

Custom Rates for Colorado Farms & Ranches in 2004

Agricultural operators may not own all the machinery, equipment, and land necessary to perform every farm and ranch operation. In some cases, labor is not available, and in others, owning the equipment is simply too costly for relatively small jobs. Therefore, many farms and ranches use custom operators, machinery rental, and/or pasture leases.

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

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.

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 rates reported in this report are not recommended rates, but simply indicate rates currently being charged throughout Colorado. They represent a variety of working conditions, machine and equipment sizes, and farm and ranch operations. The reported rates reflect only the survey results and should be used only as a guide.

Custom rates in 2004 generally increased over those charged in 2003. 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.

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Tillage					
Stalk Shredding					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	6.00 - 10.00	n/a	5.00 - 8.00
Most Common		n/a	6.00	n/a	8.00
Plow- Moldboard					
Range	\$/Acre	14.00 - 27.00	12.00 - 18.00	15.00 - 30.00	8.00 - 20.00
Most Common		25.00	15.00	18.00	16.00
Plow - Deep Chisel (Irrigated)					
Range	\$/Acre	15.00 - 27.00	7.00 - 15.00	10.00 - 20.00	6.00 - 20.00
Most Common		20.00	12.00	15.00	8.00
Plow - Deep Chisel (Dryland)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	5.00 - 10.00	10.00 - 20.00	6.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	6.00	10.00	7.50
Plow - Surface Chisel (Irrigated)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	7.50 - 10.00	8.00 - 15.00	7.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	8.00	10.00	7.00
Plow - Surface Chisel (Dryland)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.00 - 8.00	10.00 - 15.00	4.00 - 7.00
Most Common		n/a	4.25	10.00	4.00
Plow - One Way					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.00 - 8.00	5.00 - 12.00	4.50 - 12.50
Most Common		n/a	4.00	10.00	10.00
Plow - Sweep					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.00 - 7.00	5.00 - 15.00	5.00 - 8.00
Most Common		n/a	4.50	8.00	6.00
Disc (Irrigated)					
Range	\$/Acre	8.00 - 20.00	5.50 - 10.00	8.00 - 15.00	5.00 - 12.00
Most Common		15.00	8.00	10.00	8.00
Disc (Dryland)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.00 - 8.00	6.00 - 15.00	5.00 - 8.00
Most Common		n/a	7.00	8.00	8.00
Crust Busting					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.50 - 12.00	5.00 - 15.00	3.00 - 5.50
Most Common		n/a	4.00	10.00	5.00
Mulching					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.50 - 10.00	5.00 - 15.00	7.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	8.00	10.00	8.00
Harrow - Spike Tooth					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.00 - 7.00	5.00 - 12.00	2.50 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	5.00	10.00	5.50
Cultivating - Field					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.50 - 8.00	5.00 - 15.00	6.00 - 8.00
Most Common		n/a	6.00	8.00	8.00

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Tillage, continued					
Cultivating - Bedding					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.75 - 8.00	5.00 - 12.00	5.00 - 15.00
Most Common		n/a	7.00	8.00	8.00
Rod Weeder					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.00 - 8.00	5.00 - 12.00	4.50 - 8.00
Most Common		n/a	6.00	6.00	8.00
Rotary Hoe					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.50 - 8.00	5.00 - 12.00	4.00 - 8.00
Most Common		n/a	6.00	7.00	5.00
Land Leveling (Floating)					
Range	\$/Acre	10.00 - 20.00	6.00 - 10.00	8.00 - 15.00	5.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	9.00	8.00	8.00
Furrowing					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	6.00 - 10.00	5.00 - 10.00	5.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	7.00	7.00	6.00
Strip Till (Tillage Only)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	8.00 - 8.50	n/a	8.00 - 12.00
Most Common		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Chemical & Fertilizer Applications (Excludes Material)					
Dry Fertilizer					
Range	\$/Acre	3.00 - 5.00	2.00 - 5.00	4.00 - 8.00	4.00 - 4.50
Most Common		4.00	3.50	6.00	4.50
Liquid Fertilizer					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.00 - 6.50	4.00 - 10.00	4.00 - 4.50
Most Common		n/a	3.50	7.00	4.50
Anhydrous Ammonia					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.25 - 8.00	5.00 - 12.00	5.00 - 12.00
Most Common		n/a	6.00	7.00	5.00
Anhydrous Ammonia with Sweep					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.25 - 12.00	n/a	6.00 - 12.00
Most Common		n/a	7.00	n/a	6.00
Aerial Spraying					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.00 - 7.00	6.00 - 10.00	3.50 - 7.00
Most Common		n/a	4.25	7.50	5.00
Boom Sprayer					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.50 - 5.00	4.50 - 10.00	4.00 - 5.00
Most Common		n/a	4.00	7.00	4.50
Side-Dress					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	5.00 - 12.00	6.00 - 10.00	1.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	7.00	7.00	6.00

