

A Seed Crop Means Double Income On

Lettuce

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Do you want to increase lettuce profits? Seed production may be your answer!

Many growers may have thought, "I only wish there were some way that my well-grown crop, the cleanly cultivated land and the residual fertilizer in the soil could be used for additional income!"

The production cost for head lettuce in Arizona is high. According to figures assembled by Ray L. Milne, an assistant county agricultural agent, the cost of producing and preparing lettuce for shipment averages \$550 to \$620 per acre. Unless selling prices remain high, there is often only a low return for time and money invested.

Offers Excellent Income

Gross income for well grown lettuce seed has been estimated conservatively at \$900 per acre. Besides the expense of growing the head crop, some additional costs are necessary for seed production. These costs will average \$400 per acre. By obtaining income from both the head crop and a seed crop from the same field, extra profits are possible and may be well worth the extra cultural and handling operations necessary for seed production.

Remember, you can first harvest and sell the head crop. Then, after selling the head crop, you can carry the field on to seed production. To do this, you must make plans in advance and observe several precautions. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do I have a buyer for the seed? A good arrangement may be to contract with a large seed company, although seed can be sold independently.



A well-trained roguing crew removes off-type plants just before heads are harvested.

2. Can I leave the land in lettuce for an extra four to six months? Depending somewhat upon planting date, land for lettuce seed production will be tied up for 10 to 12 months.

3. Can my fields used for seed production be isolated? For certified seed under the Arizona program, fields producing seed must be separated from each other by 330 feet or more. For non-certified seed, no requirements are set, but this 20-rod space is recommended.

Ask Your County Agent

4. Do I wish to grow a certified seed crop? If so, consult your county agent about regulations and application forms *before planting the seed*. The rules are not hard to follow and there is a minimum of red tape. You may obtain assistance and advice from the State Extension Service, the Crop Improvement Association, and University of Arizona at every step of the program. Certified seed commands a premium price.

5. Can I spare a labor crew for roguing the field just prior to harvest? Off-type plants must be removed before the head crop is cut. This is important in the production of high quality seed. Since roguing nearly coincides with harvesting, special arrangements should be made for labor.

New Bulletin Soon

6. Can my field supervisors train a roguing crew adequately? Most field men are specialists and are familiar with the lettuce varieties. They know which characteristics are desirable in lettuce and usually are able to recognize poor types in the field. To help transmit this knowledge to a labor crew and to serve as a roguing guide and roguing check list, the University of Arizona is preparing a bulletin which will be ready soon. Check with your county agent.

The bulletin will cover nearly all the steps in producing good lettuce seed. In addition to help in answering questions like those above, the publication will

cover fertilization, insect control, diseases, harvesting, etc. A special section with many pictures is devoted to the roguing process. The photos will have English and Spanish captions so they can be used with labor crews. The lettuce seed certification program in Arizona is outlined step by step.

So here is a possibility to think about—a chance to supplement income from your lettuce by making it produce a second crop.

Since Lincoln's Day

"It is now 94 years since Abraham Lincoln's administration set up the Land Grant College System. Through cooperation at the local, state and federal levels, and with the generous assistance of private persons, the Land Grant College system has helped lift our agricultural production per worker to almost five times the level that prevailed when the system began. More agricultural progress has occurred since the Land Grant Colleges were established than in all the previous years since Biblical times. This system insisted that education could be applied as well as academic. It elevated agriculture and the mechanic arts to a new dignity. It broke down the Old World legacy of a caste system based on vocational calling and educational attainment."—Ezra Taft Benson, Secretary of Agriculture.

Plastic Silo Cover

A new all-weather polyethylene film is now being produced for covering trench silos, according to Virginia Polytechnic Institute. It comes in sheets, and can be placed on the silo like shingles with about a nine-inch overlap. When feeding, one sheet is removed at a time and saved for reuse. If properly applied, they seal off the ensilage from air and prevent wasteful leaching of nutrients.