

Southeast Missouri Cotton Planning Budget

Using this planning budget, cotton producers may estimate their costs and returns for 2026. Table 1 presents estimates for GMO furrow-irrigated cotton production in southeast Missouri. Assumptions were based on price forecasts as of October 2025. Detailed prices and practices are summarized in Tables 2 and 3. The production practices used to develop these cost estimates are common for southeast Missouri farms. Use the “Your estimate” column to plan your operation’s costs and returns for 2026.

Table 1. Southeast Missouri cotton (furrow-irrigated) planning budget for 2026.

	Dollars per acre	Your estimate
Income		
Seed cotton	899.76	
Government payments	115.00	
Ginning and hauling	-138.00	
Total income	876.76	
Operating costs		
Seed	84.91	
Fertilizer and soil amendments	177.70	
Crop protection chemicals	207.00	
Irrigation ¹	28.68	
Crop supplies, storage and marketing	8.50	
Crop consulting and insurance	34.00	
Custom hire and rental	52.54	
Operator labor and management	42.84	
Machinery fuel	24.28	
Machinery repairs and maintenance	81.12	
Operating interest	25.84	
Total operating costs²	767.42	
Ownership costs		
Farm business overhead	17.54	
Machinery ownership	137.56	
Real estate charge	225.00	
Total ownership costs³	380.10	
Total costs⁴	1,147.52	
Income over operating costs	109.34	
Income over total costs	-270.76	
Return to land and management	-19.45	

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

3. Ownership costs per pound = \$0.28

1. Irrigation costs are explained in detail on Page 2.

4. Total costs per pound = \$0.83

2. Operating costs per pound = \$0.56

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Irrigation costs in Table 1 include fuel, labor and any leveling, ditching or leveeing required for irrigation; and ownership costs for the pumping engine and aboveground irrigation systems.

Table 2 shows input assumptions for the cotton budget. Price estimates reflect harvest time prices. Costs or returns from storage or other marketing methods are not included. Farm business overhead includes liability insurance, utilities, accounting, etc. Real estate charge is an estimated rental rate for above average land.

Table 3 details the field activities assumed in this budget and their machinery costs. Machinery costs were estimated using typical life (years), use (hours) and performance (fuel and labor) factors for each power unit and implement used.

Table 2. Input assumptions used in southeast Missouri cotton (furrow-irrigated) planning budget for 2026.

Selected input quantities	Per acre	Selected input prices	Dollars per unit
Cotton yield, pounds	1,380	Cotton market price, per pound	0.65
Seeding rate, count	42,000	Seed, per 230,000 seed bag	465.00
Nitrogen rate (urea), pounds	100	Nitrogen (urea), per pound N	0.70
Phosphorus rate, pounds P ₂ O ₅	80	Phosphorus, per pound P ₂ O ₅	0.73
Potassium rate, pounds K ₂ O	60	Potassium, per pound K ₂ O	0.42
Lime, tons	0.5	Lime, per ton	35.00
Skilled operator labor, hours	0.73	Skilled operator labor, \$ per hour	22.50
Irrigation water, acre-inches applied	12	Irrigation water applied, cost per acre-inch	2.39
Operating interest, annual percentage	7.25	Farm diesel, per gallon	2.90

Table 3. Machinery assumptions used in southeast Missouri cotton (furrow-irrigated) planning budget for 2026, on a per acre basis.

Machine activity (not custom fieldwork)	Passes per acre	Fuel (gallons)	Labor (hours)	Operating costs ¹ (dollars)	Ownership costs ² (dollars)	Total costs (dollars)
Subsoiler (20 feet), 340 HP MFWD	1/3 ³	0.40	0.03	2.78	3.89	6.67
Bed hipper (36 feet), 280 HP MFWD	1	0.55	0.04	4.12	5.04	9.16
Bed leveler (36 feet), 340 HP MFWD	1	0.50	0.03	3.59	3.98	7.57
Row crop planter (30 feet), 280 HP MFWD	1	0.82	0.07	10.94	16.02	26.96
Self-propelled boom sprayer (120 feet), 275 HP	6	0.76	0.06	16.87	9.60	26.47
Cotton picker with baler (18 feet), 500 HP	1	3.58	0.14	63.41	46.97	110.37
Pickup (1 ton), 4WD		0.75	0.25	12.05	4.96	17.01
Stalk shredder (20 feet), 200 HP MFWD	1	1.01	0.11	8.19	9.57	17.76
Aerially apply chemicals, custom charge	3					37.80
Dry fertilizer application, custom charge	2					14.74
Total		8.37	0.73	121.94	100.03	274.51

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Abbreviations: 4WD = 4-wheel drive; HP = horsepower; MFWD = mechanical front-wheel drive tractor.

1. Machinery operating cost is the sum of fuel, repairs, maintenance and the value of labor.

2. Machinery ownership cost is the sum of machinery overhead and depreciation.

3. One pass every three years.

Producers can customize this budget using the [Southeast Missouri Crop Budgets workbook \(XLSX\)](#) (extension

[.missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/Pro/AgBusinessPolicyExtension/Docs/crop-budgets-sembudgets.xlsx](https://www.missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/Pro/AgBusinessPolicyExtension/Docs/crop-budgets-sembudgets.xlsx)).

Each crop budget has an accompanying sensitivity analysis so producers can see how their financial return to land and management varies with different crop yields and crop prices.



Check out the complete collection of Missouri crop and livestock enterprise budgets at muext.us/MissouriAgBudgets



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