

2012 Custom Rates for Farm Services in Missouri

The rates reported in this guide are based on a statewide survey conducted by mail in the summer of 2012. Farmers, agribusiness firms, aerial applicators and land improvement contractors responded to questions on the rates they were charging or paying in 2012 for custom services, excluding the cost of materials being applied.

There is no assurance that the average rates reported in this guide will cover *your* costs for performing the service or that you will be able to hire a custom operator in your area for the rates shown. *Calculate your own costs carefully before deciding the rate to charge or pay. Before entering into an agreement, discuss with the other party all the details of the specific job to be performed.*

Fuel prices have a big impact on custom rates. In 2012, the average retail price of gasoline was about \$3.60 a gallon, or \$1.10 a gallon higher than when our 2009 survey was conducted.

Explanation of the rates in this guide

Rates in this guide reflect each respondent's judgment of a "normal" job. Operators may add charges if they consider a job abnormal, such as in distance from the operator's base location, the amount of product or labor involved, the difficulty of the terrain, or special requirements of the customer or location.

The "Number reporting" and "Range in rates" columns are important. Some items had very few responses or a wide range in rates, so the average rate may not accurately reflect rates in your area. Possible explanations of the wide ranges are the type or size of equipment used, the value of labor involved, the mix of labor and equipment used, or different income needs of full-time custom operators compared to local farmers supplementing their income.

The "Average rate" column indicates the basis of the charge for all of the rates in that row. The "Mid" rate has an equal number of responses higher and lower.

Tillage operations		Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting
			Low	Mid	High	
Plowing						
Moldboard:	Normal soil	\$16.20 / acre	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$25.00	13
	Heavy soil	19.26 / acre	12.00	17.00	35.00	12
Chisel plow:	Normal soil	14.30 / acre	8.00	12.50	25.00	18
	Heavy soil	16.16 / acre	10.00	14.00	35.00	15
Disk chisel		15.11 / acre	10.00	14.55	20.00	10
Plowing or cutting disk (heavy disk)		15.80 / acre	10.00	16.00	25.00	15
V-rip or subsoil		17.06 / acre	12.00	15.50	25.00	18
Other tillage						
Tandem disk (finishing disk)		\$12.74 / acre	\$5.00	\$13.00	\$20.00	27
Vertical tillage tool		13.02 / acre	6.00	12.00	23.00	13
Harrow only		8.83 / acre	3.00	8.00	18.00	15
One-pass field prep (multiple attachments)		12.99 / acre	8.00	13.40	20.00	13
Mulch finisher		14.08 / acre	7.00	15.00	23.00	13
Cultivate rows		15.20 / acre	8.00	10.00	36.00	5
Cultipack		8.40 / acre	6.00	9.00	10.00	5

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Planting operations		Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting
			Low	Mid	High	
Conventional planting						
Corn or milo:	Plant only	\$13.71 / acre	\$ 10.00	\$14.00	\$22.00	32
	Plant + apply fertilizer/ chemicals	18.00 / acre	18.00	18.00	18.00	3
Soybeans:	Plant 30-inch rows	14.28 / acre	10.00	13.50	24.00	16
	Plant 15-inch rows	14.49 / acre	10.00	15.00	24.00	31
	Drill 7- or 9-inch rows	15.20 / acre	10.00	15.00	24.00	15
Small grains:	Drill 7- or 9-inch rows	14.07 / acre	10.00	15.00	20.00	15
Grass or clover:	Drill 7- or 9-inch rows	15.00 / acre	10.00	15.00	20.00	9
No-till planting						
Corn or milo:	Plant only	\$15.34 / acre	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$28.00	42
	Plant + fertilize	19.00 / acre	18.00	19.00	20.00	4
Soybeans:	Plant 30-inch rows	15.76 / acre	10.00	14.00	30.00	17
	Plant 15-inch rows	16.04 / acre	10.00	15.00	30.00	39
	Drill 7- or 9-inch rows	17.03 / acre	10.00	15.00	30.00	17
Small grains:	Drill 7- or 9-inch rows	16.53 / acre	11.00	15.00	30.00	17
Grass or clover:	Drill 7- or 9-inch rows	16.75 / acre	10.00	15.00	30.00	12

