

2008 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

Agriculture &

Business

Management Notes ...

Custom Rates for Colorado Farms & Ranches in 2008

Colorado State University Extension conducts an annual survey of agricultural producers, land owners and managers, lenders, agricultural consultants, machine operators, and Extension agents throughout Colorado. The results of this survey are a report of “custom rates” charged for various crop and livestock operations.

The rates reported in this report are not recommended rates, but simply indicate rates currently being charged throughout Colorado. Reported rates represent a variety of working conditions, machine and equipment sizes, and farm and ranch operations.

Also, the rates charged do not necessarily measure the full economic cost of performing the work specified. Some custom operators may charge only for the costs of fuel and labor. Others may charge for all costs including depreciation on equipment and allowance for risk. Field conditions, such as size, terrain, and location, may also account for variations in rates charged.

The reported rates reflect only the survey results and should be used only as a guide.

Survey results are reported according to three general geographic regions within Colorado. “Southeast” is the southeastern quadrant of the state, generally south of I-70 and east of the Continental Divide. “Northeast” is the northeastern quadrant of the state, generally north of I-70 and east of the Rocky Mountains. “Western, NW-Mtn, & SW” includes all of western Colorado. Insufficient data was reported for the San Luis Valley, so no custom rates are listed in this report.

Reported charges were used to determine a range of custom rate charges. “Most common” refers to the custom rate reported most often. “n/a” indicates that no information was available for that particular activity or the information was reported by a single source.

Custom rates in 2008 generally increased over those charged in 2007. For many custom hire activities, the reported rates charged in 2008 were \$2.00 higher than those reported in 2007. The primary reason for the increase was the higher prices operators paid for fuel. In some cases, custom operators and farmers reported that a “fuel charge” was charged in addition to the reported custom rate.

The authors would like to thank everyone who contributed to the custom rates survey and this report.

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2008 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Tillage				
Stalk Shredding Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 12.00 10.00	12.00 - 14.00 12.00	8.00 - 9.00 8.00
Plow - Moldboard Range Most Common	\$/acre	16.00 - 20.00 18.00	22.00 - 35.00 30.00	14.00 - 15.50 15.00
Plow - Deep Chisel (Irrigated) Range Most Common	\$/acre	18.00 - 23.00 20.00	22.00 - 25.00 22.00	18.50 - 20.00 20.00
Plow - Deep Chisel (Dryland) Range Most Common	\$/acre	12.00 - 22.00 15.00	15.00 - 25.00 20.00	18.50 - 20.00 20.00
Plow - Surface Chisel (Irrigated) Range Most Common	\$/acre	12.00 - 15.00 12.00	12.00 - 20.00 12.00	9.50 - 12.00 12.00
Plow - Surface Chisel (Dryland) Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 15.00 12.50	12.00 - 20.00 12.00	9.50 - 12.00 12.00
Plow - One Way Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	12.00 - 20.00 12.00	13.50 - 15.50 14.00
Plow - Sweep Range Most Common	\$/acre	8.00 - 10.00 9.00	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	8.00 - 12.00 12.00
Disk (Irrigated) Range Most Common	\$/acre	9.00 - 12.00 9.00	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	9.00 - 10.25 10.00
Disk (Dryland) Range Most Common	\$/acre	9.00 - 12.00 9.00	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	9.00 - 10.25 10.00
Crust Busting Range Most Common	\$/acre	8.00 - 10.00 8.00	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	8.00 - 8.00 8.00
Mulching Range Most Common	\$/acre	8.00 - 10.00 8.50	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	7.00 - 8.00 8.00
Harrow - Spike Tooth Range Most Common	\$/acre	7.00 - 8.00 8.00	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	6.00 - 6.25 6.00

