

MI-SI-55
GROWING MILO AND OTHER GRAIN SORGHUMS IN THE
WESTERN VALLEYS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Milo is grown occasionally in the Western portion of Riverside County. Although yields of over 4000 pounds per acre are sometimes secured, it is best not to count on more than 2000 to 3000 pounds per acre. Milo has one distinct disadvantage: Because of late harvest and heavy residue crown growth, it is difficult to make a smooth seed bed necessary for alfalfa. And although it can be followed by late-planted grain, heavy nitrogen applications must be given to the grain to offset the nitrogen used by the milo crop and by the rotting milo crowns.

SOILS: Milo will grow on a wide range of soil types. It is tolerant to moderate amounts of alkali. Very salty soil should, however, be avoided.

PLANTING:

Time: Milo can be planted as early as April 1, but is usually planted following a grain crop in late June or early July. Regardless of when planted in the Western portion of the County, it is nearly impossible to direct-combine for harvest before frost - November or December.

Varieties: Double Dwarf 38 milo is the recommended variety. Some growers have had some success with Martin-Combine. This variety has also performed well in test plots. Hegari is the variety generally planted for silage.

Method: Milo can be, and usually is, planted in rows varying from 30 to 40 inches apart. With this method, 3 to 4 pounds of seed will be required per acre. Some growers prefer planting with a grain drill. This requires 15 to 20 pounds of seed per acre. In either case it is best to plant the seed to moisture $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep to pre-irrigated ground.

FERTILIZERS: Since milo is usually grown following grain or alfalfa and since it seems to have the ability to tap nitrogen sources unused by other crops, it does not usually respond to fertilizer. It is probable that continuous planting of milo may require fertilizer. Since this procedure is rare, and not recommended, no information is available on the subject.

IRRIGATION: A pre-irrigation and 2 to 3 crop irrigations will usually suffice on sandy loam or finer textured soils. Sandier soils may require four irrigations. One to two acre feet of water for the crop is usually sufficient.

WEED CONTROL: Cultivation is practiced in row planted crops. Weeds in drilled milo can be controlled using $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds of actual 2,4-D per acre. Permits for spraying 2,4-D are required by the Agricultural Commissioner's office.

HARVESTING: Milo is harvested by direct-combine following a frost. On some years, harvest cannot begin until December 15 unless facilities for drying the crop after harvest are available.

Seigum

WHAT DOES IT COST TO GROW MILO IN THE
WESTERN VALLEYS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY
1955

Based on 2000 pounds per acre

ITEM	SAMPLE COSTS		YOUR COSTS	
	Per Acre	Per Cwt.	Per Acre	Per Cwt.
<u>Land Preparation and Planting</u>				
Pre-irrigate 1x (Labor)	\$ 1.25		. . . . .	. . . . .
Flow 1x	4.50		. . . . .	. . . . .
Disc 1x	2.00		. . . . .	. . . . .
Spike-tooth Harrow 1x	1.25		. . . . .	. . . . .
Plant	1.00		. . . . .	. . . . .
TOTAL PREPARATION AND PLANTING	\$ 10.00	\$.50	. . . . .	. . . . .
<u>Cultural Labor and Field Power</u>				
Irrigation Labor 4x at 1.00	\$ 4.00		. . . . .	. . . . .
Cultivate 3x at 1.50	4.50		. . . . .	. . . . .
TOTAL CULTURAL LABOR & FIELD POWER	\$ 8.50	\$.48	. . . . .	. . . . .
<u>Materials</u>				
Irrigation Water - 2 acres at \$12.00	\$ 24.00		. . . . .	. . . . .
Seed 3# at 12.5¢ per pound . . . . .	.38		. . . . .	. . . . .
(If 15# per acre drilled - \$1.88) . . . . .	. . . . .		. . . . .	. . . . .
TOTAL MATERIALS	\$ 24.38	\$ 1.22	. . . . .	. . . . .
<u>Cash Overhead</u>				
General Expense at 5% of above	\$ 2.19		. . . . .	. . . . .
Taxes	6.00		. . . . .	. . . . .
Insurance	1.50		. . . . .	. . . . .
Miscellaneous	1.00		. . . . .	. . . . .
TOTAL CASH OVERHEAD	\$ 10.69	\$.53	. . . . .	. . . . .
<u>Harvesting</u>				
Harvest at \$6.00 per acre	\$ 6.00		. . . . .	. . . . .
Haul from field, bulk at 2.00 per ton	2.00		. . . . .	. . . . .
TOTAL HARVEST	\$ 8.00	\$.40	. . . . .	. . . . .
TOTAL TO GROW AND HARVEST EXCEPT RENT	\$ 61.57	\$ 3.13	. . . . .	. . . . .
Rent - Estimate your own - Example: 1/2 rent cost to milo minus taxes	\$ 22.00	\$ 1.10	. . . . .	. . . . .
TOTAL ALL COSTS	\$ 83.57	\$ 4.23	. . . . .	. . . . .

Note: The above SAMPLE COSTS are at the contract rate and are in some cases higher than efficient owner-operator costs. To calculate YOUR COSTS use the columns on the right side of the page.