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Sweet Corn Planning Budget

Using this budget, farmers can estimate the costs and returns for raising sweet corn. Table 1 presents estimates for Missouri based on price forecasts in January 2025. Production is calculated for 1 acre with overhead irrigation. Capital investments and a sensitivity analysis are summarized in Tables 2 and 3. Use the "Your estimate" column to plan your sweet corn operation's costs and returns.

Table 1. Missouri sweet corn budget.

	Unit	Quantity	Price per unit	Dollars per acre	Your estimate
Income					
Sweet corn	dozen ears	1,800	2.77	4,986.00	
Total income				4,986.00	
Operating costs					
Seed	pound	12.5	12.57	157.13	
Fertilizer and lime	each	345.5	0.49	170.50	
Herbicide	cubic yard	4	6.75	27.00	
Insecticide	box	55.8	3.62	201.91	
Packaging	total	360	1.83	658.80	
Labor	feet	67	18.00	1,206.00	
Machinery fuel/repair/maintenance	each			84.62	
Irrigation fuel and oil	each	8	4.89	39.12	
Irrigation repairs/maintenance	hour	1	10.50	10.50	
Marketing	each	4,986	10.00	498.60	
Interest on operating capital	percent of sales	6	7.75	118.35	
Miscellaneous	total			12.56	
Total operating costs				3,172.52	
Ownership costs					
Land	acre			185.00	
Machinery	acre			41.39	
Irrigation system	acre			126.50	
Total ownership costs				352.89	
Total costs				3,525.41	
Income over operating costs				**1,813.48**	
Income over total costs				**1,460.59**	

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

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Table 2. Capital machinery investments used in Missouri sweet corn budget.

Item	Power unit	Passes	Labor (hours per pass)	Operating costs (dollars per pass)	Ownership costs (dollars per pass)
Chisel plow (9-foot)	2WD 75 hp	1	0.22	6.12	2.76
Disk harrow (10-foot)	2WD 75 hp	2	0.20	12.02	3.68
Disk bed + app fert (4-row)	2WD 75 hp	1	0.14	3.68	1.69
Cultivate (4-row)	2WD 75 hp	1	0.19	5.41	2.58
Planter – vacuum (4-row)	2WD 75 hp	1	0.19	5.41	2.58
Cultivate + app herb (4-row)	2WD 75 hp	1	0.19	5.35	2.53
Cultivate + sidedress (4-row)	2WD 75 hp	2	0.19	10.31	6.81
Sprayer 300–450 gallon (60-foot)	Self-propelled	12	0.02	1.01	0.63
Trailer – vegetables (16-foot)	2WD 75 hp	1	0.09	1.87	0.71
Total cost			**2.04**	**84.62**	**41.39**

Table 3 provides annual profitability expectations (returns over total costs) under varying yield and price scenarios in full production and holding all costs constant.

Table 3. Sensitivity analysis for Missouri sweet corn budget, income over total costs (dollars).

Percent change	Sale price per dozen ears	Yield per acre (dozen ears)						
		1,260	1,440	1,620	1,800	1,980	2,160	2,340
15% less	2.35	–559	–135	289	713	1,136	1,560	1,984
10% less	2.49	–384	65	513	962	1,411	1,859	2,308
5% less	2.63	–210	264	738	1,211	1,685	2,159	2,632
Base level	2.77	–35	463	962	1,461	1,959	2,458	2,956
5% more	2.91	139	663	1,186	1,710	2,233	2,757	3,280
10% more	3.05	314	862	1,411	1,959	2,508	3,056	3,605
15% more	3.19	488	1,062	1,635	2,208	2,782	3,355	3,929

The budget presented here aggregates costs for some inputs. Farmers can find additional details and customize this budget to match their own operation by using the Sweet Corn Planning Budget workbook (XLSX) (extension .missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/Pro/AgBusinessPolicyExtension/Docs/sweetcorn-budget.xlsx).

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