DRY ONIONS (MARKET) PROJECTED PRODUCTION COSTS 1987-1988

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at $5.50 per hour ($4.30 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, transportation, supervision and fringe benefits).

Yield--800 50 lb. sacks per acre 150+ days to maturity IMPERIAL SWEETS

OPERATION	CUSTOM RATE	MATERIALS Type	MATERIALS Cost	HAND LABOR Hours	HAND LABOR Dollars	COSTS Per Acre
LAND PREPARATION						
Stubble disc	17.75					17.75
Subsoil	27.00					27.00
Disc 1x	9.00					9.00
Landplane 2x	9.50					19.00
Border, cross check & break borders	15.00					15.00
Flood		Water 1/2 ac/ft	4.50	1	5.50	10.00
Fertilize	6.00	450# 11-52-0	53.00			59.00
Disc 2x	9.00					18.00
Triplane 1x	8.50					8.50
List	10.50					10.50
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						193.75
GROWING PERIOD						
Power mulch beds	18.50					18.50
Precision plant	13.50	Coated seed	82.50			96.00
Herbicide 2x	7.00	Herbicide	93.83			107.83
Sprinkler irrigate						145.00
Cultivate 2x	9.75					19.50
Fertilize & furrow out 2x	10.00	200# N @ .30	60.00			80.00
Weed control 2x	7.00	Herbicide	28.00			42.00
Hand weed				9	49.50	49.50
Irrigate 12x		Water 4 1/2 ac/ft	40.50	13	71.50	112.00
Insect Control 5x	4.90	Insecticides	35.00			59.50
Disease Control 3x	6.00	Fungicides	45.00			63.00
Disc 1x	9.00					9.00
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						801.83
GROWING PERIOD & LAND PREPARATION COSTS						995.58
Land Rent (net acres)						175.00
Cash Overhead-----	12% of preharvest costs & land rent					140.47
TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS						1311.05
HARVEST COSTS						
Dig, top, haul, grade, and sack	800 sacks @		3.10 per 50-lb. sack			2480.00
TOTAL ALL COSTS						3791.05

PROJECTED INCOME ABOVE COSTS (PER ACRE)

		price/sack 4.00	4.50	5.00	5.50	6.00	Breakeven $/sack
Sacks per acre	600	-771	-471	-171	129	429	5.29
	700	-681	-331	19	369	719	4.97
	800	-591	-191	209	609	1009	4.74
	900	-501	-51	399	849	1299	4.56
	1000	-411	89	589	1089	1589	4.41

DRY ONION CULTURE-IMPERIAL SWEETS

1987-1988

YEAR	ACRES	YIELDS/ACRE (SACKS)	VALUE/ACRE
1986	2544	852	$ 3186
1985	3273	591	2453
1984	3069	524	2522
1983	2940	516	1793
1982	3003	708	3328

PLANTING: Most acreage is direct seeded from mid-October to mid-November. Forty-two inch beds with 4 to 6 lines are used. Some plantings have been made with three lines on narrow beds, some have 12 lines on 80-inch wide beds.

VARIETIES: Onions are sensitive to day length and temperature. Only the early maturing, short day types are grown. The most popular varieties are: "Yellow Granex", "Goldrush", "Henry's Special", "Colossal", "Ringer", "Texas Early Grano 502", "White Supreme" and "Red Grano". Texas Grano and other ringer types are produced for the fried onion ring market. Some fields qualify to be marketed as "Imperial Sweets".

SOILS: Medium-textured sandy loams are the most desirable soils. Onions are shallow rooted and need a friable soil which retains moisture, especially after cultivation. Avoid salty, hard, or weed-infested soils.

IRRIGATION: Onions should never suffer for lack of water. Stressing onions for water before maturity may cause splitting and increases their pungency. Weather and soil conditions determine the number of irrigations (usually 7-12x). Irrigation costs include shovel work, pipe setting, and motor grading.

FERTILIZER: Generally, four hundred fifty pounds of 11-52-0 are broadcast prior to listing. One hundred fifty to 200 pounds of nitrogen are applied during the growing season.

PEST CONTROL: Mites, thrips, armyworms, leafminers, maggots, downy mildew, purple blotch, and nematodes may be problems. Pink root is a soil-borne disease affecting onions; crop rotation and resistant varieties should be use to suppress the problem.

Herbicides are commonly applied pre-emergence. Consult your farm advisor for the latest recommendations.

HARVESTING: Harvesting takes place from late March through May after 25% of the tops have fallen over. Bulbs are dug, hand topped and sacked in burlap for 3-5 days to cure. The sacks are then dumped into bulk trucks and hauled to sheds for grading, re-sacking, loading and shipping. Mechanical harvesting is occasionally practiced. The field equipment is similar to that used in dehydrator onions with a topper, digger and sorter. The major difference is that the sorter contains high speed whirling blades that trim roots and excess tops prior to sacking. Field packing is also being practiced. Burlap sacks of cured onions are sorted, sized and packed on field harvest machines making a packing shed unnecessary. The major sizes packed are jumbo, mediums, and repackers.