

# 2005 Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey



Many Iowa farmers hire some custom machine work in their farm business, or perform custom work for others. Others rent machinery or perform other services. The information below is based on a survey of 185 Iowa farmers, custom operators, and farm managers. For each operation, the average rate from the survey and the range are shown. Thirty percent of the respondents perform custom work, 20 percent hire work done, and 50 percent indicated doing both.

Values below are rates expected to be charged or paid, including fuel and labor. This rate schedule is intended only as a guide. Actual custom rates may vary according to availability of machinery in a given area, timeliness, operator skill, field size and shape, crop conditions, and the performance characteristics of the machine being used. Machinery rental rates can be estimated on the back.

Tillage	Average	Range
Chopping cornstalks, / acre	\$7.45	5.00 – 12.50
Plowing – moldboard plow, / acre	12.15	9.00 – 18.70
– chisel, / acre	11.05	8.00 – 16.20
Disk/chiseling, / acre	12.20	10.00 – 16.25
Subsoiling (8 to 15 in. deep), / a.	13.45	9.00 – 20.50
V-rip/ (over 15 in. deep), / acre	14.30	8.00 – 27.20
V-rip/ with tandem disk, / acre	13.85	11.25 – 16.00
Disking – tandem, / acre	8.45	5.00 – 15.00
– offset, / acre	9.60	8.00 – 12.90
Harrowing, / acre	5.20	3.00 – 8.00
Soil finishing, / acre	8.60	5.50 – 12.45
Field cultivating, / acre	8.00	5.00 – 14.00
Cultivating, / acre	7.15	4.00 – 13.00
Cultivating, ridge-till, / acre	10.00	7.50 – 16.25
Rotary hoeing, / acre	5.15	3.50 – 8.75
<b>Planting</b>		
Planter – w/ fert & insect. attach., / a.	\$12.15	8.00 – 19.00
– without attachments, / acre	11.05	7.00 – 18.75
– with splitters, / acre	13.25	10.00 – 22.25
– no-till planter, / acre	12.55	9.00 – 20.00
– ridge till planter, / acre	13.35	10.00 – 20.00
Soybean drill, / acre	11.20	7.00 – 17.50
No-till soybean drill, / acre	12.85	8.00 – 19.00
Grain drill, / acre	10.15	6.00 – 15.25
No-till grass seed drill, / acre	12.65	7.50 – 18.70
Broadcast grass seeder, / acre	7.00	4.50 – 10.15
<b>Fertilizer Application (materials not included)</b>		
Dry bulk – applied, / acre	\$3.50	1.50 – 7.00
– applicator only, / acre	1.40	0.50 – 2.50
Liquid – applied, / acre	4.90	4.00 – 7.50
– applicator only, / acre	2.40	1.50 – 3.70
– strip-till, knifed, / acre	9.00	6.00 – 13.00
Anhydrous– applied, / acre	6.90	4.00 – 11.85
– applicator only, / acre	2.25	1.00 – 6.50
Spreading lime, / ton	4.50	2.00 – 11.85
<b>Spraying (materials not included)</b>		
Ground, broadcast, tractor, / acre	\$4.95	3.50 – 8.50
Ground, broadcast, s. propelled, / a.	5.05	3.50 – 8.00
Ground, incorporated, / acre	8.50	4.50 – 12.20
Ground, banded, / acre	5.25	4.00 – 7.50
Aerial, / acre	5.80	– 6.75
Ground, road ditches, / hour	40.40	25.00 – 68.75