Applying fertilizer and chemicals		Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting
			Low	Mid	High	
Deliver and spread fertilizer (not including cost of fertilizer)						
Dry fertilizer on cropland:	Single spread	\$5.34 / acre	\$3.50	\$5.50	\$10.00	102
	Double spread	7.18 / acre	3.50	7.00	15.00	72
	Variable-rate application	8.70 / acre	5.00	8.50	22.00	62
Dry fertilizer on pasture (topdressed)		5.38 / acre	3.50	5.50	10.00	96
Dry fertilizer + seed broadcast		6.17 / acre	3.50	6.00	10.00	81
Spray liquid fertilizer		6.15 / acre	4.00	6.00	12.00	58
Spray liquid fertilizer + other chemicals		6.08 / acre	4.00	6.00	12.00	61
Inject liquid fertilizer (knifed in)		11.34 / acre	7.50	12.00	16.00	19
Anhydrous ammonia		12.17 / acre	7.50	12.00	28.00	63
Apply chemicals (not including cost of chemicals)						
Spray with truck		\$6.17 / acre	\$4.50	\$6.00	\$9.00	39
Spray with flotation sprayer		6.01 / acre	4.50	6.00	7.50	58
Spray with self-propelled row crop sprayer		5.98 / acre	4.00	6.00	8.00	103
Spray with tractor-mounted or -pulled sprayer		6.36 / acre	4.00	6.00	12.00	7
Lime						
Deliver and spread:	Including cost of lime	\$18.55 / ton	\$5.00	\$18.00	\$30.00	49
	Not including cost of lime	9.34 / ton	3.00	9.00	20.00	28
Deliver only:	Including cost of lime	14.12 / ton	6.00	14.00	26.00	13
	Not including cost of lime	5.67 / ton	2.00	5.00	10.00	14
Spread only		5.33 / ton	3.00	5.00	14.00	30
		8.50 / acre	6.00	9.00	10.00	9
Aerial application to fields (by airplane)						
Liquid chemicals, spraying:	Flat rate	\$9.82 / acre	\$5.50	\$9.88	\$15.00	16
	Combination rate	9.04 / acre @3.58 gallon/acre		9.25 @2.50 gallon/acre		12
Dry chemicals, crop dusting		9.45 / acre	6.75	9.00	13.50	5
Spread dry fertilizer		0.12 / pound	0.07	0.11	0.20	8
Seed fields		8.50 / acre	5.50	9.25	10.50	6
		0.13 / pound	0.07	0.14	0.17	4

Harvesting and hauling grain, seed and silage

	Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting
		Low	Mid	High	
Combining					
Corn	\$28.59 / acre	\$20.00	\$28.00	\$40.00	61
Soybeans	27.87 / acre	20.00	28.00	35.00	65
Grain sorghum	28.58 / acre	20.00	30.00	35.00	12
Small grains	27.89 / acre	20.00	30.00	35.00	27
Clover or alfalfa seed	46% of crop	33%	50%	50%	4
Fescue or other grass seeds	53% of crop	50%	50%	60%	8
Hauling grain or seed					
Field to farm storage with farm vehicle/wagon	\$0.12 / bushel	\$0.05	\$0.10	\$0.30	24
Bin to market with large grain truck over 20 miles	0.27 / bushel	0.10	0.25	0.60	54
	3.16 / loaded mile	1.80	3.38	4.00	10
Making corn or grain sorghum silage					
Field chop only	\$71.17 / acre	\$58.50	\$65.00	\$90.00	3
	7.50 / ton	5.00		10.00	2
Chop, haul and pile or fill bunker	110.00 / acre	100.00	110.00	120.00	3
	18.67 / ton	7.00	14.00	35.00	3

	Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting	
		Low	Mid	High		
Processing grain and seed						
Grain drying						
Charge for each 1% moisture removed with a shrinkage rate of	\$0.057 / bushel	\$0.02	\$0.05	\$0.10	17	
	1.24% of gross wt	0.5%	1.4%	1.5%	17	
Charge for each 1% moisture removed with no shrinkage rate	\$0.066 / bushel	\$0.02	\$0.07	\$0.10	8	
Grinding and mixing grains at elevator	\$12.61 / ton	\$5.00	\$12.00	\$20.00	29	
Recleaning and bagging						
Soybeans:	Reclean	\$0.98 / bushel	\$0.45	\$1.00	\$1.35	9
	Reclean and bag	1.51 / bushel	0.65	1.55	2.50	10
Small grains:	Reclean	0.97 / bushel	0.45	0.98	1.35	10
	Reclean and bag	1.51 / bushel	0.65	1.50	2.50	9
Clover seed:	Reclean and bag	11.75 / 100 lb rough wt	10.00	11.00	15.00	4
Grass seed:	Reclean and bag	18.00 / 100 lb rough wt	16.00		20.00	2
Bagging only						
Grain or seed, not including cost of bag	\$1.16 / 100 pounds	\$0.40	\$1.15	\$2.00	10	

Harvesting and hauling hay	Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting	
		Low	Mid	High		
Cutting hay with disk cutter or sickle bar	\$9.40 / acre	\$6.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	15	
Cutting and conditioning	12.04 / acre	7.00	12.25	16.00	12	
Raking hay	5.04 / acre	3.00	5.00	10.00	23	
Hay tedding	4.82 / acre	2.00	4.00	10.00	11	
Square bales (small, 50–100 lb)						
Baling only	\$0.88 / square bale	\$ 0.35	\$0.50	\$4.00	15	
Cut, rake and bale	1.47 / square bale	0.80	1.50	2.00	8	
	or 63% of crop	60%	63%	67%	4	
Complete harvest (cut, rake, bale, haul, stack)	\$2.25 / square bale	\$1.50	\$2.25	\$3.00	4	
Haul and stack square bales (field to barn)	0.59 / square bale	0.14	0.50	1.00	9	
Haul square bales over 20 miles	2.91 / loaded mile	1.50	3.00	4.00	8	
Round bales						
Baling only:	Small bales (750–1,000 lb)	\$8.56 / round bale	\$6.00	\$9.00	\$12.00	9
	Medium bales (1,000–1,500 lb)	10.02 / round bale	7.00	10.00	18.00	21
	Large bales (1,500+ lb)	11.25 / round bale	8.50	11.50	15.00	12
Cut, rake and bale:	Small bales (750–1,000 lb)	17.67 / round bale	15.00	18.00	20.00	6
		or 58% of crop	50%		66%	2
	Medium bales (1,000–1,500 lb)	\$18.29 / round bale	\$15.00	\$18.00	\$23.00	19
		or 58% of crop	50%	60%	67%	12
	Large bales (1,500+ lb)	\$19.00 / round bale	\$14.00	\$19.00	\$22.00	8
		or 53% of crop	33%	60%	66%	3
Cut, rake, bale and net wrap:	Small bales (750–1,000 lb)	\$18.40 / round bale	\$15.00	\$19.00	\$20.00	5
		or 55% of crop	50%		60%	2
	Medium bales (1,000–1,500 lb)	\$20.26 / round bale	\$15.00	\$19.20	\$25.00	19
		or 59% of crop	50%	60%	75%	10
	Large bales (1,500+ lb)	\$20.00 / round bale	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$25.00	11
		or 53% of crop	50%	50%	60%	6
Bale and net wrap:	Small bales (750–1,000 lb)	\$9.17 / round bale	\$6.00	\$9.00	\$12.00	6
		Medium bales (1,000–1,500 lb)	11.62 / round bale	7.00	12.00	18.00
	Large bales (1,500+ lb)	or 33% of crop	25%		40%	2
		\$11.55 / round bale	\$8.00	\$12.00	\$15.00	10
Fill plastic tube with bales	7.00 / round bale	5.00	8.00	8.00	3	
Move round bales on farm or local, flat rate	3.18 / round bale	1.00	3.00	6.00	11	
Haul round bales over 20 miles	3.18 / loaded mile	1.50	3.00	5.00	19	

