

flax
sample costs
and
production



Agricultural Extension Service
University of California
Imperial County
Court House, El Centro

Cost Data Sheet No. 5

UC Cooperative Extension

1968 flax

FLAX--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$1.90 per hour (\$1.50 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, and fringe benefits).

Yield - 45 bushels per acre.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
LAND PREPARATION						
Disc 2x	2.00					4.00
Fertilize	1.00	350# (16-20-0)	9.84			10.84
Border	1.50					1.50
Float 2x	1.00-2.00					3.00
Irrigate		water .5 ac.ft.	1.15	.5	1.00	2.15
Mulch	2.00					2.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						23.49
GROWING PERIOD						
Plant	3.00	seed 50#	7.00			10.00
Fertilize		water run 3x 50# N(NH ₂)	9.00			9.00
Irrigate 1lx		water 5.5 ac.ft.	12.65	5.7	11.00	23.65
Weed Control	5.00	herbicide	8.00			13.00
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						55.65
HARVESTING COSTS & SHIPPING						
Combine	8.00	per acre (\$.20 per bu. over 25 bu.)				12.00
Local haul	2.25					2.25
Load & analysis	2.00					2.00
RR freight to mill	4.50					4.50
TOTAL HARVESTING AND SHIPPING						20.75
Land rent						50.00
Cash overhead 15% of above						22.48
TOTAL ALL COSTS						\$172.37

Cost per bushel = \$3.83

GENERAL INFORMATION

The average yields for flax during the last five years have ranged from 27 to 42 bushels per acre with a selling price of \$3.34 to \$3.80 per bushel.

SOIL REQUIREMENTS

Soils must be permeable to water, well drained, and not too saline (electrical conductivity lower than 6 millimhos).

LAND PREPARATION

Land should be level enough to permit uniform application of water.

Mulch when dry enough with spring-tooth and spike-tooth harrows, or mulching disc and spike-tooth harrow. Make mulch fine to destroy emerged weeds, germinating weed seeds, and to prevent drying out of firm soil below. Depth of mulch should not exceed 2 to 3 inches of firmed soil.

PLANTING

Optimum planting dates range from November 15 to December 15th. Fifty pounds of seed per acre are adequate if properly planted. Seed should be drilled into contact with firm, wet soil beneath the mulch. Depths greater than 3 inches decrease possibility of getting good stands.

VARIETIES

Imperial is the best variety on wilt-free soil. In soils where Fusarium wilt is a problem the resistant varieties New River and Dunes are recommended.

FERTILIZATION

All phosphate should be applied ahead of planting. Eighty to 100 pounds of P_2O_5 per acre are adequate for maximum yield.

Apply $1/3$ to $1/2$ of N pre-plant and remainder in 2 to 3 applications--the first at the second or third post-emergence irrigation, the second fertilizer application in between the third irrigation and before bloom and the third fertilizer application after bloom but before April 5th. Approximately 200 pounds should be applied during the entire season.

IRRIGATION

One or two irrigations are necessary ahead of mulching to insure proper seed bed moisture. Ten or more irrigations after emergence have proven most profitable. Irrigation should be continued through bloom and flax should never be allowed to suffer from lack of water or too much water.

WEED CONTROL

Crop rotation and clean tillage are best for weed control. Broad-leaved weeds can be controlled with 2,4-D. Grassy weeds can be controlled with IPC. Consult Weed Control Recommendations - Imperial County.

HARVESTING

Direct combining of standing flax is practiced. Where weeds are a problem, windrowing or applying a crop desiccant by airplane to dry weeds, make combining possible. Harvesting usually takes place in June and July.

To simplify our information it is sometimes necessary to use trade names of products or equipment. No endorsement of named products is intended nor is criticism implied of similar products which are not mentioned.

Prepared by
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