

PICKLING CUCUMBERS  
MECHANICAL HARVEST COST STUDY

September 1966

Basis of study: 150 acres of cucumbers -- 300 hours annual use  
Harvest rate: one-half acre per hour  
Data from one commercial vegetable farm in Alameda County

Investment and Annual Overhead Costs

|                              | Cost     | Life | Depre-<br>ciation | Interest | Insurance<br>Taxes<br>Storage | Total   | Cost<br>Per Hour* |
|------------------------------|----------|------|-------------------|----------|-------------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| Harvester                    | \$16,400 | 5    | \$3,280           | \$492    | \$328                         | \$4,100 | \$13.67           |
| Tractor (1/2)<br>40 H.P.W.D. | 3,000    | 10   | 300               | 90       | 60                            | 450     | 1.50              |
| Trailer (1/2)                | 600      | 10   | 60                | 18       | 12                            | 90      | .30               |
| Forklift (1/2)               | 2,000    | 10   | 200               | 60       | 40                            | 300     | 1.00              |
| TOTAL                        | \$22,000 |      | \$3,840           | \$660    | \$440                         | \$4,940 |                   |
| Cost per hour                |          |      | \$12.80           | \$2.20   | \$1.47                        |         | \$16.47           |

\*Total divided by 300 hours.

Cash Operating Costs

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Labor (one operator at \$2.00, two sorters, and one forklift or tractor operator at \$1.55) | \$ 6.65        |
| Repairs to harvester - \$16,400 x 6% = \$984 ÷ 300 hours                                    | 3.28           |
| Repairs to tractor, forklift, and trailer (\$.50 + \$.35 + \$.15)                           | 1.00           |
| Fuel  |                |
| Harvester - 85 H.P. = 4.5 gal. per hour @ \$.25   | 1.13           |
| Trailer tractor (about 1/4 of harvester fuel)   | .28            |
| TOTAL   | <u>\$12.34</u> |
| Total cost per hour   | <u>\$28.81</u> |
| Total cost per acre (\$28.81 per hour x 2 hours per acre)                                   | \$57.62        |

Cost Per Ton at Varying Yields

| <u>Yield per Acre in Tons</u> | <u>Cost per Ton</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2                             | \$28.81             |
| 3                             | 19.21               |
| 4                             | 14.41               |
| 5                             | 11.52               |
| 6                             | 9.60                |
| 7                             | 8.23                |
| 8                             | 7.20                |
| 9                             | 6.40                |
| 10                            | 5.76                |

Study conducted by Philip S. Parsons, Extension Economist; William Sims, Extension Vegetable Specialist; and Harwood Hall, Farm Advisor in Alameda County.

University of California Agricultural Extension Service