

Custom Rates for Colorado Farms & Ranches in 2014

Colorado State University Extension annually conducts a survey of custom rates charged for various crop and livestock operations and lease arrangements in Colorado. Information is collected from agricultural producers, land owners and managers, lenders, agricultural consultants, machine operators, and Extension agents.

The survey results are reported by region:

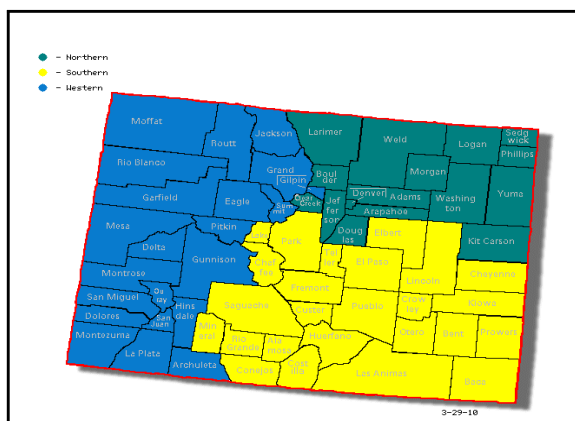
- Northern – generally those counties north of I-70 and east of the Rocky Mountains),
- Southern – generally, the area south of I-70 and includes the San Luis Valley, and
- Western – generally those counties west of the mountains.

variations in rates charged. The reported rates do not necessarily measure the full economic cost of performing the specified work.

A possible additional charge (not reflected in this publication) associated with a custom operation is a “mileage fee”. A custom operator, veterinarian, or other provider may have a per mileage rate for transporting equipment between fields or traveling to/from a work site.

The rates reported herein are not recommended rates. They simply reflect the range of rates as reported by those individuals surveyed. Some reported rates may seem unusually low or high which is due to very few respondents and/or the operation is not widely performed. The information in this report should be used only as a guide.

The authors would like to thank everyone who contributed to the 2014 custom rates survey. It is hoped that this “custom rates” report is beneficial to making informed decision.



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Reported rates represent a variety of working conditions, machine and equipment sizes, and farm and ranch operations. Field conditions, field size, terrain, and location also account for some

This report, decision tools, and other information pertaining to myriad farm and ranch management issues are available at the ABM web site: www.coopext.colostate.edu/ABM/.

2014 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Tillage				
Stalk Shredding	\$/acre	8.00 – 10.00	8.00 – 14.00	12.00 – 14.00
Plow – Moldboard	\$/acre	14.00 – 16.00	22.00 – 27.00	12.00 – 25.00
Plow – Deep Chisel (irrigated)	\$/acre	10.00 – 16.00	18.00 – 20.00	23.00 – 30.00
Plow – Deep Chisel (dryland)	\$/acre	10.00 – 16.00	8.00 – 16.00	12.00 – 25.00
Plow – Surface Chisel (irrigated)	\$/acre	12.00 – 16.00	8.00 – 11.00	12.00 – 25.00
Plow – Surface Chisel (dryland)	\$/acre	10.00 – 16.00	8.00 – 11.00	12.00 – 20.00
Plow – Sweep	\$/acre	10.00 – 16.00	9.00 – 15.00	12.00 – 20.00
Disk (irrigated)	\$/acre	9.00 – 16.00	10.00 – 12.00	15.00 – 25.00
Disk (dryland)	\$/acre	9.00 – 16.00	10.00 – 12.00	12.00 – 20.00
Mulching	\$/acre	14.00 – 16.00	8.00 – 10.00	12.00 – 20.00
Harrow – Spring Tooth	\$/acre	14.00 – 16.00	8.00 – 13.00	12.00 – 20.00
Cultivating – Field	\$/acre	9.00 – 16.00	10.00 – 12.00	15.00 – 20.00
Cultivating – Bedding	\$/acre	10.00 – 16.00	8.00 – 13.00	15.00 – 20.00
Rod Weeder	\$/acre	7.00 – 10.00	7.00 – 13.00	12.00 – 20.00
Rotary Hoe	\$/acre	6.00 – 10.00	7.00 – 13.00	10.00 – 20.00
Land Leveling/Floating	\$/acre	9.00 – 12.00	18.00 – 20.00	18.00 – 20.00
Furrowing	\$/acre	10.00 – 18.00	18.00 – 20.00	12.00 – 18.00
Strip Till (tillage only)	\$/acre	10.00 – 25.00	15.00 – 20.00	15.00 – 20.00

Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Planting (does not include seeds and transplants)				
Seed Cleaning	\$/bushel	0.75 – 0.80	0.75 – 1.00	0.80 – 1.00
Plant – Drill	\$/acre	11.00 – 18.00	12.00 – 14.00	10.00 – 15.00
Plant – Drill (30-inch spacing)	\$/acre	14.00 – 20.00	12.00 – 14.00	10.00 – 15.00
Plant – Air Seeder	\$/acre	11.00 – 20.00	12.00 – 16.00	15.00 – 18.00
Plant – Strip Till (single operation)	\$/acre	12.00 – 30.00	11.00 – 16.00	15.00 – 20.00
Plant – No Till	\$/acre	11.00 – 18.00	15.00 – 16.00	15.00 – 25.00

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Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Chemical and Fertilizer Application (does not include material)				
Dry Fertilizer	\$/acre	5.00 – 7.00	5.00 – 7.00	6.00 – 10.00
Liquid Fertilizer	\$/acre	4.00 – 7.00	5.00 – 7.50	6.00 – 12.00
Anhydrous Ammonia	\$/acre	6.00 – 12.00	7.00 – 12.00	8.00 – 15.00
Anhydrous Ammonia with Sweep	\$/acre	7.00 – 14.00	7.00 – 15.00	8.00 – 20.00
Aerial Spraying	\$/acre	6.00 – 7.00	6.50 – 8.00	6.50 – 10.00
Boom Sprayer	\$/acre	5.00 – 7.00	5.00 – 12.00	5.00 – 10.00
Side-Dress	\$/acre	5.00 – 7.00	5.00 – 12.00	10.00 – 12.00

Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Hay and Silage Harvesting				
Silage Chopping & Hauling	\$/acre	45.00 – 60.00	40.00 – 70.00	50.00 – 90.00
Hay – Mowing	\$/acre	10.00 – 14.00	14.00 – 20.00	15.00 – 20.00
Hay – Swathing	\$/acre	12.00 – 16.00	8.00 – 15.00	15.00 – 25.00
Hay – Raking	\$/acre	3.00 – 5.00	4.00 – 5.00	5.00 – 10.00
Baling – Small Square Bales	\$/bale	0.65 – 1.20	0.50 – 1.35	0.50 – 1.50
Baling – 3x3x8 or 4x4x8 Bales	\$/bale	10.00 – 20.00	8.00 – 18.00	8.00 – 20.00
Baling – Round Bales	\$/bale	10.00 – 13.00	8.00 – 10.00	5.00 – 10.00
Loading/Stacking – Sm Sq Bales	\$/bale	0.40 – 0.60	0.45 – 2.50	0.50 – 1.00
Hauling – Small Square Bales	\$/bale	0.40 – 0.60	0.55 – 1.00	1.00 – 2.50
Hauling – Large Square Bales	\$/bale	9.00 – 12.00	8.00 – 10.00	n/a
Hauling – Round Bales	\$/bale	9.00 – 12.00	8.00 – 10.00	n/a
Tub Grinding	\$/ton	12.00 – 18.00	12.00 – 15.00	12.00 – 16.00

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Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Grain Harvesting In some locales there is both a fixed rate per acre and a variable rate per bushel charged for combining. For example, the costs for harvesting dryland wheat may be known as "23-23-23" or "3 23s" -- \$23 per acre plus \$0.23 for each bushel harvested in excess of 20 bushels per acre plus \$0.23 per bushel for hauling.				
Combine – Corn/Sorghum (irrigated)	\$/acre \$/bushel	27.00 – 30.00 0.20 – 0.25	18.00 – 28.00 0.18 – 0.20	20.00 – 40.00 0.22 – 0.25
Combine – Corn/Sorghum (dryland)	\$/acre \$/bushel	20.00 – 30.00 0.20 – 0.25	18.00 – 24.00 0.18 – 0.24	20.00 – 40.00 0.22 – 0.25
Combine – Small Grains (irrigated)	\$/acre \$/bushel	24.00 – 30.00 0.20 – 0.25	18.00 – 24.00 0.18 – 0.24	20.00 – 40.00 0.22 – 0.25
Combine – Small Grains (dryland)	\$/acre \$/bushel	20.00 – 30.00 0.12 – 0.25	18.00 – 24.00 0.18 – 0.24	20.00 – 40.00 0.22 – 0.25
Combine – Oil Seeds, Soybeans, Dry Beans	\$/acre	40.00 – 55.00	n/a	n/a
Swath – Small Grains	\$/acre	12.00 – 15.00	n/a	15.00 – 23.00
Hauling - Grains	\$/bushel	0.20 – 0.28	0.18 – 0.24	0.20 – 0.30

Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Labor				
Hand Labors	\$/hour	9.00 – 14.00	9.00 – 20.00	8.00 – 20.00
Tractor Drivers	\$/hour	12.00 – 25.00	10.00 – 15.00	8.00 – 15.00
Irrigators				
Experienced	\$/hour	8.00 – 16.00	12.00 – 15.00	12.50 – 20.00
Less Experienced	\$/hour	8.00 – 10.00	8.00 – 10.00	7.50 – 10.00
Full Time (year round) Employees	\$/month	2,500 – 3,200	3,200 – 5,200	3,000 – 4,000
Foreman	\$/month	2,500 – 3,500	1,700 – 3,000	3,000 – 5,000
Managers	\$/month	2,500 – 4,500	4,000 – 5,000	3,000 – 5,000

Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Livestock Handling				
Sheep - Shearing	\$/head	n/a	4.00 – 5.00	2.00 – 10.00
Sheep – Fertility Testing Rams	\$/head	20.00 – 45.00	20.00 – 25.00	30.00 – 32.00
Sheep – Ultrasound Diagnosis	\$/head	3.00 – 4.00	3.00 – 5.00	3.00 – 8.00
Beef – Fertility Testing Bulls	\$/head	25.00 – 30.00	25.00 – 40.00	25.00 – 45.00
Beef – Pregnancy Testing Cows	\$/head	2.00 – 4.00	3.00 – 4.00	2.50 – 5.00
Horses – Shoeing (with shoes)	\$/head	80.00 – 100.00	85.00 – 100.00	85.00 – 100.00
Horses – Hoof Trimming	\$/head	40.00 – 65.00	45.00 – 65.00	35.00 – 75.00
Livestock Hauling	\$/Loaded mile	4.25 – 6.00	2.00 – 4.50	4.00 – 5.00
Fence Building (4 wires)	\$/mile	5,000 – 9,300	5,000 – 9,300	8,000 – 12,000

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Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Livestock Land Rental Arrangements				
Sheep – Grazing All Pasture Types	\$/head/day	n/a	n/a	0.15 – 0.30
Beef Cows – Grazing				
Native Range	\$/head/month	11.00 – 20.00	15.00 – 25.00	19.00 – 30.00
Irrigated Pasture	\$/head/month	18.00 – 20.00	18.00 – 20.00	20.00 – 30.00
Wheat Pasture	\$/head/month	15.00 – 22.00	18.00 – 20.00	n/a
Corn/Milo Stalks	\$/head/month	15.00 – 30.00	14.00 – 21.00	n/a
Yearling Cattle – Grazing				
All Pasture Types	\$/head/month	10.00 – 15.00	12.00 – 21.00	15.00 – 30.00
All Pasture Types	\$/head/day	0.25 – 0.90	0.40 – 0.90	0.60 – 0.80

Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Crop Land Cash Rents				
Irrigated Land				
Corn/Sorghum	\$/acre	200 – 300	275 – 325	120 – 250
Small Grains	\$/acre	200 – 300	145 – 325	120 – 250
Alfalfa	\$/acre	200 – 250	200 – 300	120 – 250
Sugar Beets	\$/acre	250 – 350	n/a	n/a
Non-Irrigated Land (Dryland)				
Corn/Sorghum	\$/acre	45 – 50	45 – 50	20 – 50
Small Grains	\$/acre	45 – 50	45 – 50	20 – 50
Oil Seed and Millet	\$/acre	45 – 50	45 – 50	20 – 50
Alfalfa	\$/acre	160 – 190	170 – 225	120 – 190

Activity	Basis For Charge	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Crop Land Share Rents The first number represents the tenant's share and the second number represents the landowner's share of production and expenses.				
Irrigated Land				
Corn/Sorghum		67% - 33%	67% - 33%	67% - 33%
Small Grains		75% - 25%	67% - 33%	75% - 25%
Alfalfa		50% - 50%	50% - 50%	60% - 40%
Sugar Beets		75% - 25%	75% - 25%	n/a
Non-Irrigated Land (Dryland)				
Corn/Sorghum		67% - 33%	67% - 33%	67% - 33%
Small Grains		75% - 25%	75% - 25%	67% - 33%
Oil Seed and Millet		75% - 25%	75% - 25%	75% - 25%
Alfalfa		50% - 50%	50% - 50%	60% - 40%