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Planting (Excludes Seed & Transplants)					
Seed Cleaning (Small Grains)					
Range	\$/Bu	0.75 - 1.00	0.26 - 0.75	1.20 - 2.25	0.65 - 1.10
Most Common		1.00	0.50	1.20	0.65
Plant - Row Crops (22 inch spacing)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.50 - 15.00	n/a	n/a
Most Common		n/a	10.00	n/a	12.00
Plant - Row Crops (30 inch spacing)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.00 - 15.00	6.00 - 12.00	6.00 - 12.00
Most Common		n/a	9.00	10.00	10.00
Plant - Drill					
Range	\$/Acre	10.00 - 12.00	4.50 - 10.00	6.00 - 12.00	5.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	5.00	8.00	5.00
Plant - Airseeder					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.00 - 8.00	n/a	5.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	7.00	n/a	8.00
Plant - Oilseeds					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	7.00 - 10.00	6.00 - 10.00	6.00 - 10.00
Most Common		n/a	8.00	8.00	10.00
Plant - Dry Beans					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	5.00 - 10.00	6.00 - 12.00	10.00 - 15.00
Most Common		n/a	9.00	8.00	10.00
Plant - Legumes					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	8.00 - 10.00	8.00 - 14.00	10.00 - 15.00
Most Common		n/a	10.00	10.00	10.00
Plant - Grass					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	6.00 - 18.00	8.00 - 14.00	10.00 - 15.00
Most Common		n/a	10.00	10.00	10.00
Plant - Strip Till					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Plant - Ridge Till					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	8.00 - 15.00	8.00 - 15.00	8.00 - 16.00
Most Common		n/a	8.00	10.00	8.00
Plant - No Till (Row Crops)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.25 - 12.00	8.00 - 15.00	8.00 - 15.00
Most Common		n/a	10.00	10.00	10.00
Plant - No Till					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	4.25 - 12.00	8.00 - 20.00	8.00 - 15.00
Most Common		n/a	9.50	12.00	8.00