Harvesting Grain	Average	Range
Corn combining, / acre	\$24.60	16.00 – 37.50
Soybean combining, / acre	23.90	20.00 – 36.25
Small grain combining, / acre	22.50	19.00 – 31.25
Picking ear corn, / acre (seed corn)	31.50	25.00 – 42.50
Picking ear corn, / acre	22.60	20.00 – 27.45
Drying corn		
– continuous flow dryer (/ point)	0.028	0.020 – 0.035
– bin dryer (/ point)	0.036	0.015 – 0.070
– bin dryer (/ bu.) no fuel or labor	0.081	0.030 – 0.130
Handling grain (by auger), / bu.	0.050	0.010 – 0.130
Storing grain, / bu., / month	0.027	0.010 – 0.083
Storing grain, / bu., / year	0.127	0.070 – 0.250
Hauling grain, on-farm, wagon / bu.	0.052	0.020 – 0.130
Hauling grain to mkt., wagon/bu. (1-way)	0.072	0.040 – 0.120
Hauling grain to mkt., truck, / bu., (5 mi.)	0.075	0.030 – 0.180
Hauling grain to mkt., truck, / bu., (25 mi.)	0.109	0.060 – 0.200
Hauling grain to mkt., truck, / bu., (100 mi.)	0.193	0.080 – 0.300
Hauling grain in field, grain cart,/acre	4.600	2.000 – 7.500

Harvesting Forages	Average	Range
Hay – mowing, / acre	\$8.05	7.00 – 12.00
– mowing/conditioning, / acre	9.75	7.00 – 14.00
– raking, / acre	4.35	2.00 – 7.50
– windrowing, / acre	9.90	8.00 – 12.50
– mowing CRP acres, / acre	8.95	6.00 – 16.25
– mowing fence rows, ditches/hr.	47.15	20.00 – 105.00
Hay baling – small square, / bale		
– large square, / bale	9.10	8.00 – 13.50
– large round, / bale	8.00	6.00 – 12.00
– charge for plastic wrapping	1.50	0.75 – 2.50
– stack, 1 ton, / stack	12.30	10.00 – 15.00
– stack, 3 ton, / stack	25.25	20.00 – 31.25
Hay baling & storing, square, / bale	0.61	0.50 – 0.75
Straw or corn stalk baling, large round	10.00	7.00 – 15.00
Wrapping round bales, / bale, w. net	4.05	1.50 – 9.00
Silage – chopping, / acre		
– chopping, / hr., / row	55.45	35.00 – 87.75
– chop, haul, fill upright silo,/hr./row	28.80	20.00 – 36.65
– chop, haul, fill trench silo,/hr./row	30.90	25.00 – 33.35
– chop, haul, fill trench silo,/hr./row	29.45	26.65 – 33.35
Haylage – chopping,/hr., 7 foot hd.	78.30	50.00 – 94.00

Machine Rental (operator, tractor, and fuel not included)	Average	Range
Tractor, / horsepower, / hour	\$0.20	0.10 – 0.30
Grain drill, / acre	7.95	7.00 – 10.00
No-till soybean drill, / acre	9.05	7.00 – 12.00
Grain cart, corn, / acre	5.00	4.00 – 6.00
Grain cart, soybeans, / acre	3.45	2.00 – 5.00
Grain wagon, / bu.	0.06	0.04 – 0.08
Grain auger, / bu.	0.02	0.01 – 0.04
Grain vacuum, / bu.	0.06	0.03 – 0.15
Grain cleaner, / bu.	0.05	0.03 – 0.10
Grain truck (semi), / bu.	0.11	0.06 – 0.15
Liquid manure spreader, / hour	20.25	19.50 – 21.40
Solid manure spreader, / hour	18.40	19.00 – 20.00
Skid loader, / hour	36.95	20.00 – 68.80
Silage wagon, / hour	8.60	6.75 – 12.50
Power washer, / hour	21.65	12.00 – 27.75
Tub grinder, / hour	146.50	100.00 – 200.00
Brush chopper, / acre	13.80	8.50 – 15.00