2008 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Tillage, continued				
Cultivating - Field Range Most Common	\$/acre	8.00 - 10.00 8.00	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	9.25 - 12.50 12.00
Cultivating - Bedding Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 15.00 10.00	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	10.00 - 12.50 12.00
Rod Weeder Range Most Common	\$/acre	6.00 - 8.00 7.00	12.00 - 20.00 12.00	5.00 - 8.00 7.00
Rotary Hoe Range Most Common	\$/acre	6.00 - 8.00 7.00	12.00 - 20.00 12.00	6.75 - 7.00 7.00
Land Leveling (Floating) Range Most Common	\$/acre	9.00 - 12.00 10.00	12.00 - 20.00 15.00	9.00 - 10.50 10.00
Furrowing Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 15.00 10.00	12.00 - 20.00 12.00	11.00 - 12.00 12.00
Strip Till (Tillage Only) Range Most Common	\$/acre	12.00 - 15.00 15.00	12.00 - 20.00 12.00	12.25 - 18.00 18.00

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2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Chemical & fertilizer Application (Does Not Include Materials)				
Dry Fertilizer Range Most Common	\$/acre	5.00 - 6.50 6.00	7.00 - 10.00 7.50	7.00 - 7.50 7.00
Liquid Fertilizer Range Most Common	\$/acre	5.50 - 6.00 5.50	5.00 - 7.00 6.00	5.50 - 5.75 5.50
Anhydrous Ammonia Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 12.00 12.00	12.00 - 15.00 12.50	7.50 - 12.00 12.00
Anhydrous Ammonia with Sweep Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 12.00 10.00	n/a n/a	7.75 - 11.00 10.00
Aerial Spraying Range Most Common	\$/acre	5.50 - 7.00 7.00	10.00 - 15.00 12.00	5.50 - 7.00 5.50
Boom Sprayer Range Most Common	\$/acre	7.00 - 7.00 7.00	5.50 - 10.00 7.00	4.50 - 5.00 5.00
Side-Dress Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 10.00 10.00	10.00 - 10.00 10.00	9.00 - 10.00 10.00

2008 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Planting (Excludes Seed and Transplants)				
Seed Cleaning (Small Grains)				
Range	\$/acre	.70 - .75	.65 - .90	.60 - .75
Most Common		.70	.70	.75
Plant - Row Crops (22-inch spacing)				
Range	\$/acre	22.00 - 24.00	n/a	n/a
Most Common		22.00	n/a	n/a
Plant - Row Crops (30-inch spacing)				
Range	\$/acre	18.00 - 22.00	12.00 - 15.00	16.00 - 18.00
Most Common		18.00	12.50	18.00
Plant - Drill				
Range	\$/acre	8.00 - 10.00	10.00 - 15.00	7.00 - 8.5
Most Common		8.00	12.50	8.00
Plant - Air Seeder				
Range	\$/acre	8.50 - 11.00	12.00 - 15.00	9.00 - 10.00
Most Common		10.00	12.50	10.00
Plant - Vegetables				
Range	\$/acre	35.00 - 110.00	n/a	n/a
Most Common		85.00	n/a	n/a
Plant - Oilseeds and Dry Beans				
Range	\$/acre	n/a	10.00 - 20.00	n/a
Most Common		n/a	12.00	n/a
Plant - Legumes				
Range	\$/acre	n/a	10.00 - 20.00	n/a
Most Common		n/a	12.00	n/a
Plant - Grass				
Range	\$/acre	9.50 - 18.00	12.00 - 25.00	7.75 - 8.50
Most Common		16.00	15.00	8.00
Plant - Strip Till				
Range	\$/acre	20.00 - 24.00	23.00 - 35.00	23.00 - 27.00
Most Common		22.00	28.00	27.00
Plant - Ridge Till				
Range	\$/acre	n/a	12.00 - 20.00	n/a
Most Common		n/a	15.00	n/a
Plant - No Till (Row Crops)				
Range	\$/acre	13.00 - 18.00	15.00 - 18.00	18.00 - 18.00
Most Common		15.00	15.00	18.00
Plant - No Till (Grain Crops)				
Range	\$/acre	10.50 - 15.00	10.00 - 15.00	9.50 - 11.00
Most Common		12.50	15.00	10.00