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Grain Harvesting					
Combine - Corn/Sorghum (Irrigated)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	17.50 - 47.00	20.00 - 30.00	22.00 - 35.00
Most Common		n/a	22.00	26.00	27.00
Combine - Corn/Sorghum (Dryland)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	12.00 - 15.00	n/a	13.00 - 17.00
	+		+		+
	\$/Bu		0.12 - 0.15		0.00 - 0.23
	(bu>20) ^a				
Most Common		n/a	12.00 + 0.13	n/a	17.00 + 0.13
Combine - Small Grains (Irrigated)					
Range	\$/Acre	16.00 - 22.00	12.00 - 14.00	20.00 - 30.00	13.00 - 15.00
	+	+	+		+
	\$/Bu	n/a	0.12 - 0.14		0.13 - 0.16
	(bu>20) ^a				
Most Common		16.00 + 0.80	12.00 + 0.12	25.00	13.00 + 0.13
Combine - Small Grains (Dryland)					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	11.00 - 14.00	15.00 - 25.00	12.00 - 18.00
	+		+		+
	\$/Bu		0.11 - 0.14		0.08 - 0.18
	(bu>20) ^a				
Most Common		n/a	13.00 + 0.13	22.00	13.00 + 0.13
Combine - Dry Beans					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	n/a	20.00 - 35.00	5.00 - 30.00
Most Common		n/a	n/a	30.00	16.50
Combine - Oilseeds					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	10.00 - 15.00	15.00 - 25.00	13.00 - 21.00
Most Common		n/a	15.00	20.00	15.00
Swath - Small Grains					
Range	\$/Acre	8.00 - 9.00	6.00 - 14.00	n/a	5.50 - 8.00
Most Common		8.00	8.00	n/a	7.00
Haul - Grain					
Range	\$/Bu	n/a	0.08 - 0.14	0.10 - 0.25	0.10 - 0.35
Most Common		n/a	0.13	0.15	0.13
Haul - Oilseeds					
Range	\$/Cwt	n/a	0.12 - 0.50	0.20 - 0.60	0.12 - 0.50
Most Common		n/a	0.20	0.40	0.25

^a 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 13:13:13 – \$13 per acre, \$0.13 per bushel for bushels greater than 20, and \$0.13 per bushel for hauling.

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Silage & Hay Making					
Silage Chopping & Hauling					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	3.50 - 9.00	4.00 - 10.00	2.25 - 5.75
Most Common		n/a	8.00	8.00	5.00
Hay Mowing					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	n/a	8.00 - 18.00	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	10.00	n/a
Swathing					
Range	\$/Acre	8.00 - 20.00	7.00 - 12.00	10.00 - 18.00	8.00 - 14.00
Most Common		10.00	10.00	12.00	8.00
Raking					
Range	\$/Acre	3.00 - 15.00	4.00 - 8.00	4.00 - 12.00	4.00 - 7.00
Most Common		6.00	6.00	6.00	5.00
Baling - Small Square (about 70 lbs)					
Range	\$/Bale	0.34 - 0.79	0.27 - 0.50	0.30 - 0.75	0.42 - 0.60
Most Common		0.55	0.50	0.60	0.60
Baling - Medium Square (3x3, about 800 lbs)					
Range	\$/Bale	12.00 - 18.00	8.00 - 15.00	n/a	14.00 - 20.00
Most Common		n/a	10.00	n/a	15.00
Baling - Big Square (4x4, about 1750 lbs)					
Range	\$/Bale	12.00 - 18.00	7.50 - 13.00	10.00 - 22.00	12.00 - 20.00
Most Common		14.00	12.00	15.00	15.00
Baling - Round (about 1500 lbs)					
Range	\$/Bale	18.00 - 32.00	7.50 - 20.00	7.50 - 25.00	6.00 - 14.00
Most Common		n/a	12.00	12.00	10.00
Loading/Stacking - Sm Sq Bales					
Range	\$/Bale	0.25 - 0.32	0.20 - 0.60	0.25 - 0.50	0.18 - 0.35
Most Common		0.30	0.26	0.40	0.32
Haul - Small Square Bales					
Range	\$/Ton	8.00 - 12.50	20.00 - 25.00	8.00 - 15.00	10.00 - 15.00
Most Common		10.50	11.00	10.00	12.00
Haul - Med & Big Square Bales					
Range	\$/Ton	n/a	n/a	8.00 - 20.00	10.00 - 15.00
Most Common		n/a	n/a	10.00	11.00
Haul - Big Round Bales					
Range	\$/Ton	9.00 10.00	3.60 - 25.00	8.00 - 20.00	10.00 - 15.00
Most Common		n/a	11.50	10.00	13.00
Tub Grinding					
Range	\$/Ton	6.00 12.00	10.00 - 14.00	n/a	11.00 - 14.00
Most Common		n/a	10.00	n/a	14.00

