperial County

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO GROW WINTER TOMATOES?
Based on 6 Ton yield--480 flats per acre (25# flats)

| ITEMS | SAMPLE COSTS | | | YOUR COSTS | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------|----------|----------|
| | Per Acre | Per 100# | Per Flat | Per Acre | Per 100# | Per Flat |
| Land Preparation | | | | | | |
| Chisel or Flow 1X | 5.00 | | | | | |
| Disc 2X | 3.50 | | | | | |
| Float 2X | 3.00 | | | | | |
| Beds | 5.00 | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous | 2.00 | | | | | |
| TOTAL LAND PREPARATION | 18.50 | .16 | .04 | | | |
| Cultural Labor and Field Power | | | | | | |
| Planting 1X | 1.25 | | | | | |
| Cultivating 5X | 6.25 | | | | | |
| Irrigating 8X | 10.00 | | | | | |
| Thin and Replant 1X | 20.00 | | | | | |
| Hoe 1-2X | 20.00 | | | | | |
| Fertilizer application 3X | 4.25 | | | | | |
| Brushing 1½X | 30.00 | | | | | |
| Pest control 5X | 5.00 | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous | 2.00 | | | | | |
| TOTAL CULTURAL | 98.75 | .80 | .20 | | | |
| Materials | | | | | | |
| Water 1½' | 4.00 | | | | | |
| Fertilizer--organic & commercial | 50.00 | | | | | |
| Seed ¾X | 8.00 | | | | | |
| Insecticides 75# | 9.00 | | | | | |
| Brush | 78.00 | | | | | |
| Paper | 34.00 | | | | | |
| Wire 100# | 13.00 | | | | | |
| Stacks 100/A | 17.00 | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous | 5.00 | | | | | |
| TOTAL MATERIALS | 218.00 | 1.80 | .45 | | | |
| Cash overhead | | | | | | |
| General expense 5% of above | 16.76 | | | | | |
| Taxes--include in rent | | | | | | |
| Insurance and miscellaneous | 1.50 | | | | | |
| TOTAL CASH OVERHEAD | 18.26 | .16 | .04 | | | |
| Depreciation included in rent & rates | | | | | | |
| Renting land | 50.00 | .80 | .20 | | | |
| SUB TOTAL UP TO HARVEST | 403.51 | 3.32 | .83 | | | |
| Harvest--Pick and haul | 96.00 | .80 | .20 | | | |
| TOTAL ALL COSTS | 499.51 | 4.12 | 1.03 | | | |

The above sample costs are based on following assumptions: Medium soils: following truck or small grain crop, planting seed direct in field. Labor and field power charges are based on commercial contract rates and land is charged at current cash rent. Taxes and depreciation are included in the rates. These costs are up to the packaging. Packaging and processing will usually be about as much per flat as the growing costs (See companion sheet)

Estimate your own costs by filling in the last three columns.
PROFITS = YIELD X PRICES less COSTS

WINTER TOMATOES

LOCATION AND ACREAGE: Winter tomatoes are produced in the warmer areas, primarily, the north end Calipatria-Niland area. The December 1954 Irrigation District Crop Survey lists 4,448 acres.

VARIETIES: Pennheart, Pearson, and Earliana types are in majority. Local and trade strains of these and others are of some importance. Most plantings are made using blocks of two or more varieties for purpose of maintaining production over longer period.

PLANTING DATE: August 1 to September 1 for winter harvest. November and December for early spring harvest.

PLANTING: Essentially all are field seeded. Plantings are made with Planet Jr. or "Jab" type planters and seeding is on north slopes of raised melon type beds in August. Beds are "subbed up" after planting by running small heads of water for four to six days or longer. The south slope of the bed is planted in November and December.

SOILS: Most land devoted to the winter crop is around Niland and is sandy but with a very tight heavy clay at depths generally less than two feet from the surface. Location of suitable tomato areas is based upon temperature factors and not upon soil characteristics.

FERTILIZERS: Most growers place chicken or steer manures in plow furrows under the seed row ahead of planting and may or may not side dress later with commercial fertilizers. Successful crops have been grown where no organics have been used but where ample quantities of commercial fertilizers were applied. In such cases most of the phosphate and part of the nitrogen have been applied at or ahead of planting. Later applications of nitrogen are side-dressed as needed.