2008 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
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 23:23:23 (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) Range	\$/acre + \$/Bu	18.00 - 35.00 + 0.21 - 0.40	35.00 - 50.00	34.00 - 50.00 + 0.16 - 0.16
Most Common		25.50 + 0.35	45.50 + 0.00	50.00 + 0.16
Combine - Corn/Sorghum (Dryland) Range	\$/acre + \$/Bu	12.00 - 20.00 + 0.21 - 0.40	n/a	27.00 - 35.00 + 0.21 - 0.21
Most Common		12.00 + 0.35	n/a	35.00 + 0.21
Combine - Small Grains (Irrigated) Range	\$/acre + \$/Bu	20.00 - 25.00 + 0.21 - 0.23	20.50 - 26.00 + 0.21 - 0.21	35.00 - 40.00 + 0.21 - 0.21
Most Common		21.50 + 0.21	25.00 + 0.21	40.00 + 0.21
Combine - Small Grains (Dryland) Range	\$/acre + \$/Bu	15.00 - 22.00 + 0.21 - 0.23	12.00 - 44.00 + 0.21 - 0.21	30.00 - 35.00 + 0.16 - 0.16
Most Common		21.00 + 0.21	21.50	35.00 + 0.16
Combine - Oilseeds and Dry Beans Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	55.00 - 60.00 60.00
Combine - Soybeans Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	40.00 - 45.00 45.00
Swath - Small Grains Range Most Common	\$/acre	12.00 - 15.00 12.00	n/a n/a	10.00 - 12.50 10.00
Haul - Grain Range Most Common	\$/acre	0.15 - 0.20 0.15	0.17 - 0.21 0.19	0.12 - 0.15 0.15
Haul - Soybeans & Oilseeds Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	0.15 - 0.25 0.15

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2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Hay and Silage Harvesting				
Silage Chopping & Hauling Range Most Common	\$/acre	15.00 - 45.00 35.00	35.00 - 40.00 35.00	35.00 - 40.00 40.00
Mowing Range Most Common	\$/acre	9.00 - 16.00 10.00	10.00 - 18.00 18.00	11.00 - 13.00 12.00
Swathing Range Most Common	\$/acre	12.00 - 15.00 15.00	12.00 - 16.00 14.00	7.00 - 10.50 10.00
Raking Range Most Common	\$/acre	7.00 - 8.00 7.00	8.00 - 10.00 8.00	3.75 - 5.25 4.00
Baling - Small Square (about 70 lbs) Range Most Common	\$/acre	0.60 - 2.00 0.90	0.70 - 0.90 0.80	0.60 - 2.20 0.92
Baling - Med. Square (3x3, 800 lbs) Range Most Common	\$/acre	12.00 - 25.00 20.00	n/a n/a	18.00 - 20.00 20.00
Baling - Large Square (4x4, 1750 lbs) Range Most Common	\$/acre	15.00 - 20.00 20.00	16.00 - 18.50 16.00	17.00 - 20.00 20.00
Baling - Round (about 1500 lbs) Range Most Common	\$/acre	15.00 - 25.00 22.00	12.00 - 15.50 12.00	14.00 - 16.00 15.00
Loading/Stacking - Sm Sq Bales Range Most Common	\$/acre	0.35 - 0.70 0.50	0.40 - 0.60 0.50	0.30 - 0.40 0.37
Haul - Small Square Bales Range Most Common	\$/acre	9.00 - 15.00 12.00	12.00 - 14.00 12.00	12.00 - 15.00 14.00
Haul - Med & Large Bales Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 15.00 12.00	12.00 - 14.00 12.00	10.00 - 12.50 12.00
Haul - Round Bales Range Most Common	\$/acre	5.00 - 18.00 15.00	12.00 - 14.00 14.00	12.00 - 15.00 12.00
Tub Grinding Range Most Common	\$/acre	10.00 - 20.00 12.00	15.00 - 18.00 16.00	13.00 - 16.00 16.00

