

sugar beets

sample costs

and

production



Agricultural Extension Service
University of California
Imperial County
Court House, El Centro

Cost Data Sheet No. 9
UC Cooperative Extension

SUGAR BEETS--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$1.90 per hour (\$1.50 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, and fringe benefits).

Yield - 20 tons per acre.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
LAND PREPARATION						
Plow or subsoil	8.00					8.00
Disc 2x	2.00					4.00
Build & break borders	1.00					1.00
Flood	2.00	water 9 ac ft.	2.10	1.0	2.00	4.10
Disc 2x	2.00					4.00
Fertilize	1.00	11-48-0 (300#)	14.00			15.00
Fertilize	1.00	100# N(NH ₃)	6.00			7.00
Float	1.00					1.00
List	3.00					3.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						47.10
GROWING PERIOD						
Incorporate & plant	10.00	herbicide	8.00			19.75
		seed 2# raw	1.75			
Cultivate & block	8.00					8.00
Cultivate 2x	3.00					6.00
Fertilize 2x	1.50	80# N (2x)	9.60			12.60
Weed Control				7.8	15.00	15.00
Insect Control 4x	1.50	insecticide	12.00			18.00
Irrigate 12x		water 5 ft.	11.50	6.3	12.00	23.50
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						102.85
HARVEST COSTSX						
Dig	1.30	per ton @ 20 tons per acre				26.00
Haul	1.00	per ton @ 20 tons per acre				20.00
TOTAL HARVEST COST						46.00
Land rent						65.00
Cash overhead 15% of above						39.14
TOTAL COSTS						\$300.09

Cost per ton = \$15.00

GENERAL INFORMATION

The average yields for sugar beets during the last five years have ranged from 17.90 to 22.21 tons per acre. The overall average for the 5 year period was 20.11 tons per acre. The average selling price has ranged from \$13.71 to \$16.72 per ton.

SEED BED PREPARATION

Costs based in the guide line on flat pre-irrigation due to slightly lower costs, tendency towards lowering salinity levels, and usually better soil condition in the seed bed.

SEEDING RATES

A slightly greater amount of seed is generally used in early plantings due to difficulty in getting stands in the extremely hot weather.

PLANTING DATES

The usual planting season begins in September and continues through October.

VARIETIES

A number of varieties are available through sugar companies.

FERTILIZATION

Phosphate--broadcast before listing.

Nitrogen--Apply 1/3 of required amount with phosphate preplant, 1/3 at thinning and final 1/3 before mid-December. Late applications of nitrogen will reduce sugar percentage and purity.

IRRIGATION

Irrigation is by furrows. The crop is "irrigated up" initially and may require "watering back" within four or five days to get a stand. Never allow the crop to wilt or suffer from shortage of water. Ten to 20 irrigations may be required. Last irrigation should be applied at least 30 days prior to harvest.

WEED CONTROL

Most growers are using herbicides for weed control in sugar beets. The preemergence herbicide must be incorporated by a power driven incorporator. Layby herbicides are generally surface applied. Consult Weed Control Recommendations - Imperial County.

PESTS AND DISEASES

A number of insects and diseases may be a problem during the growing season. Growers planting extremely early should exercise all caution against damage by inspecting fields often and carefully. Crickets, flea beetles and army worms normally occur as seedling pests and are especially damaging in early plantings. From January to March the green peach aphid is a primary pest. Spider mites and leafhoppers occur as late season pests. Consult Pest Control Recommendations - Imperial County.

Nematodes are continuing to be a major pest. Growers should carefully clean all machinery moving into beet fields. Crop rotation is the only control presently feasible.

Prepared by
Imperial County
Agricultural Extension Service
Staff
Revised March 1968

Co-operative Extension Work in
Agriculture and Home Economics,
College of Agriculture, University
of California, and United States
Department of Agriculture co-oper-
ating. Distributed in furtherance
of the Acts of Congress of May 8,
and June 30, 1914. George B.
Alcorn, Director, California Agri-
cultural Extension Service.