Miscellaneous Services	Average	Range		Average	Range
Moving round bales, / bale	\$2.20	1.00 – 3.50	Digging post holes, / hole	\$2.95	2.00 – 4.00
Moving round bales by truck, / mile	1.70	0.50 – 2.30	Building terraces, / foot	1.45	1.00 – 3.10
Removing snow (loader), / hr.	55.10	20.00 – 125.00	Trenching, / foot	1.00	0.50 – 1.50
Removing snow (blade), / hr.	56.20	30.00 – 106.20	Tiling (ex. materials), / rod	8.80	5.00 – 14.00
Removing snow (blower), / hr.	72.45	35.00 – 112.50	Back hoeing, / hour	56.80	40.00 – 80.00
Grinding, mixing feed, / ton	9.75	6.00 – 18.50	Chopping brush, / acre	11.95	10.00 – 14.00
Spreading liq. manure, broadcast, /hr	33.40	28.00 – 41.00	Cleaning seed, / bu.	0.55	0.50 – 0.70
Spreading liq. manure, inject., /hr	44.90	27.50 – 50.00	Shearing sheep, / head	2.35	2.00 – 2.60
Loading solid manure, / hour	41.15	30.00 – 50.00	Scouting crops, / acre	3.70	1.50 – 6.00
Loading, spreading solid manure, /hr	59.15	30.00 – 100.00	Soil testing, / sample	7.40	5.00 – 12.00
Building fence, / hour (no materials)	13.60	10.00 – 22.00	GPS grid soil testing, / acre	5.90	2.50 – 9.00
Building fence, / rod (no materials)	7.40	5.00 – 10.00	Rock picking, / acre	10.75	4.00 – 15.00
Hauling livestock, / mile	1.95	1.00 – 2.75	Power Washing / hour	24.15	18.00 – 37.00
Bulldozing, / hr. / ft. of blade	9.30	6.50 – 15.00			

Custom Farming – Growing and Harvesting	Average	Range
Corn, / acre	\$81.00	60.00 – 128.75
Soybeans, / acre	71.75	50.00 – 110.00
Small grain, / acre	57.05	50.00 – 75.00

Farm Labor Wages	Average	Range
Machinery operating, / hour	\$9.65	7.00 – 14.00

### Average 2005 Farm Custom Rates, by Area

The table below shows average custom rates reported for some common operations in different areas of the state. Not enough responses were received for other operations to provide reliable estimates.

Operation	Northwest	Northeast	Southwest	Southeast
Chisel plow	\$11.40	\$10.00	\$11.65	\$10.60
Moldboard plow	12.20	11.80	12.75	11.90
Tandem disk	8.65	8.30	8.15	8.60
Field cultivate	7.95	8.35	7.80	8.00
Plant, with attachments	11.70	12.05	12.85	13.00
Cultivate, conventional	7.20	7.20	6.65	6.75
Spray, ground, broadcast	4.75	4.85	5.10	5.30
Combine corn	24.70	24.50	24.15	24.95
Combine soybeans	23.50	23.90	23.85	24.30
Combine small grain	23.10	22.50	22.75	22.00
Square baling, / bale	0.47	0.45	0.40	0.37
Round baling, / bale	8.80	8.10	7.50	7.80
Machinery labor, / hour	9.80	9.35	9.45	10.05

### Estimating Machinery Rental Rate

1. Custom charge (includes labor, fuel, tractor) \$ \_\_\_\_\_/acre
2. Percent of custom charge which is for interest, insurance, depreciation, and repairs (excluding fuel and labor) \_\_\_\_\_%  
(use 70% for tillage, 80% for planting and harvesting)
3. Rental value, including tractor (1 x 2) \$ \_\_\_\_\_/acre
4. Tractor rental value, if tractor is not provided:  
\_\_\_\_\_HP x \$ \_\_\_\_\_per hp–hour rental rate / \_\_\_\_\_acres/hour = \$ \_\_\_\_\_/acre  
(See PM 696, *Estimating Field Capacity of Farm Machines.*)
5. Implement rental value, without tractor (3 minus 4) \$ \_\_\_\_\_/acre

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### Farm Machinery Economics

Internet home study course:  
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