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2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Orchard				
Apples - Pruning Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	225 - 280 250	n/a n/a
Apples - Thinning Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	300 - 375 350	n/a n/a
Apples - Picking Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	1.10 - 1.60 1.50	n/a n/a
Peaches - Picking Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	1.50 - 1.75 1.60	n/a n/a
Grapes - Pruning Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	300 - 385 350	n/a n/a
Grapes - Picking Range Most Common	\$/acre	n/a n/a	525 - 600 575	n/a n/a

2008 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Labor				
Hired Labor - High Level Positions Range Most Common	\$/hour	8.50 - 15.00 15.00	8.00 - 12.00 n/a	9.00 - 11.50 10.00
Hired Labor - Low Level Positions Range Most Common	\$/hour	8.00 - 12.00 8.00	8.00 - 10.00 n/a	7.00 - 11.00 9.00
Hired Labor - Other Range Most Common	\$/hour	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	n/a n/a
Tractor Drivers - High Level Positions Range Most Common	\$/hour	10.00 - 15.00 15.00	10.00 - 15.00 N/a	10.00 - 14.00 12.00
Tractor Drivers - Low Level Positions Range Most Common	\$/hour	8.00 - 15.00 8.00	8.00 - 10.00 8.00	8.00 - 10.00 9.00
Irrigators - Experienced Range Most Common	\$/hour	9.00 - 15.00 15.00	10.00 - 15.00 12.00	10.00 - 15.00 12.00
Irrigators - Less Experienced Range Most Common	\$/hour	8.00 - 10.00 8.00	8.00 - 10.00 8.00	8.00 - 10.00 9.00
Hired Labor - Year Round Employees Range Most Common	\$/month	3,200 - 5,500 5,000	3,500 - 5,000 n/a	3,000 - 5,000 3000
Foreman - Experienced Range Most Common	\$/month	2,000 - 4000 4000	2,500 - 4,000 n/a	2,000 - 4,000 4,000
Foreman - Less Experienced Range Most Common	\$/month	1,700 - 3,000 1,700	2,000 - 3,000 n/a	2,000 - 3,500 3,000
Manager - Experienced Range Most Common	\$/month	4,000 - 5,000 5,000	4,000 - 5,000 n/a	4,000 - 5,000 5,000
Manager - Less Experienced Range Most Common	\$/month	4,000 - 4,500 4,000	3,500 - 4,000 n/a	4,000 - 4,500 4,000

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2008 Activity	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Crop Share Rental Arrangements Listed crop share arrangements are the most common and do not specify which expenses, if any, are paid by the land owner.			
Corn and Sorghum (Irrigated) Tenant	2/3	2/3	2/3
Land owner	1/3	1/3	1/3
Corn and Sorghum (Dryland) Tenant	3/4	2/3	2/3
Land owner	1/4	1/3	1/3
Small Grains (Irrigated) Tenant	2/3	2/3	2/3
Land owner	1/3	1/3	1/3
Small Grains (Dryland) Tenant	3/4	2/3	3/4
Land owner	1/4	1/3	1/4
Oilseeds & Millet (Dryland) Tenant	2/3	2/3	3/4
Land owner	1/3	1/3	1/4
Alfalfa (Irrigated) Tenant	1/2	1/2	1/2
Land owner	1/2	1/2	1/2
Dry Beans (Irrigated) Tenant	2/3	2/3	2/3
Land owner	1/3	1/3	1/3
Other (Irrigated) Tenant	n/a	2/3	70
Land owner		1/3	30
Other (Dryland) Tenant	2/3	2/3	n/a
Land owner	1/3	1/3	

Cash Rental Arrangements Listed cash rental arrangements are the most common and do not specify which expenses, if any, are paid by the land owner.				
Irrigated Crop Production Range	\$/acre	110 - 225	80 - 180	127 - 155
Dryland Crop Production Range	\$/acre	20 - 25	n/a	20 - 45

