

# Wisconsin's Custom Rate Guide — 1995

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Many Wisconsin farmers hire or perform some type of custom work during the year. This publication reports average rates paid by farmers for custom work in 1995. The figures are reported rates based on surveys collected from farmers who hire custom work, custom operators, and machinery dealers during the fall of 1995.

Custom rates published in this release, except for tractor and combine rental rates, include the cost of hiring the machine with fuel and operator, but exclude the cost of any materials. No attempt was made to distinguish between rates charged by custom operators who perform these operations as their main source of income, and neighbors who occasionally do custom work as a sideline. Rates charged by custom operators would likely trend to the higher side of the range to cover repairs and depreciations, and to provide a return on their investment.

The rates shown in this release should be used as guides rather than absolute values in making management decisions. Rates can be influenced by the availability of equipment, soil conditions, field shape and size, type and size of machine, and traditional practices in an area. The reported rates can be used to compare with local rates or to determine if leasing or owning a machine may be a better alternative

If less than ten reports were received for a particular custom operation, the data are marked with an asterisk (\*). If there were less than three reports for a particular operation, the data were not published.

Price changes for machinery, fuel, and farm supplies during 1996 should be taken into account when analyzing the 1995 data for use in the upcoming growing season.



## Land Tillage and Fertilizer

Custom rates for land tillage include charges for hiring the machine with fuel and operator, but exclude the costs of materials such as fertilizer, herbicides, etc. The majority of custom operators charge by the acre rather than by the hour. Charges by the hour are summarized by size of equipment for the most popular sizes of tillage machinery. Per acre charges were gathered by size of equipment too, but there was no significant difference in price for the different categories. Therefore, only one price was published.

Rates for applying fertilizers and chemicals are for the application of the product. Cost of materials is excluded.

### Land Tillage Operations, Per Acre, Wisconsin, 1995

Tillage operation	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per acre	
Moldboard plowing	5.00 - 23.00	12.70
Chisel plowing	5.00 - 22.00	11.00
Finishing disk	2.00 - 20.00	9.25
Offset disk	5.00 - 15.00	9.90
Disk with digger and drag	3.00 - 15.00	7.55
Spring tooth harrow	5.00 - 10.00	7.30
Spike tooth harrow	3.00 - 13.00	6.15
Rotary hoe	2.00 - 11.00	5.25
Soil finisher	4.00 - 18.00	9.65
Subsoiling	5.00 - 22.00	11.60
Field cultivator	3.00 - 25.00	9.25
Row cultivator		
With fertilizer	3.00 - 10.00	7.05
Without fertilizer	2.00 - 11.00	5.85
Shredding corn stalks	3.00 - 15.00	6.80

### Land Tillage Operations, Per Hour, Wisconsin, 1995

Tillage operation	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per hour	
Moldboard plowing		
1 - 4 bottoms	12.00 - 50.00	32.30
5 bottoms	18.00 - 55.00	38.90
6 - 7 bottoms*	50.00 - 60.00	56.30
Chisel plowing		
8 - 10 feet*	20.00 - 80.00	47.00
11 - 13 feet	35.00 - 75.00	49.20
14 - 16 feet*	50.00 - 110.00	72.90
Finishing disk		
14 - 16 feet*	20.00 - 35.00	30.00
23 - 25 feet*	40.00 - 100.00	56.30
Disk with digger and drag		
20 - 25 feet*	20.00 - 80.00	47.50
Field cultivator		
24 - 26 feet*	40.00 - 75.00	51.70
30 or more feet*	55.00 - 110.00	80.00
Row cultivator		
Without fertilizer		
6 Row*	35.00 - 40.00	38.30
Shredding corn stalks		
13 - 15 feet*	40.00 - 75.00	55.00

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

### Applications of Fertilizer and Chemicals 1/ Wisconsin, 1995

Application	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per acre	
Fertilizers		
Liquid	1.50 - 8.00	5.35
Dry	1.00 - 10.00	3.40
Anhydrous ammonia	4.00 - 12.50	6.65
Lime	1.00 - 10.00	4.00
Insecticides	3.00 - 8.00	5.90
Fungicides	3.00 - 8.00	5.80
Herbicides	1.25 - 10.80	6.05

1/The prices listed reflect application only. Cost of materials is excluded.

## Planting Operations

The following tables show the rates for custom work during the planting season. These rates do not include costs for seed and fertilizer. On the questionnaire, respondents were asked to provide prices for planting using three different methods: conventional tillage, minimum tillage, and no-till. The summary showed no significant difference in the price, so only one rate is published in this report.

In most cases, the per acre rate was the method reported. The second table shows the per hour rates for the most popular sizes of grain drills and corn planters.

