

ALFALFA HAY PRODUCTION  
IN FALL RIVER - BIG VALLEY  
SHASTA - LASSEN

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MARCH 1973

SAMPLE COSTS TO PRODUCE ALFALFA

FLOOD IRRIGATED-WELL

FALL RIVER-BIG VALLEY

SHASTA-LASSEN

MARCH 1973

Labor: Skilled, \$3.00/hr; Regular, \$2.00/hr; both including Workmen's Compensation, Social Security and other fringe costs

Yield: 5 tons per acre

Operation	Hours per Acre	CASH AND LABOR COST PER ACRE				
		Labor	Fuel & Repairs	Materials Kind & Quantity	Cost	Total
<u>Cultural Costs</u>						
Irrigate 8 times	6.0	\$12.00	\$.50	Power/pump 4 acre ft. water @4.00	\$16.00	\$28.50
Fertilize application				Sulfur 50 lbs. @2.25¢	1.13	1.13
Gopher Control	.1	.30	.10	Contract	.30	.30
Herbicide every other year (weed control)				Bait	1.00	1.40
				Contract	3.00	3.00
<b>Total Cultural Costs</b>		<b>\$12.30</b>	<b>\$.60</b>		<b>\$21.43</b>	<b>\$34.33</b>
<u>Harvest Costs</u>						
Mow 3 times	.9	\$2.70	\$1.31			\$ 4.01
Rake 3 times	.6	1.80	.72			2.52
Bale 3 times	.6	1.80	1.65	Wire \$.95/ton	\$ 4.75	8.20
Roadside-contract				\$3.75/ton	18.75	18.75
<b>Total Harvest Costs</b>		<b>\$6.30</b>	<b>\$3.68</b>		<b>\$23.50</b>	<b>\$33.48</b>
<u>Cash Overhead</u>						
Miscellaneous		Office, interest on operating capital, etc., 6% of \$67.81				\$ 4.07
Taxes		\$500 x 25% x .08 rate				10.00
<b>Total Cash Overhead</b>						<b>\$14.07</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH COSTS</b>						<b>\$81.88</b>
Management - 5% of 5 tons @\$32.00						\$ 8.00
<b>80 ACRES ALFALFA ON 200 ACRE FARM</b>						
				<u>ANNUAL COST</u>		
<u>Investment</u>	<u>Per Acre</u>		<u>Depreciation</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>7%</u>	
Land	\$500.00			\$35.00		
Irrigation system	188.00		\$ 9.40	6.58		
Equipment	90.50		10.05	3.52		
Stand	66.00		13.20	2.31		
	<b>\$844.50</b>		<b>\$32.65</b>	<b>\$47.41</b>		<b>\$80.06</b>
<b>TOTAL COST PER ACRE</b>						<b>\$169.94</b>
Cost per ton @ 5 ton yield						\$33.99

SAMPLE COSTS TO PRODUCE ALFALFA

WHEEL LINE SPRINKLER IRRIGATED

FALL RIVER-BIG VALLEY

SHASTA-LASSEN

MARCH 1973

Labor: Skilled, \$3.00/hr; Regular, \$2.00/hr; both including Workmen's Compensation, Social Security and other fringe costs

Yield: 5 tons per acre

Operation	Hours per Acre	CASH AND LABOR COST PER ACRE				
		Labor	Fuel & Repairs	Materials Kind & Quantity	Cost	Total
<u>Cultural Costs</u>						
Irrigate 8 times	2.5	\$5.00	\$1.25	Power/pump 4 acre ft. water @4.50	\$18.00	\$24.25
Fertilize				Sulfur 50 lbs. @2.25¢	1.13	1.13
application				Contract	.30	.30
Gopher control	.1	.30	.10	Bait	1.00	1.40
Herbicide every other year (weed control)				Contract	3.00	3.00
<b>Total Cultural Costs</b>		<b>\$5.30</b>	<b>\$1.35</b>		<b>\$23.43</b>	<b>\$30.08</b>
<u>Harvest Costs</u>						
Swath 3 times	.75	\$2.25	\$2.33			\$ 4.58
Rake 3 times	.6	1.80	.72			2.52
Bale 3 times	.6	1.80	1.65	Wire \$.95/ton	\$ 4.75	8.20
Roadside (contract)				\$3.75/ton	18.75	18.75
<b>Total Harvest Costs</b>		<b>\$5.85</b>	<b>\$4.70</b>		<b>\$23.50</b>	<b>\$34.05</b>
<u>Cash Overhead</u>						
Miscellaneous		Office, interest on operating capital, etc. 6% of \$64.13				\$ 3.85
Taxes		\$500 x 25% x .08 rate				10.00
<b>Total Cash Overhead</b>						<b>\$13.85</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH COSTS</b>						<b>\$77.98</b>
Management - 5% of 5 tons @ \$32.00						\$ 8.00
<u>160 ACRES ALFALFA ON 250 ACRE FARM</u>						
<u>ANNUAL COST</u>						
<u>Investment</u>	<u>Per Acre</u>			<u>Depreciation</u>	<u>Interest 7%</u>	
Land	\$500.00				\$35.00	
Irrigation System	234.00			\$11.70	8.19	
Equipment	131.20			13.12	4.59	
Stand	50.00			10.00	1.75	
	<b>\$915.20</b>			<b>\$34.82</b>	<b>\$49.53</b>	<b>\$84.35</b>
<b>TOTAL COST PER ACRE</b>						<b>\$170.33</b>
Cost per ton @ 5 ton yield						\$34.07