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Orchard					
Apples - Picking					
Range	\$/Bu	n/a	n/a	0.40 - 1.20	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	0.75	n/a
Peaches - Picking					
Range	\$/Bu	n/a	n/a	0.50 - 1.60	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	1.00	n/a
Grapes - Pruning					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	n/a	240.00 - 350.00	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	320.00	n/a
Grapes - Picking					
Range	\$/Acre	n/a	n/a	200.00 - 500.00	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	480.00	n/a

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	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 landowner.)					
Corn & Sorghum (Irrigated)					
Tenant		n/a	2/3	2/3	2/3
Land owner		n/a	1/3	1/3	1/3
Corn & Sorghum (Dryland)					
Tenant		n/a	3/4	2/3	2/3
Land owner		n/a	1/4	1/3	1/3
Small Grains (Irrigated)					
Tenant		70	2/3	2/3	2/3
Land owner		30	1/3	1/3	1/3
Small Grains (Dryland)					
Tenant		n/a	3/4	2/3	3/4
Land owner		n/a	1/4	1/3	1/4
Oilseeds & Millet (Dryland)					
Tenant		n/a	3/4	2/3	3/4
Land owner		n/a	1/4	1/3	1/4
Alfalfa (Irrigated)					
Tenant		60	1/2	1/2	1/2
Land owner		40	1/2	1/2	1/2
Dry Beans (Irrigated)					
Tenant		n/a	2/3	2/3	2/3
Land owner		n/a	1/3	1/3	1/3
Other (Irrigated)					
Tenant		n/a	2/3	2/3	70
Land owner		n/a	1/3	1/3	30
Other (Dryland)					
Tenant		n/a	2/3	2/3	3/4
Land owner		n/a	1/3	1/3	1/4
Cash Rents (Cash rental arrangements in Colorado, while increasing in use, are relatively rare. Hence, the insignificant number of cash rents listed in the surveys prevent a most common rent from being reported).					
Irrigated Crop Production					
Range	\$/acre	n/a	35.00 - 125.00	70.00 - 140.00	115.00 - 150.00
Dryland Crop Production					
Range	\$/acre	n/a	n/a	n/a	12.00 - 37.50

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Livestock					
Shearing - Lambs					
Range	\$/Head	2.00 - 2.25	0.75 - 4.00	1.00 - 3.00	1.00 - 3.00
Most Common		2.25	1.50	1.50	1.50
Shearing - Ewes					
Range	\$/Head	2.00 - 2.25	1.70 - 5.00	2.00 - 3.00	1.00 - 3.00
Most Common		2.25	1.75	2.50	1.50
Shearing - Rams					
Range	\$/Head	2.00 - 2.25	2.00 - 5.00	4.00 - 6.00	3.00 - 4.00
Most Common		2.25	2.00	5.00	3.00
Tagging Sheep					
Range	\$/Head	n/a	n/a	1.00 - 2.00	n/a
Most Common		1.00	n/a	1.50	2.00
Fertility Test Rams					
Range	\$/Head	n/a	10.00 - 25.00	8.00 - 25.00	3.00 - 42.00
Most Common		n/a	15.00	20.00	10.00
Fertility Test Bulls					
Range	\$/Head	n/a	10.00 - 40.00	25.00 - 35.00	15.00 - 42.00
Most Common		n/a	30.00	25.00	30.00
Pregnancy Test Cows					
Range	\$/Head	n/a	2.50 - 5.00	2.50 - 5.00	1.50 - 2.50
Most Common		3.00	3.00	3.50	2.50
Ultrasound Diagnosis					
Range	\$/Ewe	n/a	n/a	1.00 - 3.00	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	1.50	n/a
Horse Shoeing (with shoes)					
Range	\$/Head	45.00 - 70.00	40.00 - 65.00	35.00 - 55.00	50.00 - 60.00
Most Common		50.00	45.00	50.00	40.00
Hoof Trimming (Horse)					
Range	\$/Head	20.00 - 60.00	20.00 - 40.00	15.00 - 30.00	20.00 - 35.00
Most Common		35.00	30.00	25.00	20.00
Haul Livestock					
Range	\$/Loaded	1.75 - 3.00	2.00 - 3.00	2.00 - 2.50	1.15 - 2.00
Most Common	Mile	2.75	2.50	2.25	1.87
Building Fence (excluding materials)					
Range	\$/Mile	n/a	1,200 - 7,500	1,000 - 5,000	3,000 - 7,500
Most Common		n/a	3,000	2,000	3,000

