

ESTABLISHING A STAND OF ALFALFA FOR HAY

Cost Analysis Work Sheet - 1966

Sample costs to establish a stand of alfalfa for hay production. Man labor \$1.30 per hour total and equipment operator \$1.60. Seventy horsepower tracklayer per hour cash costs \$3.50, depreciation \$1.50 and interest \$.90. Fifty h.p. wheel diesel tractor per hour cash costs \$1.20, depreciation \$.60 and interest \$.30. Annual investment costs and real estate taxes are charged to the production schedule, so are omitted as development costs.

	<u>Sample Costs</u>	<u>My Costs</u>
	<u>Per</u>	<u>Per</u>
<u>CASH COSTS</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Disc 3 times: 3/4 hour man and tracklayer	3.83	
Chisel 1 time: 1 hour man and tracklayer	5.10	
Landplane 2 times: 1/2 hour man and tracklayer	2.55	
Border Preparation: 1/8 hour man and wheel tractor	.35	
Pre-irrigation: Labor 1 hour per acre	1.30	
Water: Power for 1 acre foot at \$5	5.00	
Seed: 25 lbs. at 48¢	12.00	
planting: 1/4 hour man and wheel tractor	.70	
Fertilize: material; 80 units P ₂ O ₅ at 11¢	8.80	
application: 1/4 hour man and wheel tractor	.70	
Cultipak or Harrow: 1/4 hour man and wheel tractor	.70	
Repairs to Equipment except tractors	1.50	
Miscellaneous Expense: office, car, operating capital, insurance, etc.	2.50	
Total Cash Costs	45.03	
<u>DEPRECIATION</u>		
Tracklayer: 2 1/4 hours at \$1.50	3.38	
Wheel Tractor: 7/8 hour at 60¢	.53	
Equipment except Tractors	1.15	
Total Depreciation	5.06	
<u>INTEREST ON INVESTMENT AT 6%</u>		
Tracklayer: 2 1/4 hours at 90¢	2.03	
Wheel Tractor: 7/8 hour at 30¢	.26	
Equipment except Tractors	.35	
Total Interest on Investment	2.64	
TOTAL CASH TO ESTABLISH ALFALFA STAND	52.73	

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This work sheet was developed to show sample costs for establishing a good stand of alfalfa hay. It includes all costs involved from land preparation through seeding. Included also is the cost of fertilization for the first year's production. It does not include any other production figures. A cost sheet is available for producing and processing hay.

In order to obtain high yields of good quality hay, certain factors should be considered before seeding. Some of these factors are outlined below.

Alfalfa gives maximum yields on deep loam soils. It can be grown on most soil types. Alfalfa does poorly on land that contains hardpan or an impervious layer closer to the surface than four feet. It is moderately tolerant to alkali and does poorly on high water table areas.

Subsoiling - Soil compacted by equipment in growing previous crops, especially cotton, develops compacted layers which restrict root growth and increases the incidence of phytophthora root rot. Subsoiling or ripping is needed for good production.

Land Grading - Most alfalfa fields require a 0.2 slope per 100 feet, of run. Newly leveled land should be pre-irrigated so that low and high areas can be eliminated before planting. Water should not run in the checks over eight hours.

Time of Seeding - November and February are usually the best months to seed alfalfa. Fall plantings usually produce a higher yield the first year. If weeds are a serious problem, irrigating to germinate weed seed and a light discing along with a spring seeding may be beneficial.

Method of Seeding - Alfalfa should be uniformly covered (no deeper than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch). After broadcast seeding and harrowing, the field should be rolled or cultipacked to prevent moisture loss and provide protection against low temperatures. Drilled seedings should also be rolled or cultipacked.

Date of Seeding - Twenty pounds of seed per acre is recommended for normal seeding on well prepared seedbeds. Twenty-five to thirty pounds per acre may be justified when seeding during cold or hot weather or on cloddy seedbeds or under other adverse conditions.

Varieties - Moapa makes up the largest acreage of alfalfa hay in Fresno County. There are many new private and public varieties on the market today which look promising. University developed data on the performance of many of these varieties is available at the Farm and Home Advisors Office. A grower should only plant small acreages of new untested varieties. A simple field trial will check their performance when grown under a particular soil and management practice.

Weed Control - Clipping for weed control after emergence should not be done until the crown of the plant is well established. Before using herbicides, contact the Farm and Home Advisors office.