Let's Talk About. . .

CUCUMBER PRODUCTION

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The production of pickling cucumbers has long been an important vegetable crop in Alameda County. Although acreage has declined until it is less than 1,000 acres per year, the crop remains in relative favor among local growers. Much of the crop is processed locally.

In 1966 mechanical harvesting was demonstrated in the county for the first time. This is a once over harvest occurring about 60 days after planting. In order to determine the economics of mechanically harvesting pickling cucumbers, a study of costs was made. The results of this study are reported on the other side of this sheet and should be used in connection with a second sheet, "Pickling Cucumbers, Mechanical Harvest Cost Study."

The cost figures in this study are based on approximate 1967 price and wage rates. Local variations exist in cultural practices, water costs, land rent and cropping intensity. The study does not attempt to represent an average of these variables, but rather a sample of what costs might be.

For the sake of simplicity, the study is based on a "land rental" basis. Taxes on land and interest and depreciation costs on permanent installations (well(s), etc.) are assumed to be an integral part of the land "rent" cost.

Pickling cucumbers are normally bought by processors on a contract grade-weight basis. Grades are based on size and shape. Premium prices are paid for the normally shaped smaller grades. The "average" price per ton will vary according to the proportion of cucumbers that fall into each of the various grades and the contract prices for these grades.

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, AND COUNTY OF ALAMEDA COOPERATING

SAMPLE COSTS TO PRODUCE
PICKLING CUCUMBERS--ALAMEDA AND SANTA CLARA COUNTIES
6 TON PER ACRE YIELD--MACHINE HARVEST

Operation	Hours Per Acre	Cash and Labor Cost per Acre: Labor	Fuel and Repairs	Materials: Kind and Quantity	Materials: Cost	Total
Cultural costs						
Land Preparation	4.0	$ 8.00	$11.35			$19.35
List	0.3	.60	.45			1.05
Pre-irrigate	2.5	4.10	1.00	Power to pump-1/3 Ac.Ft. @ $6.	$ 2.00	7.10
Plant & Roll	0.3	.60	.65	Seed - 6 lb @ $1.35	8.10	9.35
Cultivate 2x	1.0	2.00	1.80			3.80
List & Fertilize (contract)				Fertilizer 300 lb @ $4.	12.00	12.00
Irrigate 4x	8.0	13.20		Power to pump 1 Ac.Ft. @ $6.	6.00	19.20
Dust 2x (contract)				Dust - 80 lb @ .05 + $2.50/application	9.00	9.00
TOTAL CULTURAL COSTS		$28.50	$15.25		$37.10	$80.85
TOTAL HARVEST COST		$9.60/ton (see Mechanical Harvest schedule)				57.60
Cash overhead						
Misc., Office, etc.	5% of above costs				9.62	
Taxes - equipment					1.00	
Rent					60.00	
TOTAL CASH OVERHEAD						$67.92
TOTAL CASH COST						206.37
MANAGEMENT	5% of 6 tons @ $65.					19.50

INVESTMENT COSTS FOR HAND HARVEST

200 Acres Row Crops	Per Acre	Annual Cost: Depreciation	Interest	
Irrigation System	$ 66.50	$ 6.65	$ 2.00	
Buildings	10.00	.33	.30	
Equipment	399.50	32.78	12.02	
TOTAL	$476.00	$39.76	$14.32	54.08
Only 1/2 of overhead costs are charged as two crops can be raised annually				27.04
TOTAL COSTS PER ACRE				$252.91

Per Hour Rates

Labor*
- Skilled Labor - $2.00
- Regular Labor - 1.65

*Including Fringe Costs

Tractor-Cash Costs
- C.D. 60 - $2.00
- C.D. 40 - 1.25
- W.D. 50 - 1.25
- W.D. 40 - 1.00

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