

Sugar Beets Featured at Yuma Field Day



Sugar beets drew the spotlight at the fall field day at The University of Arizona Yuma Branch Experiment Station, causing visitors to ask about the future of this crop in Arizona.

Giant beets, which had been in the ground since June, were pulled up for exhibit. Visitors also saw fields where sugar beets are planted year around, on a given date each month.

Arizona has asked for a permanent allotment of at least 65,000 tons of sugar beets. This request was presented in Washington, D. C., by Floyd Smith of Phoenix, chairman of the governor's committee on sugar beets. Dr. Harold Myers, dean, U of A Agriculture College, also

assisted with technical information at these hearings. Currently, the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture is studying the matter.

Sugar beets have been grown successfully in Cochise, Graham, Maricopa and Yuma counties, according to U of A agronomists. For example, in Yuma last year sugar beets yielded on the average 32.9 tons an acre.

"We've had average yields over the years of 33 tons per acre from four varieties of sugar beets. Some plots produced up to 40 tons," explained Dr. Ernest Jackson, U of A associate agronomist, Yuma.

"Sugar content of the beets," Jackson added, "has averaged 19 per cent, which

is a little higher than in California's Imperial Valley." The sugar beets produced at Yuma at present are used in livestock feeding tests.

Recommendations about planting and fertilizing sugar beets are quite well worked out, Jackson said. The crop usually is dusted once each year with DDT to control leafhoppers. However, damage to the beets from leafhoppers has been of minor importance.

"The US-H2 variety has produced our highest yields, ranging from 22.9 tons with no nitrogen fertilization to over 34 tons per acre when 275 pounds of nitrogen was applied," Jackson said.