### Planting Operations, Per Acre, Wisconsin, 1995

Planting operation	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per acre	
Small grains		
Broadcast*	3.00 - 12.00	7.25
Drilled	3.00 - 22.00	9.90
Corn	4.00 - 26.00	10.60
Soybeans		
Row	6.00 - 22.00	10.50
Drilled	3.00 - 22.00	11.10
Alfalfa, clover, etc.	3.50 - 20.00	9.80

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

### Planting Operations, Per Hour, Wisconsin, 1995

Planting operation	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per hour	
Small grains		
Drilled		
11 - 16 feet*	20.00 - 80.00	48.20
Corn		
4 row*	8.00 - 50.00	25.80
6 row*	30.00 - 55.00	38.80

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

## Harvesting Operations

Custom rates charged for harvesting Wisconsin's major crops are quoted in the following tables. Charging by the acre is still the more popular way to report for harvest, but many custom operators still charge by the hour.

### Harvesting Operations, Per Acre, Wisconsin, 1995

Harvesting operation	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per acre	
Small grains	4.00 - 50.00	21.20
Swathing small grains	4.00 - 25.00	8.10
Corn		
Combine grain	14.00 - 40.00	22.00
Pick ear corn	8.00 - 32.00	17.70
Soybeans	15.00 - 30.00	22.30

### Harvesting Operations, Per Hour, Wisconsin, 1995

Harvesting operation	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per hour	
Small grains		
10 - 11 feet*	30.00 - 65.00	51.20
12 feet	30.00 - 85.00	56.10
13 feet	30.00 - 95.00	58.30
14 feet	60.00 - 80.00	67.00
15 feet	50.00 - 120.00	80.40
16 feet	60.00 - 120.00	81.90
17 or more feet*	50.00 - 120.00	95.70
Swathing small grains		
10 - 12 feet*	15.00 - 40.00	27.00
Corn		
Combine grain		
4 Row	30.00 - 100.00	76.70
6 Row	60.00 - 125.00	82.70
Pick ear corn		
2 Row	15.00 - 40.00	30.00
Soybeans		
12 - 14 feet*	60.00 - 85.00	72.40
15 feet*	60.00 - 85.00	72.80
16 feet	60.00 - 100.00	84.80
17 or more feet	60.00 - 126.00	98.90

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

## Hay Harvest

There are many ways to charge for harvesting forage. This survey showed the most popular way to charge for baling hay was by the bale. However, charging for haylage work was not as simple. Some charge by the foot of silo or bag, others by the load, others by the bag, and some by acre or hour. The following tables include the rates that had at least three reports.

### Hay Harvesting Operations, Wisconsin, 1995

Harvesting operation	Range in rates	Average rate
Dollars per acre		
Mowing and conditioning	2.00 - 15.00	8.15
Raking	1.00 - 12.00	4.20
Dollars per bale		
Hay baling		
Small square bales	0.10 - 2.00	0.34
Large square bales	4.00 - 12.10	7.10
Small round bales	3.00 - 10.00	5.70
Large round bales	4.00 - 15.00	6.95
Dollars per bale		
Mowing to baling (one operation)		
Small square bales*	0.40 - 0.85	0.65
Bale wrapping		
Large square bales*	3.00 - 9.00	6.75
Small round bales	1.50 - 11.00	5.15
Large round bales	1.50 - 14.00	6.70
Dollars per stack		
Stacking		
1 Ton stack	5.00 - 20.00	10.80
2 Ton stack	10.00 - 25.00	14.00
3 Ton stack*	8.00 - 35.00	16.30
Dollars per acre		
Haylage operations		
Chopping	10.00 - 75.00	23.00
Chop, haul and fill silo (one operation)	15.00 - 75.00	30.70

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

### Hay Harvesting Operations, Wisconsin, 1995

Harvesting operation	Range in rates	Average rate
Dollars per hour		
Mowing and conditioning		
9 feet*	5.00 - 45.00	30.80
12 feet	30.00 - 45.00	36.80
14 feet*	35.00 - 75.00	53.60
16 feet*	35.00 - 100.00	63.00
Raking		
9 - 11 feet*	12.00 - 30.00	16.70
Haylage operations		
Chopping	33.00 - 185.00	77.40
Chop, haul and fill silo (one operation)	40.00 - 300.00	108.90
Chop, haul and fill silo bag (one operation)*	135.00 - 225.00	170.00
Dollars per foot		
Chop, haul and fill silo (one operation)*	11.50 - 25.00	19.50
Chop, haul and fill silo bag (one operation)*	2.00 - 9.00	3.70
Dollars per bag		
Chop, haul and fill silo bag (one operation)*	200.00 - 404.00	338.50

