

market ( onions  
sample costs  
and  
production



Imperial

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

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Cost Data Sheet No. 15

ONIONS (FRESH MARKET)--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$2.00 per hour (\$1.50 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, transportation, supervision and fringe benefits).

Yield - 600 50# sacks per acre.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
<b>LAND PREPARATION</b>						
Plow or subsoil	\$ 8.00					\$ 8.00
Disc 2x	2.00					4.00
Border & break border	1.00					1.00
Flood		water .75 ft @	1.73	1	2.00	3.73
Fertilize	1.00	400# 11-48-0	19.00			20.00
Disc 2x	2.00					4.00
Landplane 2x	2.75					5.50
List	3.00					3.00
<b>TOTAL LAND PREPARATION</b>						<b>49.23</b>
<b>GROWING PERIOD</b>						
Plant	3.00	seed 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ # @				
		7.50	18.75			21.75
Herbicide	3.00		12.00			15.00
Cultivate 4x	3.00					12.00
Fertilize - side-dress 2x	3.00	250# N @ 10¢	25.00			31.00
Hoe 2x				15	30.00	30.00
Irrigate 12x		water 4 acre				
		ft. @ 2.30	9.20	6	12.00	21.20
Pest control 2x	2.50	pesticides	4.50			9.50
<b>TOTAL GROWING PERIOD</b>						<b>140.45</b>
<b>TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS</b>						<b>189.68</b>
<b>HARVEST COSTS</b>						
Dig, top, haul, pack, sacks, selling commission, shed rental (@ 1.06 per 50# sack)						636.00
<b>TOTAL HARVEST COSTS</b>						<b>636.00</b>
Land rent						65.00
Cash overhead 15% of preharvest and land rent costs, plus 2% of harvest costs						50.92
<b>TOTAL ALL COSTS</b>						<b>\$ 941.60</b>

Cost per sack = \$1.57

The Agricultural Commissioner's reports show seasonal average price per ton during the past five years varied from a low of \$50 in 1964 to a high of \$119.78 in 1966.

**YIELDS**

Normal yields range 400 to 800 fifty-pound sacks per acre, although top yields have exceeded 900 sacks.

**PLANTING DATES**

Most acreage is direct seeded from mid October to mid November.

## VARIETIES

Because onions are sensitive to day length and temperatures, only the early maturing, short day types are grown. The most popular hybrids are Yellow Granex, White Granex, and Dessex. The open pollinated types are Texas Early Grano 502 and San Joaquin Yellow Globe, which is a later maturing variety.

## WEED CONTROL

Herbicides are commonly applied preemergence. Consult your Farm Advisor for latest recommendations.

## SOILS

Medium textured sandy loams are the most desirable. Being shallow rooted, onions need a friable soil in which to easily expand and one which retains moisture about the roots especially after cultivation. Avoid salty, hard, and weed-infested soils.

## IRRIGATION

Until two or three weeks before intended harvest, onions should never suffer for lack of water. Weather and soil conditions determine the number of irrigations. Seven to 12 times are normal.

## FERTILIZERS

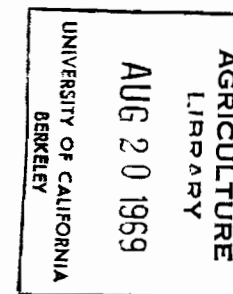
Generally, between 200 and 250 lbs. of actual nitrogen per acre and 144 to 200 lbs. of phosphate are applied. All phosphate and 33 to 50 lbs. of nitrogen are usually broadcast before listing followed by two sidedressings of nitrogen.

## PESTS AND DISEASES

Mites, thrips, armyworms, leaf-miners, maggots, downy mildew and nematodes may be a problem. Pink root is a soil-borne disease which may attack the crop.

## HARVESTING

Harvesting takes place from late March through early May after approximately 25% of the tops have fallen over. Bulbs are dug, hand topped and rooted, sacked and hauled to sheds for grading, sacking, loading and shipping. During storage adequate ventilation is important.



Prepared by  
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