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Livestock Grazing					
Native Range - Cows					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	12.00 - 18.00	12.50 - 35.00	12.00 - 20.00	13.00 - 30.00
Most Common		12.00	15.00	18.00	20.00
Native Range - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	8.00 - 11.00	7.00 - 19.00	9.00 - 15.00	7.50 - 18.00
Most Common		10.00	10.00	12.50	13.50
Native Range - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Lb of Gain	0.30 - 0.35	0.30 - 0.40	0.15 - 0.40	n/a
Most Common		n/a	0.30	0.30	n/a
Native Range - Sheep					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	n/a	n/a	2.50 - 3.50	n/a
Most Common		n/a	1.50	3.00	n/a
Irrigated Pasture - Cows					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	10.00 - 18.00	15.00 - 20.00	12.00 - 20.00	30.00 - 37.50
Most Common		15.00	20.00	18.00	n/a
Irrigated Pasture - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	10.00 - 12.00	n/a	9.00 - 15.00	12.00 - 18.00
Most Common		10.00	n/a	12.50	n/a
Irrigated Pasture - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Lb of Gain	n/a	n/a	0.15 - 0.40	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	0.30	n/a
Wheat Pasture - Cows					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	n/a	12.00 - 15.00	10.00 - 18.00	15.00 - 30.00
Most Common		n/a	12.50	12.00	n/a
Wheat Pasture - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	n/a	5.500 - 15.00	8.00 - 15.00	n/a
Most Common		n/a	8.00	9.00	n/a
Wheat Pasture - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Lb of Gain	n/a	0.25 - 0.35	0.20 - 0.30	n/a
Most Common		n/a	0.35	0.25	n/a
Wheat Stubble - Cows					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	n/a	10.00 - 18.00	n/a	n/a
Most Common		n/a	12.00	n/a	10.00
Wheat Stubble - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Hd/Month	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Most Common		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

2004 Custom Rates for Colorado Farms and Ranches

2004 Activity	Basis For Charge	San Luis Valley	Southeast	Western NW-MTN & SW	Northeast
Livestock Grazing (continued)					
Corn/Milo Stalks - Cows					
Range	\$/Hd/Mont	n/a	8.00 - 18.00	12.00 - 20.00	7.50 - 15.00
Most Common	h	n/a	10.00	18.00	15.00
Corn/Milo Stalks - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Hd/Mont	n/a	n/a	9.00 - 15.00	6.00 - 11.00
Most Common	h	n/a	n/a	12.50	9.00
Corn/Milo Stalks - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Hd/Day	n/a	0.20 - 0.45	0.20 - 0.35	n/a
Most Common		n/a	0.38	0.30	n/a
Other Aftermath - Cattle					
Range	\$/Hd/Mont	n/a	8.00 - 16.00	12.00 - 18.00	10.00 - 15.00
Most Common	h	n/a	9.00	15.00	15.00
Other Aftermath - Yearlings					
Range	\$/Hd/Mont	n/a	7.00 - 9.00	9.00 - 18.00	6.00 - 11.00
Most Common	h	n/a	9.00	12.00	9.00
All Forage - Sheep					
Range	\$/Hd/Day	n/a	n/a	0.05 - 0.12	0.03 - 0.07
Most Common		n/a	0.05	0.08	0.04