

WHAT WILL IT COST TO GROW ALFALFA IN MADERA COUNTY

1/53.

Clarence E. Johnson, Farm Advisor
Burt Burlingame, Extension Economist in Farm Management

Costs of growing any crops will vary considerably on different ranches. The table below contains approximate costs of producing alfalfa in Madera County. These costs are not based on conditions for any one ranch. This table is designed as a guide in helping you to determine the cost of producing alfalfa on your ranch and in aiding you to appraise and plan your own crop program.

This cost analysis is based on alfalfa grown on well developed land in rotation with cotton, irrigated pasture and other row crops. It is also based on a moderate sized acreage, the use of both well and ditch water, and contract baling and hauling. Where conditions and costs vary from those given, you can make adjustments accordingly in appraising your alfalfa enterprise. On the basis of 6 tons per acre, this analysis shows a cost per ton of \$19.86. If the yield were 8 tons per acre the cost per ton would be \$16.50. On the other hand, at 4 tons per acre, this cost would be \$27.00. Acre costs would vary only slightly with differences in yield.

	Sample Costs		My Costs	
	Per Acre	Per Ton (1)	Per Acre	Per Ton
LABOR COSTS: (2)				
Fertilize, ditch and border work, miscellaneous:				
2 man, 1½ tr. hours		\$3.80		
Irrigate: 10 to 12 times - 8 man hours		8.00		
Mowing: 2 hours, man and tractor		4.40		
Raking and turning: 2½ hours, man and tractor		5.50		
Baling: Contract basis	27.00	4.50		
Haul and stack bales: Contract basis	9.00	1.50		
Total Labor and Field Power Cost	57.70	9.62		
MATERIAL COSTS:				
Irrigation water: 4 acre feet, tax and power	10.00			
Fertilizer: Av. annual	5.00			
Miscellaneous	1.00			
Total Material Cost	16.00	2.67		
CASH OVERHEAD COSTS:				
General expense: Office, phone, car, etc.	3.69			
County taxes	5.00			
Insurance, repairs and miscellaneous overhead	3.50			
Total Cash Overhead Cost	12.19	2.03		
TOTAL CASH, LABOR & FIELD POWER COST	85.89	14.32		
DEPRECIATION:				
Stand: \$30 cost - 3 yrs. life	10.00			
Irrigation facilities: \$80 cost - 20 yrs. life	4.00			
Equipment: Mower, rake, etc. \$20 cost - 10 yrs.	2.00			
Total Depreciation Cost	16.00	2.67		
INTEREST ON INVESTMENT AT 5%:				
On stand, irrigation facilities and other equipment at ½ original cost (\$65)	3.25			
Land at \$400	20.00			
Total Interest On Investment Cost	23.25	3.87		
TOTAL COST OF PRODUCTION	125.14	20.86		
Less Credit For Pasturage	-6.00	1.00		
NET COST OF HAY	119.14	19.86		

(1) Based on a yield at 6 tons per acre in 5 cuttings.

(2) Man labor at \$1.00 per hour and light tractor at \$1.20 per hour.