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Wheat - Cost of prod. - O.S.

WHEAT COSTS - INTERIM REPORT OF GROWING COSTS. (1946 Crop)

General

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Usually a single field per farm was costed, but in a few cases two fields were recorded. The farms concerned were all in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire: mainly concentrated in three areas, the Isle of Axholme, the Market Harborough District and on the arable land to the east and north-east of Louth. It will be noticed that these three areas are all good land and the costs are not intended to be taken as representative of the counties as a whole.

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Method of Compilation

A field record was kept for each costed field on which all operations were recorded and additional expenses such as seed, artificials and twine. The preceding crops were noted, and the manuring of these crops and the actual or estimated yield where this was possible. The detailed calculations were made on the following basis:-

Direct Costs: Manual Labour was taken at cost. Ordinary time for men was taken as 1/7d. per hour before the wage increase and 1/10d. since. These figures take into account the fact that the worker has bank holidays and other holidays with full pay, and the employer pays half of the national health and unemployment insurance contributions. Overtime was taken at standard rates. Women, juveniles and workers employed at higher than the minimum weekly wage were averaged at their appropriate hourly rates. Piecework and contract work were taken at cost. Horse labour was taken at a flat rate of 10d. per working hour and tractors at 3/-d. and 4/6d. per hour for wheeled tractors and tracklayers respectively. Seed, Artificials and Binder Twine were charged at the cost on the farm. "Rent etc." was the actual rent payable plus the drainage rate where this applied. Rental values were taken in relation to the actual rents being paid on similar land and were usually below the rent at which the land could have been let in 1946. Farmyard manure was charged at 20/-d. per ton but allowances were made for manurial residues (detailed below).

Indirect Costs and Credits (a) A charge for artificials applied to preceding crops was made in accordance with the revised table published in "Agriculture" July 1946, and credits were made to the wheat for residues from these applications and from applications made to the wheat which would benefit succeeding crops. (b) Farmyard manure was valued at 20/-d. per ton and treated in a similar way to artificials on the assumption

that the benefit would last four years, the net amount chargeable to the crops being:-

1st Crop	10/-d.
2nd "	5/-d.
3rd "	2/6d.
4th "	2/6d.

(c) Cultural Residues: This item is intended to cover the estimated benefits which certain crops have on the condition and fertility of the soil. It includes the operations saved in the case of wheat following potatoes, the cleaning effect of root crops in general, and the manurial benefits from leguminous crops and from folding of fodder crops whereby manurial residues are returned directly to the land. Up to three pounds per acre has been charged to the wheat under this heading according to the preceding crop and other circumstances. No credit has been given to wheat under this heading except where a bare fallow has preceded the wheat. In this case the cost of the fallow has been divided over three years in the proportion one-half: one-third: one-sixth.

Costs not included in Summary

All labour in stacking and thatching has been included where this was done but no charge has been made for straw or pegs. No attempt has been made to estimate either overhead costs or charges for implements other than tractors. Hedging, ditching and draining have been omitted with the exception of drainage rates. It should also be noted that in a season such as 1946 a considerable part of the labour force may be virtually making time as a result of sudden changes in the weather and part of the cost of such labour might properly be regarded as an additional cost chargeable to the wheat.

Threshing Costs and Yields

Threshing costs will be included in the final report together with final figures for yields. A proportion of the yield figures are estimates which will be revised as the threshing results come in.

A. J. WYNNE.

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