Other field work and hauling	Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting	
		Low	Mid	High		
Mow pasture or CRP land	\$16.38 / acre	\$ 7.00	\$15.00	\$40.00	28	
	60.67 / hour	20.00	60.00	90.00	25	
Cut brush (brush hog)	16.95 / acre	7.00	15.00	45.00	19	
	73.04 / hour	30.00	70.00	135.00	28	
Chop stalks	15.45 / acre	7.00	15.00	30.00	11	
	63.89 / hour	45.00	60.00	85.00	9	
Farm jobs with tractor and loader:	50–100 hp	68.18 / hour	35.00	65.00	120.00	11
	Over 100 hp	94.58 / hour	50.00	100.00	150.00	12
Hauling livestock, long distance:						
With gooseneck trailer or farm truck	2.72 / loaded mile	1.40	3.00	3.75	28	
With large livestock truck	3.56 / loaded mile	2.25	3.75	4.50	4	

Fence work	Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting
		Low	Mid	High	
Inspection and minor repairs	\$25.42 / hour	\$10.00	\$20.00	\$50.00	12
Fence removal:					
By hand and tractor	50.54 / hour	10.00	30.00	100.00	13
	250.00 / quarter mile	120.00	300.00	330.00	3
With large equipment, no salvage	132.65 / hour	80.00	135.00	175.00	17
	766.67 / quarter mile	150.00	650.00	1,500.00	3
Fence building, easy terrain:					
Barbed wire, set posts	45.78 / hour	12.00	40.00	125.00	9
	822.50 / quarter mile	100.00	840.00	1,350.00	8
Combination barbed and woven, set posts	56.25 / hour	25.00	60.00	80.00	4
	1,341.67 / quarter mile	150.00	1,560.00	2,100.00	6
Fence building, rough terrain:					
Barbed wire, set posts	48.63 / hour	12.00	37.50	125.00	8
	968.33 / quarter mile	130.00	990.00	1,800.00	6
Combination barbed and woven, set posts	51.40 / hour	12.00	50.00	85.00	5
	1,520.00 / quarter mile	140.00	1,450.00	3,000.00	6
Dig holes and set posts					
	51.00 / hour	10.00	45.00	125.00	12
	15.58 / post	5.00	17.50	20.00	6
Drive posts					
Metal T-posts	50.18 / hour	12.00	40.00	125.00	11
	1.77 / post	0.30	1.00	4.00	3
Wooden posts	62.50 / hour	20.00	55.00	120.00	4

Small equipment jobs	Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting	
		Low	Mid	High		
Field work*						
Plowing	\$54.17 / hour	\$25.00	\$50.00	\$80.00	6	
Tillage or soil preparation	68.33 / hour	25.00	77.50	100.00	6	
Planting rows or drilling	52.50 / hour	25.00		80.00	2	
Broadcast seeding	23.00 / acre	4.00	15.00	50.00	3	
	60.00 / hour	25.00	75.00	80.00	3	
Spraying	14.00 / acre	5.00	5.00	40.00	5	
	50.00 / hour	20.00		80.00	2	
*Equipment used for field work:	Small tractor (size)	63 hp	30	65	100	8
	ATV with attachments					1
	Unidentified					3
Miscellaneous						
Saw and split downed trees into firewood	\$36.70 / hour	\$10.00	\$32.50	\$75.00	10	
	105.70 / cord	50.00	100.00	178.50	5	
Wildlife plot establishment	73.75 / hour	50.00	60.00	125.00	4	

