



KSU Farm Management Guide

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Labor Standards for Nontraditional Kansas Crops

Department of Agricultural Economics



Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

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The importance of nontraditional, or alternative, crops in Kansas has increased with the enactment of the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform (FAIR) Act of 1996. The following labor standards were developed to provide labor information for use in whole-farm and enterprise budgets, farm planning, and comparative studies. These labor usage values have been incorporated into the K-MAR-105 computer programs, such as the Proftlink Business Analysis.

The Kansas Farm Management Associations utilize these crop labor standards for use in farm typing studies, enterprise budgets, and expense allocations. KSU Farm Management Guide Cost Return budgets developed for nontraditional crops will use these labor usage values.

It should be emphasized that these standards represent “average” time requirements for specific crop enterprises. Actual labor usage will vary by enterprise size, type of operation, machinery utilized, management, etc.

Table 1. Labor Standards for Truck Crops and Fruits*

Crop	Hours Per Acre				
	Machine Labor	Other Labor	Harvesting Labor	Packing/Grading	Total Labor
Truck Crops					
Cantaloupe	16.75	9.00	394.00	34.95	454.70
Cucumber	6.85	8.50	80.00	29.60	124.95
Potatoes	9.40	20.35	56.15	21.15	107.05
Pumpkins	7.35	9.00	27.60	36.80	80.75
Squash	6.75	22.00	182.00	68.05	278.80
Strawberries	7.75	14.00	270.00	10.35	302.10
Sweet Corn	7.05	7.00	36.50	14.10	64.65
Tomatoes	28.60	293.50	300.00	54.95	577.05
Watermelons	7.35	9.00	27.60	36.80	80.75
Fruits					
Peaches	9.05	13.70	57.75	19.25	99.75

*Sources: Derived in part from Oklahoma State University and North Carolina State University enterprise cost-return budgets. The labor standard for watermelons was used for pumpkins.

Table 2. Labor Standards for Vegetables*

Crop	Hours Per Acre				
	Machine Labor	Other Labor	Harvesting Labor	Packing/Grading	Total Labor
Asparagus	4.45	9.75	62.85	24.20	101.25
Beans	30.30	4.50	43.60	15.75	94.15
Beets	7.00	10.00	192.00	13.00	222.00
Broccoli	8.80	13.50	121.75	20.90	164.95
Cabbage	8.70	11.00	76.20	86.75	182.45
Carrots	7.00	10.00	192.00	13.00	222.00
Cauliflower	9.85	94.00	233.35	25.15	362.35
Eggplant	14.05	11.00	100.00	115.40	240.45
Greens	5.95	10.00	56.00	13.00	84.95
Lettuce	5.90	10.00	48.00	13.00	76.90
Okra	6.90	9.00	139.40	29.60	186.40
Onions	7.00	10.00	192.00	13.00	222.00
Peas	8.50	8.00	62.50	9.60	88.60
Peppers	11.70	57.00	45.50	18.05	132.25
Radish	7.00	10.00	192.00	13.00	222.00
Rhubarb	7.00	10.00	192.00	13.00	222.00
Spinach	6.30	—	54.00	61.50	121.80
Turnips	7.00	10.00	192.00	13.00	222.00

*Sources: Derived in part from Oklahoma State University and North Carolina State University enterprise cost-return budgets. The labor standard for carrots was used for beets, onions, radish, rhubarb, and turnips.

Table 3. Labor Standards for Selected Cash Crops and Tree Nuts*

Crop	Hours Per Acre		
	Machine Labor	Other Labor	Total Labor
Cash Crops			
Cotton	3.35	—	3.35
Tobacco	30.55	154.15	184.70
Peanuts	6.45	0.40	6.85
Tree Nuts			
Pecans	21.40	0.50	21.90

*Sources: Derived in part from Auburn University, Oklahoma State University, and North Carolina State University enterprise cost-return budgets.

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