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University of California
Agricultural Extension Service
Imperial County
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SUGAR BEETS - 1956

WHAT DOES IT COST YOU TO GROW BEETS?
(Based on 20 ton yield per acre)

ITEMS	SAMPLE COSTS				YOUR COSTS	
	20 tons/acre		30 tons/acre		Per Acre	Per Ton
	Per Acre	Per Ton	Per Acre	Per Ton		
LAND PREPARATION - LABOR & FIELD POWER Subsoil, disc 3x, float, border pre- irrigate, knock out borders, land plane, list	20.00	1.00	20.00	.67		
CULTURAL LABOR & FIELD POWER Shape and plant beds	2.25		2.25			
Fertilize - 2x	4.00		4.00			
Thin - 1x	15.00		15.00			
Hoe - 2x	20.00		20.00			
Cultivate - 3x	6.00		6.00			
Irrigate - 12x	6.00		6.00			
Ditch & irrig. prep.	2.00		2.00			
Miscellaneous	4.00		4.00			
TOTAL CULTURAL	59.25	2.96	59.25	1.98		
MATERIALS Irrigation water-3.5'	7.00		7.00			
Seed - 4#	2.00		2.00			
Fertilizer-160 N, 80 P ₂ O ₅	32.00					
264 N, 80 P ₂ O ₅			47.60			
Miscellaneous	2.00		2.00			
TOTAL MATERIALS	43.00	2.15	58.60	1.95		
HARVESTING Harvest - machine @ \$1.45/ton screened wt.	29.00		43.50			
Hauling - \$0.85/ton	17.00		25.50			
TOTAL HARVEST	46.00	2.30	69.00	2.30		
CASH OVERHEAD General expense - (5% to harvest)	6.11		6.89			
Taxes	2.00		2.00			
Insurance	1.00		1.00			
TOTAL CASH OVERHEAD	9.11	.46	9.89	.33		
DEPRECIATION	2.00	.10	2.00	.07		
LAND RENT (or 1/5 share)	40.00	2.00	40.00	1.33		
TOTAL ALL COSTS	219.36	10.97	258.74	8.62		

The above sample costs are based on enterprise efficiency studies in Imperial County. Estimate your own costs by filling in the last two columns based on yields that you could reasonably expect and costs of operation and materials that would be required on your land.

SUGAR BEETS

VARIETIES: U.S. 56/2 and U.S. 75 are the varieties now in use. U.S. 15 was hit by curly top in 1955-56. Newer strains may soon be expected to replace U.S. 56/2.

ACREAGE: All acreage is planted under contract with one of the three sugar processors operating in this area. The acreage for each year is listed below.

1955	37,467 acres	1953	59,170 acres	1951	36,279 acres
1954	37,205 "	1952	33,154 "	1950	34,099 "

YIELDS: Yields will vary from about 14 tons to as high as 30 tons, depending both on cultural practices and date of harvest. Considerable yield is sacrificed when beets must be harvested too early. Average yield of 1953 was about 19 tons; 1954 - 23 tons.

PLANTING DATES: September 1 to October 15 have become the "normal" in recent years.

SOILS: Beets are grown on a wide variety of soil types. As with many other crops, the very heavy and very light soils are less adapted to sugar beets. Successful production is possible on less adapted soils but fertility and irrigation requirements make close supervision essential.

LAND PREPARATION: See reverse side of this sheet.

FERTILIZERS:

Phosphate is best applied before listing of beds - broadcast 80 lbs. P_2O_5 per acre then list beds.

Nitrogen is needed in large amounts for best yields. Apply 1/3 pre-plant as for phosphate, 1/3 after thinning and remaining 1/3 before cold weather sets in. Follow N levels closely by tissue tests to be sure N is high through March and into April. Nitrogen applied in irrigation water is less efficient than side placed.

IRRIGATION: Irrigation is by furrows. The crop is "subbed up" initially and may require "watering back" within 4 or 5 days to assure a stand. Do not allow the crop to wilt or suffer for moisture. From 12 to 20 irrigations are used. About 2 weeks will be required following the final irrigation before the fields are dry enough to permit harvest.

HARVESTING: Harvesting is almost completely mechanized. Arrangements are made with a commercial harvester. Dates of harvest and delivery of beets are determined by the sugar company with whom you have your contract.

PESTS AND DISEASES: Insect pests may include crickets, grasshoppers and worms at emergence and seedling stage; aphids and worms during main period of growth. Watch for red spiders near harvest time. Each field presents specific problems and usually recommendations cannot be made except for a specific field. Consult your farm advisor or agricultural commissioner.

SEE REVERSE SIDE