

SAMPLE INPUTS AND COSTS FOR PRUNES IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY  
Mature Orchard with a yield of 2.5 Dried Tons per acre

	Hours per acre				Cost Per Acre	Cost Per Dry Ton
	Man Labor	Tractors		Truck Etc.		
		C30	W20			
Pruning	25.0				31.25	
Brush disposal	1.8		0.6		3.00	
Cultivation, mowing and harvest preparation	5.0	4.0	1.0		14.40	
Spraying, 3 times, incl. \$1.50 hr. sprayer	1.5	1.5		(1.5 sp)	6.75	
Irrigate, 4 times, using sprinkler	8.0		1.0		10.90	
Prop, Tie, Wire, etc.	5.0			2.0	10.75	
Misc., fertilize, cover crop, borer control	8.0	.5	.5	1.0	13.95	
<b>Total cultural labor and field power</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>91.00</b>	<b>36.40</b>
Snake and pick, 6.25 T at \$12.00 a ton	60.0				75.00	30.00
Supervision, loading, box work, hauling	10.0		1.0	2.0	19.15	7.66
Dehydrating at \$12 a ton, contract					75.00	30.00
<b>Total Harvesting</b>	<b>70.0</b>		<b>1.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>169.15</b>	<b>67.66</b>
<b>Total labor and field power</b>	<b>124.3</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>260.15</b>	<b>104.06</b>
Irrigation water, power to pump 20 A. in., 250' head					12.80	
Fertilizer 80 lb. nitrogen at 15¢					12.00	
Spray materials					18.00	
Misc. materials, cover crop, borer control					7.00	
<b>Total material cost</b>					<b>49.80</b>	<b>19.92</b>
<b>Total labor, field power and materials</b>					<b>309.95</b>	<b>123.98</b>
General expense, office, car, etc., estimated at 5% of above					15.50	
County taxes, land & trees \$35, other improvements and equipment \$5.					40.00	
Repairs to equipment not covered by hourly rates					5.00	
Compensation insurance \$5.00, Soc. Security \$1.00; other \$1.00					7.00	
<b>Total cash overhead costs</b>					<b>67.50</b>	<b>27.00</b>
<b>Total cash costs</b>					<b>377.45</b>	<b>150.98</b>
Investment overhead based on an orchard unit of 80 acres, any part of which may be prunes	Original cost 80 acres	Dollars per acre				
		Average Value	6% Int.	Depreciation		
Trees, cost \$900 an acre, 30 yrs.	72,000	450.00	27.00	30.00		
Building for equipment	4,000	25.00	1.50	2.00 -		
Irrigation System	15,000	93.75	5.63	12.20		
Tractors, truck, pick-up, etc.	15,200	95.00	5.70	15.00 -		
Tillage equipment	2,600	16.25	.98	2.75 -		
Sprayer	6,000	37.50	2.25	7.50 -		
Misc. equipment, props, etc.	6,400	40.00	2.40	6.00 -		
Housing for help-can vary consid.	8,000	50.00	3.00	5.00		
Land, at agricultural value	120,000	1,500.00	90.00	-----		
<b>Total investment &amp; deprec.</b>	<b>249,200</b>	<b>2,307.50</b>		<b>80.25</b>	<b>80.25</b>	<b>32.10</b>
<b>Total cash &amp; deprec. costs</b>					<b>457.70</b>	<b>183.08</b>
Interest on Investment			138.46		138.46	55.38
<b>TOTAL ALL COSTS</b>					<b>596.16</b>	<b>238.46</b>

Labor and power costs above are figured at the following hourly rates: Tractor and truck driver \$1.50; other orchard labor \$1.25; 30 h.p. crawler tractor \$1.50; 20 h.p. wheel tractor with forklift \$.90; air carrier sprayer engine \$1.50; 2 ton truck \$2.00. These equipment rates are cash costs only for fuel, oil, repairs and also license and insurance for the truck.

Rate value per acre upon which interest is computed is estimated at half of the original cost for depreciable items, since over useful life they decline to salvage or zero value.

Fruit & Nuts

PRUNES IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY  
by David Ramos, Farm Advisor  
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September 21, 1961

Importance of Prune Industry - The California Crop and Livestock Reporting Service gives the following acreage estimates for Santa Clara County as of 1960: bearing - 31,631; non-bearing - 2,324; Total - 33,955. This represents about 40 percent of the bearing acreage and about 32 percent of the total acreage in the state.

Production - The following table shows the acreage, yield, and value of prunes for the past five years, as reported by the Agricultural Commissioner. The decrease in prune acreage is primarily due to displacement by urban development in the northern half of the county.

PRUNE PRODUCTION IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Year	ALL VARIETIES			FRENCH				
	Bearing Acreage	Total Tons	Total Value	Bearing Acreage	Ave. Yield	Total Tons	Price Per Ton	Total Value
1956	36,827	84,450	14,535,000	33,884	2.4	80,000	165	13,200,000
1957	36,002	73,400	13,073,300	33,034	2.1	70,150	172	12,065,800
1958	35,238	48,845	16,998,200	32,273	1.5	46,950	340	15,959,000
1959	32,434	61,800	21,797,500	29,838	2.0	58,400	350	20,440,000
1960	31,755	56,200	20,320,100	29,254	1.8	52,900	360	19,044,000

Adaptation - Prunes are grown on a wide variety of soils, although a deep, well-drained, medium-textured soil is preferred. Very heavy soils are objectionable in the prune trees growing on them are usually small, unthrifty and low yielding. Prunes can be grown on sandy or gravelly soils, but more frequent irrigation will be required. One of the most common limiting factors in prune production is soil moisture. An adequate supply of readily available moisture throughout the year is essential for maximum yield and size of fruits. More critical observation of soil moisture conditions and more frequent irrigations to avoid deficiencies is resulting in increased production in many orchards.

Harvesting - Prunes are generally hand shaken and picked from the ground into lug boxes, although there is considerable interest in mechanization. The use of mechanical shakers can be expected to increase. Bulk bins may be introduced in the near future and eventually replace lug boxes. Mechanical pickup machines have been developed and work satisfactorily under proper conditions. It may be possible to use catching frames in a multiple harvest operation without sacrificing yield or quality.

Yield - Yield is one of the most important factors in determining cost per ton. Costs shown on the other side of this sheet are for a good commercial yield of 2.5 tons of dried fruit per acre, but yields are greatly influenced by frost and other climatic conditions. In this type of orchard if costs other than harvesting were the same, costs per ton would vary with yields as shown below.

SAMPLE COSTS WITH VARYING YIELDS

Yield in dry tons per acre	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0
All costs except harvesting	418.55	418.55	418.55	418.55	418.55	418.55
Harvesting Cost at \$71.04 per ton*	105.56	142.08	177.61	213.12	248.64	284.16
Total Cost per acre	525.11	560.63	596.16	631.67	667.19	702.71
Cost Per dry ton	350.07	280.32	238.46	210.56	190.63	175.68

\*-- includes 5% general expense.