2008 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Livestock				
Shearing - Lambs Range Most Common	\$/head	n/a 2.50	3.00 - 5.00 3.00	n/a n/a
Shearing - Ewes Range Most Common	\$/head	n/a 2.5	3.00 - 6.00 3.50	n/a n/a
Shearing - Rams Range Most Common	\$/head	n/a 5.00	4.00 - 10.00 6.00	n/a n/a
Tagging - Sheep Range Most Common	\$/head	n/a n/a	1.00 - 3.00 1.50	n/a n/a
Fertility Testing - Rams Range Most Common	\$/head	22.00 - 25.00 22.00	20.00 - 35.00 25.00	42.00 - 45.00 45.00
Fertility Testing - Bulls Range Most Common	\$/head	27.00 - 35.00 35.00	15.00 - 45.00 35.00	25.00 - 45.00 25.00
Pregnancy Testing - Cows Range Most Common	\$/head	3.00 - 12.00 8.00	8.00 - 12.00 8.00	8.00 - 12.00 8.00
Ultrasound Diagnosis - Sheep Range Most Common	\$/head	8.00 - 3.75 3.25	3.25 - 6.50 4.50	2.20 - 4.00 3.00
Shoeing (with shoes) - Horse Range Most Common	\$/head	45.00 - 75.00 75.00	85.00 - 110.00 85.00	45.00 - 85.00 85.00
Hoof Trimming - Horse Range Most Common	\$/head	40.00 - 70.00 55.00	33.00 - 55.00 55.00	35.00 - 40.00 40.00
Haul Livestock Range Most Common	\$/loaded mile	3.50 - 5.50 5.50	3.50 - 5.00 4.00	3.50 - 6.00 5.50
Building Fence (including materials) Range Most Common	\$/mile	5,500 - 7,500 6,500	5,000 - 7,500 6,500	5,500 - 7,500 6,500

2008 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2008 Activity	Basis For Charge	Southeast	Western NW, Mtn, SW	Northeast
Livestock Grazing The costs of grazing on pastures of all types depends greatly on the provider (landowner or renter) of items such as fencing, water, salt and minerals, and care.				
Native Range - Cows Range Most Common	\$/hd/month	12.00 - 18.00 14.00	15.00 - 30.00 18.00	25.00 - 27.00 25.00
Native Range - Yearlings Range Most Common	\$/hd/month	12.00 - 15.00 13.00	10.00 - 21.00 15.00	n/a n/a
Irrigated Pasture - Cows Range Most Common	\$/hd/month	25.50 - 28.50 25.50	15.00 - 30.00 15.00	22.00 - 30.00 25.00
Irrigated Pasture - Yearlings Range Most Common	\$/hd/month	n/a n/a	10.00 - 25.00 15.00	n/a n/a
Wheat Pasture - Cows Range Most Common	\$/hd/month	12.00 - 15.00 15.00	10.00 - 30.00 15.00	18.00 - 22.00 18.00
Wheat Pasture - Yearlings Range Most Common	\$/hd/month	n/a n/a	9.00 - 20.00 15.00	n/a n/a
Corn/Milo Stalks - Cows Range Most Common	\$/hd/day	15.00 - 20.00 15.00	18.00 - 30.00 20.00	7.00 - 10.00 10.00
Corn/Milo Stalks - Yearlings Range Most Common	\$/hd/day	n/a n/a	0.25 - 0.70 0.50	n/a n/a
Crop Stubble & Aftermath - Cows Range Most Common	\$/hd/day	n/a n/a	15.00 - 30.00 18.00	n/a n/a
Crop Stubble & Aftermath - Yearlings Range Most Common	\$/hd/day	n/a n/a	10.00 - 22.00 15.00	n/a n/a
All Pasture/Forage/Aftermath- Sheep Range Most Common	\$/hd/day	0.05 - 0.10 n/a	0.10 - 0.25 0.15	n/a n/a
All Pasture Types - Yearlings Range Most Common	\$/lb of gain	n/a n/a	0.35 - 0.70 0.50	n/a n/a