

SAMPLE COSTS
TO PRODUCE
ALFALFA
IN THE LOWER
SACRAMENTO VALLEY
1974

Prepared by:

Robert T. Petersen, Farm Advisor, Colusa County
Jack P. Orr, Farm Advisor, Sacramento County
Chas. B. Wilson, Farm Advisor, Sutter-Yuba Counties
Carl A. Schoner, Jr., Farm Advisor, Yolo County
A. D. Reed, Extension Economist, Davis
L. A. Horel, Research Associate, Davis

SAMPLE COSTS TO PRODUCE ALFALFA
Lower Sacramento Valley - 1974

Based on 200 acres of alfalfa on a 1,000 acre ranch. Yield: 7 tons. Labor rates including fringe benefits \$3.50 and \$2.60 per hour.

Operation	Hours per acre	Cash and labor cost per acre				
		Labor	Fuel & repairs	Materials Kind and Quantity	Cost	Total
<u>Cultural Costs</u>		dollars				
Irrigate 8X	8.0	20.80		Water 4.5' @ \$4.00	18.00	38.80
Ditch	.1	.35	.40			.75
Insect control 3X				Contract	16.00	16.00
Spring tooth	.1	.35	.40			.75
Miscellaneous	.5	1.75	1.00		1.00	3.75
Winter weed control				Contract	15.00	15.00
Crop loan interest					2.65	2.65
TOTAL CULTURAL COSTS		23.25	1.80		52.65	77.70
<u>Harvest Costs</u>						
Swath 6X	1.5	5.25	6.25			11.50
Combine windrows 6X	.4	1.40	2.00			3.40
Bale				7 ton @ \$10.00	70.00	70.00
Bankout				7 ton @ \$3.00	21.00	21.00
TOTAL HARVEST COSTS		6.65	8.25		91.00	105.90
<u>Cash Overhead</u>						
Misc., office, etc.					10.05	
Taxes on equipment					1.00	
Rent				25% of 7 ton @ \$60	105.00	
TOTAL CASH OVERHEAD						115.05
TOTAL CASH COST		29.90	10.05		259.70	299.65
Management 5% of 7 ton @ \$60						21.00
<u>Investment</u>		<u>Per Acre</u>		<u>Annual Cost</u>		
				<u>Depreciation</u>	<u>Interest 8%</u>	
Equipment	\$100			\$10.00	\$4.00	
Crop Stand	100			33.35	4.00	
Total				\$43.35	\$8.00	51.35
TOTAL COST PER ACRE						372.00
Cost per ton @ 7 ton yield						53.14

COST OF PRODUCTION AT VARYING YIELDS

Yield per acre-tons	5	6	7	8	9
Cost of production per ton	\$61.15	\$56.48	\$53.14	\$50.64	\$48.70

ALFALFA CULTURAL BRIEFS

Soil Requirements: Three feet or more in depth; fertile; well drained; loams preferred; well supplied with organic matter; free from acidity or alkali, hardpan or gravel streaks; and high water table.

Planting Dates: May be planted in the fall or in the spring. A fall planting will normally yield a full crop during the following season.

Harvest Dates: About every 4 weeks, April to September.

Varieties: Depends on the soil type. Check with your Farm Advisor.

Seeding Rate: 15-25 pounds.

Fertilizer: Test your soil for phosphate needs. 200-400 pounds of single superphosphate per year may be applied every other year.

Irrigation: Irrigate after each cutting applying 3-6 inches per time. Extra irrigations may be required in the spring, during the hottest part of the summer and in the fall.

Weed Control: Control as many weeds as possible before the alfalfa is planted. Winter weed control is usually required.

Insect Control: Use resistant varieties to control the spotted alfalfa aphid. Parasites will usually control the pea aphid, and the alfalfa caterpillar. Use chemical controls only with heavy infestations that cannot be controlled by cutting the crop. Plant resistant varieties to control nematode. Control of weevils is universally required.

Diseases: Use resistant varieties to control bacterial wilt and downy mildew. Use good irrigation practices to control Phytophthora root rot.

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