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

### Corn Silage Harvesting Operations, Wisconsin, 1995

Harvesting operation	Range in rates	Average rate
Dollars per acre		
Chopping	10.00 - 82.00	40.50
Chop, haul and fill silo (one operation)	10.00 - 100.00	44.50
Dollars per hour		
Chopping	20.00 - 200.00	77.00
Chop, haul and fill silo (one operation)	33.00 - 300.00	104.20
Chop, haul and fill silo bag (one operation)*	130.00 - 150.00	142.70
Dollars per foot		
Silo bagging only*	2.00 - 3.50	2.70
Dollars per bag		
Silo bagging only*	200.00 - 450.00	337.50
Dollars per acre		
Chopping corn stalks for bedding	2.00 - 13.00	6.75
Dollars per hour		
Chopping corn stalks for bedding*	10.00 - 60.00	37.20
Dollars per bale		
Baling corn stalks	4.00 - 16.00	7.50

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

**Tillage, Planting and Other Farm Work, Wisconsin, 1995**

**Average Price as Reported by Districts 1/**

Operation	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE	State
Dollars per acre										
Moldboard plowing	11.60	11.40	16.60	10.40	13.90	14.30	14.50	12.00	12.50	12.70
Chisel plowing	-	8.90	-	10.40	10.90	12.00	10.80	10.40	12.70	11.00
Finishing disk	7.00	5.35	-	8.75	-	9.80	11.40	8.75	10.90	9.25
Dollars per acre										
Applying dry fertilizer	2.65	4.15	2.35	3.40	3.35	3.90	3.75	2.85	4.05	3.40
Applying herbicides	5.70	6.30	6.25	6.80	6.00	5.95	6.25	5.70	5.90	6.05
Dollars per acre										
Planting small grains										
Drilled	8.15	7.90	-	9.65	9.55	10.30	12.30	8.60	10.40	9.90
Planting Corn	9.75	9.80	9.95	10.80	11.50	10.10	12.80	10.20	10.20	10.60
Planting soybeans										
Drilled	-	7.65	14.20	11.40	10.80	9.75	13.60	11.40	11.00	11.10
Row	8.35	11.20	-	10.30	-	9.50	12.70	9.25	13.70	10.50
Dollars per hour										
Relief milker	8.20	7.55	6.00	10.20	8.20	9.10	8.85	11.30	7.20	8.95
General farm labor	6.35	6.00	5.40	6.25	6.50	6.60	5.80	6.65	6.60	6.30
Dollars per hour										
Bobcat use	31.40	48.30	-	24.40	44.30	22.90	26.40	27.90	35.00	28.60
Bulldozer use	71.00	61.20	-	71.80	70.00	64.10	73.10	70.00	58.30	68.00

1/Estimates were published if there were three or more reports in the district.

**Harvesting Operations, Wisconsin, 1995**

**Average Price as Reported by Districts 1/**

Operation	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE	State
Dollars per acre										
Combining corn	21.40	18.20	22.80	22.20	22.50	22.60	21.90	21.60	22.60	22.00
Picking ear corn	18.00	-	18.30	19.90	18.30	16.60	18.50	16.50	-	17.70
Harvesting soybeans	22.20	19.60	24.30	21.50	23.30	22.80	21.50	22.00	23.00	22.30
Harvesting small grains	19.50	16.90	21.60	21.10	20.90	21.60	22.30	20.90	22.50	21.20
Dollars per acre										
Haying operations										
Mowing & conditioning	8.80	7.65	-	7.90	6.65	8.60	7.80	7.90	8.70	8.15
Raking hay	3.30	3.35	-	5.45	-	4.50	4.85	4.00	3.65	4.20
Dollars per bale										
Baling hay										
Small square bales	0.30	0.35	-	0.30	0.28	0.30	0.31	0.41	0.40	0.34
Small round bales	5.35	5.50	5.15	5.95	5.55	6.00	5.40	5.65	5.80	5.70
Large round bales	6.40	7.40	6.65	6.70	7.25	7.30	6.85	7.45	7.15	6.95

1/Estimates were published if there were three or more reports in the district.

## Machinery Rental

Tractor rental has become an important part of planting and harvesting operations on Wisconsin farms. Rates for tractor and combine rental are for the use of the machinery only. The operator must provide the fuel and the labor.

### Machinery Rental Operations 1/ Wisconsin, 1995

Equipment size	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per hour	
Tractors		
Under 50 HP	5.00 - 35.00	15.10
50 - 99 HP	5.00 - 35.00	16.90
100 - 149 HP	5.00 - 40.00	21.80
150 HP and over	14.00 - 60.00	28.20
4-wheel drive		
Under 175 HP	15.00 - 50.00	27.00
Over 175 HP	20.00 - 65.00	34.30
Combines		
4-row and smaller	22.00 - 90.00	65.50
6-row and larger	40.00 - 135.00	83.60

1/Above rates for machinery use only. Fuel and operator are provided by the user.