**SAMPLE COSTS TO PRODUCE ALFALFA**

**HAND LINE SPRINKLER IRRIGATED**

**FALL RIVER-BIG VALLEY**

**SHASTA-LASSEN**

MARCH 1973

Labor: Skilled, \$3.00/hr; Regular, \$2.00/hr; both including Workmen's Compensation, Social Security and other fringe costs

Yield: 5 tons per acre

Operation	Hours per Acre	CASH AND LABOR COST PER ACRE				
		Labor	Fuel & Repairs	Materials Kind & Quantity	Cost	Total
<b>Cultural Costs</b>						
Irrigate 8 times	5.0	\$10.00	\$1.00	Power/pump 4 acre ft. water @4.50	\$18.00	\$29.00
Fertilize application				Sulfur 50 lbs. @2.25¢	1.13	1.13
Gopher control	.1	.30	.10	Contract Bait	.30 1.00	.30 1.40
Herbicide every other year (weed control)				Contract	3.00	3.00
<b>Total Cultural Costs</b>		<b>\$10.30</b>	<b>\$1.10</b>		<b>\$23.43</b>	<b>\$34.83</b>
<b>Harvest Costs</b>						
Mow 3 times	.9	\$ 2.70	\$1.31			\$ 4.01
Rake 3 times	.6	1.80	.72			2.52
Bale 3 times	.6	1.80	1.65	Wire \$.95/ton	\$ 4.75	8.20
Roadside-contract				\$3.75/ton	18.75	18.75
<b>Total Harvest Costs</b>		<b>\$ 6.30</b>	<b>\$3.68</b>		<b>\$23.50</b>	<b>\$33.48</b>
<b>Cash Overhead</b>						
Miscellaneous				Office, interest on operating capital, etc., 6% of \$68.31		\$ 4.10
Taxes				\$500 x 25% x .08 rate		10.00
<b>Total Cash Overhead</b>						<b>\$14.10</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH COSTS</b>						<b>\$82.41</b>
Management - 5% of 5 tons @\$32.00						\$ 8.00
<b>80 ACRES ALFALFA ON 200 ACRE FARM</b>						
				ANNUAL COST		
<b>Investment</b>	<b>Per Acre</b>			<b>Depreciation</b>	<b>Interest 7%</b>	
Land	\$500.00				\$35.00	
Irrigation system	260.00			\$13.00	9.10	
Equipment	90.50			10.05	3.52	
Stand	50.00			10.00	1.75	
	<b>\$900.50</b>			<b>\$33.05</b>	<b>\$49.37</b>	<b>\$82.42</b>
<b>TOTAL COST PER ACRE</b>						<b>\$172.83</b>
<b>Cost per ton @ 5 ton yield</b>						<b>\$34.57</b>

## SUGGESTIONS FOR GETTING HIGH YIELDS

### AND HIGH QUALITY

1. Select deepest soils that are well drained.
2. Prepare firm seed bed.
3. Disk in sulfur and phosphorus if needed.
4. Plant 20 pounds per acre of recommended certified varieties in March and April. Inoculate seed properly. On new soil not grown alfalfa in recent years, apply 150 pounds ammonia sulfate per acre at planting time. Lime coated with inoculant highly recommended.
5. Don't delay first irrigation in spring too long on established stands. During July and August irrigate about every 10-12 days.
6. Cut first crop about June 1 or when re-growth on crowns is about 1/4 inch long. If alfalfa weevils are a problem, cut early. Time between cuttings should be 35-40 days. Generally, three cuttings are made but a fourth cutting is possible if the first cutting is off the field during first week of June. Baling at 25-30% moisture with hay savor makes a fourth cutting possible in some years. Getting the hay cut, baled, off the field quickly and irrigated are necessary steps in order to get higher yields.
7. Hay quality can be improved by using chemicals to control weeds.

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