CULTIVATION, THINNING, IRRIGATION: When small plants are well established and before they become crowded, thin to desired spacing. Close spacings (12-18 in.) are being used by many growers. Two to four plants are sometimes left to be thinned later to one or at most two plants per spacing desired. As soon as the weather begins to cool (September 15-October 15) the beds are reshaped by cultivation, one-way plow, and hand work in such a way as to change the plant row from the north slope to the south slope of the bed. Irrigation is by furrow from canals and head ditches. Surface drainage for tail water is essential.

BRUSHING: Mean date of first killing frost is December 6. Brush and paper protective measures should be in place ahead of this date and should be so placed that they admit all sunlight to warm the ground in the daytime and still with a strong slant to the south to intercept and reflect heat radiated from the warm ground at night. Brushing also prevents considerable wind damage from dry desert winds. Brushing is considered to be adequate protection for about 3 to 4 degrees of frost.

PEST CONTROL AND DISEASES: Insects and disease problems are more or less specific for each field. Control of crickets and grasshoppers at emergence of plants is usually necessary as is periodic dustings during the season for control of certain worms and insects. Consult your Farm Advisor or Agricultural Commissioner for control of specific pests. Diseases are ordinarily not too severe a problem and control is usually by removal and burning of diseased plants as soon as disease is recognized.

HARVEST AND PACKING: Harvest is by local or Mexican pickers and packing is done in the small packing sheds at the edge of each field. Tomatoes are sold to buyers from these sheds or shipped to brokers at the terminal market. SAMPLE HARVEST, PACKING AND SHIPPING COSTS WITH A BRIEF SUMMARY OF MARKET PRICE FLUCTUATION OF 1947-1950 ARE GIVEN ON THE ACCOMPANYING SHEET.

PROFITS = YIELD X PRICE less COSTS

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WINTER TOMATOES--IMPERIAL COUNTY

In order to compare Los Angeles wholesale prices with the cost to growers, the cost of marketing as well as the cost of production 1/ must be considered. The table below provides space for you to estimate your marketing costs and sample costs as a guide. As marketing costs vary greatly among growers, the sample costs indicated are estimates based on grower interviews and are not averages.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO HARVEST AND MARKET WINTER TOMATOES?

| ITEM | SAMPLE COSTS | | YOUR COSTS |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|------------|
| | CWT. | Flat 25 ^{1/2} ¢ | |
| Harvesting and hauling to shed | .80 | .20 | |
| Packing house costs: | | | |
| Material--flats, nails, paper, labels | 1.36 | .34 | |
| Labor and overhead--sorting, packing, and supervision | 1.76 | .44 | |
| Total Packing House | 3.12 | .78 | |
| Transportation costs: | | | |
| Truck to Los Angeles, handling, tax and inspection | 1.20 | .30 | |
| Total harvesting, packing, and transportation | 5.12 | 1.28 | |
| Total pre-harvest cost <u>1/</u> | 2.28 | .57 | |
| Total harvesting, packing, transportation, and pre-harvest cost | 7.40 | 1.85 | |
| Selling cost--15% commission @ 2.18 flat | 1.32 | .33 | |
| Total cost at Los Angeles market | 8.72 | 2.18 | |

1/ Sample cost of production estimates are shown on a companion cost of production sheet for winter tomatoes issued by your farm advisor. Estimates are based on a yield of 6 tons or 480 25-lb. flats per acre.

Current Reports--Free reports on current tomato production and marketing may be received by writing for the following: Truck Crop Notes, issued monthly by the California Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, P. O. Box 1258, Sacramento 6; and the daily Local Fruit and Vegetable Report at Los Angeles, issued by the Federal-State Market News Service, 300 Wholesale Terminal Building, Los Angeles.

