Web Soil Survey

https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov
Shooting Star CSA’s Area of Influence
How Far Can My Farm Be From Markets?

• How many miles away is your field from market?

• How long does it take you to make the drive?

• How many times per week are you delivering to market?

• When are you planning to make the drive?

Hidden Costs
Example: I have a market 100 miles away

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{# of miles per trip} & \times \text{cost of gas per mile} \\
+ & \\
\text{# of miles per trip} & \times \text{cost of maintenance per mile} \\
+ & \\
\text{# of hours per trip} & \times \text{cost per hour of driver} \\
\times & \\
\text{# of trips per year} & \\
+ & \\
\text{annual cost of auto insurance} & \\
+ & \\
\text{annual cost of delivery truck/van} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

= Cost of Transportation
Example: I have a market 100 miles away

**Inputs:**

Gas = $41/trip  
Maintenance = $50/trip  
Labor = $85/trip  
Total operating cost per trip = $176  
Trips = 45  
Annual van operating costs = $7,920  
Van cost = $3,800  
Auto insurance = $1,200
Example (cont.): I have a market 100 miles away

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{# of miles per trip} & \times \text{cost of gas per mile} \\
+ \quad & \\
\text{# of miles per trip} & \times \text{cost of maintenance per mile} \\
+ \quad & \\
\text{# of hours per trip} & \times \text{cost per hour of driver} \\
& \times \\
\text{# of trips per year} & \\
+ \quad & \\
\text{annual cost of auto insurance} & \\
+ \quad & \\
\text{annual cost of delivery truck/van} & \\
\hline
= \text{Cost of Transportation} & = \$12,290
\end{align*}
\]
What’s Next?

Time to knock on doors!

Don’t worry about that shotgun!

Keep markets in mind!

Get to know irrigation district managers
You Have Found Your Valley!

Example
You have been searching for a couple of weeks and you found a region that is close to a market, is a part of an irrigation district, and it looks like there are a few empty plots in the area. What do you do?
You Have Found Your Valley!

**STEP 1**
Knock on doors, introduce yourself, be clear of your intentions but do not make any promises. Ask to conduct soil and water analysis, it will show that you are serious about what you do. Ask about the history of the land and when it was last farmed.

**STEP 2**
Research. Ask neighbors about the property and its owners—there is usually plenty of gossip to go around.

**STEP 3**
Prepare a lease agreement (Farmlink can help with this). Anything worth being said should be in writing!

**STEP 4**
Start farming!!!
Examples of Irrigation Districts

South San Joaquin Irrigation District

Solano Irrigation District

Imperial Irrigation District

Irrigation district employees know the land, what is being used, what is fallow, and who owns the land.
Conclusion/Takeaways

• Markets decide everything, so pay attention to them.

• Utilize the web soil survey website
  • https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov

• Knock on doors and get face to face time with landowners!

• Calculate your transportation costs!

• Irrigation districts employees are a great resource. They have high level knowledge of the land you are assessing.
Questions?

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