

SEED CROP NOTES

April 6, 1972

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ALFALFA SEED YIELD SUMMARY 1950-71

The average yield of alfalfa seed per acre in Fresno County has been fairly consistent since it became a major crop 21 years ago in this area.

1952 was the highest yielding crop on a per acre basis with a 785 pound average. The average production during most of these years has been between 500 and 600 pounds.

During the five year period from 1959 through 1963, heavy populations of alfalfa seed chalcid adversely affected the yields in Fresno County.

The very wet spring of 1969 caused weed problems and late vegetative growth which contributed to a lower than normal yield that year. Outside of these six years, there does not seem to be a common major problem running through the data.

The acreage of seed alfalfa and yields per acre are listed below for Fresno County from 1950 through 1971. The source of this information was the Agricultural Commissioner's reports. The 1971 figures are approximate at this time.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>YIELD AVE. LBS./ACRE</u>	<u>TOTAL ACRES IN COUNTY</u>
1971	500 496	60,500 64,068
1970	504	60,686
1969	398	50,631
1968	620	44,361
1967	530	47,044
1966	560	44,202
1965	589	40,615
1964	570	34,840
1963	471	33,642
1962	320	40,697

YIELD AVE.

LBS./ACRE

TOTAL ACRES

IN COUNTY

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>YIELD AVE. LBS./ACRE</u>	<u>TOTAL ACRES IN COUNTY</u>
1961	392	58,769
1960	387	68,446
1959	386	68,415
1958	510	64,560
1957	589	60,228
1956	518	48,282
1955	512	35,732
1954	621	19,914
1953	613	15,656
1952	785	10,248
1951	568	8,228
1950	466	6,280

WEED SEED AND DIRT "CLEANOUT" PROBLEMS

Now is the time when growers can do something about reducing the dirt and weed seeds in the alfalfa seed harvest bin next fall.

Mature fields that have weeds within the rows should be mechanically worked before April 20th. Most of the mustard and pigweed has germinated by this time. If pre-emergence herbicides were not used last winter, fields should be examined for these weeds at this time.

After seed fields have been disced or cultivated the depth of the irrigation furrow should be no deeper than 4" from the top of the plant bed to the bottom of the furrow.

It may be necessary to roll some fields with a culti-pac to knock clods off of the plant bed. If this is not done, the harvester will pick up excess dirt during the harvest. If the harvester cutter bar is lifted to avoid picking up dirt, this results in leaving portions of plants lodged in the furrow which contributes to

lost yield and volunteer alfalfa problems the following year.

Let's take care of our weed and dirt clean-out problems now as best we can.

HONEY BEE COLONY STRENGTH CERTIFICATION

State legislation which was enacted on August 12, 1970 now makes it possible for alfalfa seed growers to request inspection and certification of honey bee colony strength. These requests should be directed to the Agricultural Commissioner's Office in Fresno. A reasonable fee to cover the cost of inspection and certification has been established by the county Board of Supervisors. The party requesting the inspection and certification shall pay for the service.

I suggest that growers and beekeepers develop a written pollination contract to assist in clear communications. Copies of sample pollination contracts are available at this office upon request.

ALTERNATE STRIP IRRIGATION REMINDER

Seed growers interested in trying the irrigation management method described in the March 3rd issue of Seed Crop Notes should begin setting up the alternate strips right after clip back with their first irrigation. This will allow the alternate stress pattern to be established before full bloom is reached.

I will be happy to discuss this further with interested growers.

CERTIFIED SEED FEES

The following is a schedule of fees determined by the California Crop Improvement Association for growers of certified seed. Please keep these in mind when making application through this office for certification.

Membership Fee \$1.00
(This is an annual fee for each grower and processor making application.)

Application Fee..... \$0.25
per acre
(Minimum \$10.00 per grower)

Applications with tags from the seed planted and fees are to be turned into this

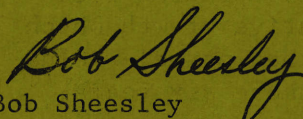
office prior to the deadline dates set for each crop.

Applications submitted after the deadline dates will be accepted with payment of a late filing fee (50¢ per acre instead of 25¢ per acre). The acceptance of applications after the deadline date is always contingent on whether field inspection can still be done accurately by the California Crop Improvement Association.

Following are the deadline dates for certified seed applications:

Alfalfa	June 1
Beans	July 15
Red and Ladino Clover	June 1
Flax	April 1
Turf Grass	April 1
Rice	July 15
Safflower	April 1
Sorghum	July 15
Trefoil	June 1
Grain (Barley, Oats, Rye, and Wheat)	April 1

Sincerely,


Bob Sheesley
Farm Advisor