

Productive Conservation on Working Lands

What does it cost to establish PCWL Crops?

One of the first questions asked when discussing new or alternative crops almost always has to do with economics. How much does it cost to plant and how much can I earn from it? Here we will look at the first part, crop establishment cost. While the upfront establishment cost can certainly be quite expensive, remember these crops are generally planted for 10 or more years. By spreading the costs of establishment over 10 years we start to see these crops as quite economical to establish. These costs are averages from PCWL Crop establishment projects across the state of Minnesota.

There was a significant difference in land costs depending on area of the state. There were many more native grass projects being established in the northern half of Minnesota where land costs are relatively low. Yet we found more Hazelnut projects were established on smaller acreages in the southern half where land costs were often more than double that of the northern projects. Many of the native grass projects are being established for dual purposes of biomass and seed harvest. This is reflected in the marketing and processing costs.

Average costs for establishing native grasses for seed or biomass	
Item	Average \$/Acre
Land Rent- \$/yr	70.63
Soil Prep	23.56
Weed Control	36.63
Seed/plant material	119.89
Planting	25.00
Maintenance	27.22
Harvest	34.38
Processing	136.71
Other	5.00
Marketing	5.00
Fertilizer	35.00
	\$519.01

Average costs for establishing Hybrid Hazelnut bushes	
Item	Average \$/Acre
Land Rent- \$/yr	150
Soil Prep	29.75
Weed Control	114
Seed/plant material	121
Planting	31.25
Maintenance	134.5
Harvest	
Processing	
Other	
Marketing	
Fertilizer	
	\$580.50

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