### Grain Drying, Wisconsin, 1995

Operation	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per point of moisture removed	
Grain drying		
Corn	0.01 - 0.09	0.021
Soybeans*	0.01 - 0.12	0.034

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

## Farm Labor

Wages paid to farm labor, especially relief milkers, have not been asked on previous custom rates surveys. However, there is a lot of interest in this information. The following table lists the rates paid to relief milkers and general farm labor. According to this survey, relief milkers are three times more likely to be paid by the hour than by the cow. This information is listed by district on page five.

### Farm Labor, Wisconsin, 1995

Work hired to do	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars	
Relief milker		
Rate per hour	4.50 - 25.00	8.95
Rate per cow	0.25 - 1.50	0.75
	Dollars per hour	
General farm labor	4.00 - 18.00	6.30

### Manure Handling Operations, Wisconsin, 1995

Operation	Range in rates	Average rate
	Dollars per hour	
Manure handling		
Loading	10.00 - 70.00	34.90
Spreading	10.00 - 75.00	34.40
Liquid manure handling		
Pumping and spreading	25.00 - 126.75	47.40
irrigation*	95.00 - 135.00	106.00
	Dollars per gallon	
Liquid manure handling		
Pumping and spreading	0.01 - 0.07	0.02

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

## Miscellaneous Custom Rates, Wisconsin, 1995

Operation	Range in rates	Average rate
Dollars per unit listed		
Hauling livestock		
By straight truck	5.00 - 125.00	26.70
By loaded mile	0.30 - 3.00	1.60
Per head	1.25 - 30.00	13.00
Dollars per head per month		
Building rental		
Dairy barn	8.00 - 20.00	11.85
Cattle shed	1.25 - 7.50	3.65
Dollars per month		
Machine shed	5.00 - 100.00	38.60
Dollars per bushel per month		
Grain storage	0.01 - 0.10	0.03
Dollars per cwt.		
On farm feed grinding*	0.10 - 1.00	0.52
Dollars per bushel		
On farm grain roasting*	0.50 - 0.70	0.55
Dollars per hour		
Bobcat use	6.00 - 75.00	28.60
Bulldozer use	22.00 - 125.00	68.00
Chain sawing	4.50 - 50.00	14.60

\*Less than 10 reports summarized.

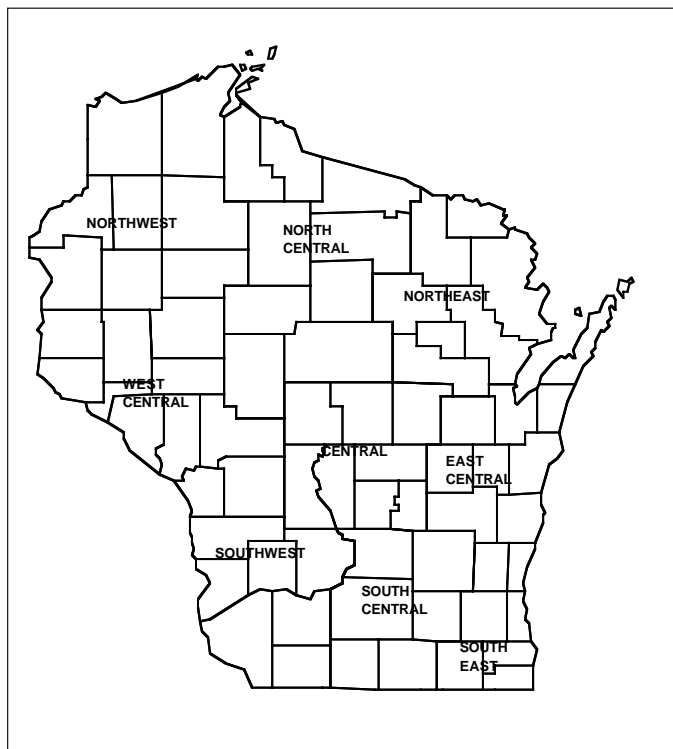
## Survey Procedure

This publication is the result of a survey conducted by the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service during the fall of 1995. This is the first statewide report compiled since the spring of 1992. County agents helped to rebuild the list of custom operators. Approximately 850 reports from farmers, custom operators, and machinery dealers were summarized to derive state and district averages. Some reports listed rates for just one or two categories, while others contained rates for many types of operations.

The rates in this release are ranges and averages of the actual reported data, not official estimates. The cost of following up with individual surveys prohibited questioning or affirming doubtful replies. However, the reports were edited to remove the replies for which the respondent's interpretation of the question didn't match the other respondents' interpretations.

This is a very popular report, as county extension offices, as well as the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service, receive many requests for data on rates charged for custom work throughout the year.

Your input is important to us. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this report, please call 608/224-4848 or write to the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service, P.O. Box 8934, Madison, WI 53708-8934.



## Acknowledgements

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