PROFITS = YIELD X PRICES less COSTS

Winter tomatoes

April 1955

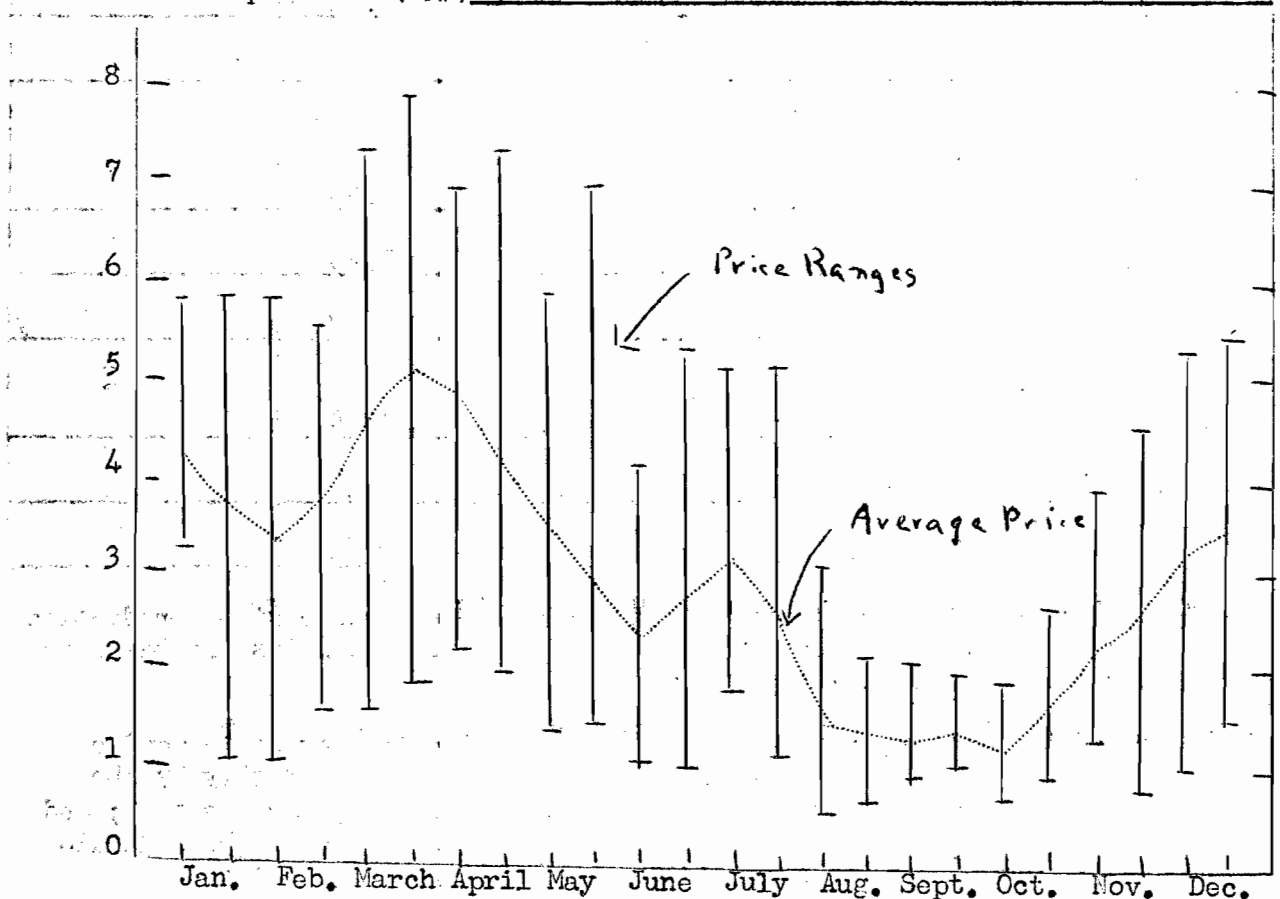
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WHAT PRICE CAN YOU EXPECT FOR WINTER TOMATOES?

During the hazardous winter tomato season, price ranges are large and are apt to vary greatly from year to year. While tomato prices paid by consumers are influenced on the supply side by the quantity and quality offered for sale and on the demand side by consumers' desire for tomatoes, purchasing power, and prices of substitute products, a far-sighted prediction of their behavior is not possible. An inspection of the chart below shows the wide ranges in price at the Los Angeles market and a four-year average annual price trend. The high point of the winter market is generally during March.

Average Wholesale Tomato Prices and Extreme Price Range at Los Angeles, Semi-Monthly during the Four Year Period, 1947-1950

Price--dollars per flat (25#)



PROFITS = YIELD X PRICES less COSTS

Winter Tomatoes