Earth moving and heavy equipment jobs

	Average rate	Range in rates			Number reporting	
		Low	Mid	High		
By job performed						
Building terraces:						
Conventional gradient	\$2.23 / linear foot	\$1.50	\$2.20	\$3.00	19	
	2.93 / cubic yard	2.00	2.93	4.00	12	
	143.46 / hour	100.00	145.00	225.00	26	
Parallel, cut and fill to grass outlets	2.69 / linear foot	2.00	2.75	3.90	13	
	3.09 / cubic yard	2.00	3.07	5.00	12	
	141.46 / hour	100.00	140.00	225.00	24	
Parallel, with storage to tile outlets	2.94 / linear foot	2.00	3.00	3.90	15	
	2.90 / cubic yard	2.00	2.93	4.00	14	
	145.77 / hour	100.00	145.00	225.00	26	
Diversion	2.93 / linear foot	2.50	3.00	3.50	9	
	2.97 / cubic yard	2.00	2.90	5.00	14	
	144.29 / hour	100.00	150.00	200.00	21	
Grade and shape waterways	2.59 / linear foot	1.60	2.88	3.00	4	
	2.66 / cubic yard	1.75	2.53	4.00	14	
	139.46 / hour	90.00	140.00	200.00	28	
Ditch construction	2.80 / linear foot	2.00	2.75	3.75	5	
	3.22 / cubic yard	2.00	3.10	5.00	6	
	126.96 / hour	55.00	135.00	175.00	24	
Building ponds and lakes	2.68 / cubic yard	1.50	2.55	5.00	39	
	139.17 / hour	80.00	135.00	220.00	36	
Land leveling	3.11 / cubic yard	2.00	3.14	5.00	11	
	135.52 / hour	55.00	145.00	175.00	29	
Land clearing:						
Cut brush and trees; pile on site	876.54 / acre	245.00	975.00	1,700.00	13	
	131.96 / hour	40.00	140.00	180.00	28	
Remove brush, trees, stumps; pile on site	1,040.00 / acre	245.00	887.50	3,000.00	18	
	133.65 / hour	40.00	140.00	200.00	37	
By type of equipment used (including operator labor)						
Bulldozer:	Under 100 hp	\$95.38 / hour	\$30.00	\$92.50	\$140.00	26
	100–150 hp	119.00 / hour	80.00	120.00	160.00	45
	Over 150 hp	145.36 / hour	100.00	145.00	220.00	55
Scraper:	Under 10 cu yd capacity	94.62 / hour	45.00	85.00	150.00	13
	10–15 cu yd capacity	131.54 / hour	65.00	130.00	180.00	39
	Over 15 cu yd capacity	170.21 / hour	85.00	165.00	300.00	24
Motor grader:	Under 100 hp	92.73 / hour	60.00	100.00	120.00	11
	100 hp or larger	121.20 / hour	90.00	125.00	175.00	15
Track-type loader:	Under 100 hp	98.67 / hour	55.00	100.00	140.00	15
	100 hp or larger	131.11 / hour	90.00	125.00	180.00	27
Skid loader		71.91 / hour	25.00	70.00	150.00	55
Track hoe/excavator:	Mini (2–6 tons)	86.04 / hour	45.00	82.50	125.00	24
	Medium and large	134.72 / hour	80.00	130.00	200.00	60
Back hoe		82.38 / hour	45.00	80.00	150.00	53
Tiling machine		1.46 / linear foot	0.75	1.32	3.00	17
		160.00 / hour	130.00	150.00	200.00	3
Trencher		1.40 / linear foot	0.80	1.30	3.00	20
		109.29 / hour	70.00	95.00	200.00	7
Tree shear		77.75 / hour	45.00	72.50	150.00	20