

SUMMARY

1. The average cost of operating small tractors was 47 cents an hour, medium size tractors 54 cents, large tractors 67 cents, and the average for all tractors was 54 cents.
2. The average cost of operation per hour varies with the size of load. With an average load, the cost per hour for all tractors was 54 cents, with a light load, 48 cents, and with a heavy load, 60 cents.
3. The average cost of operation varies with the amount of use. Medium size tractors used less than 800 hours a year resulted in an operating cost of 61 cents an hour, from 800 to 1,000 hours, 54 cents, and over 1,000 hours, 50 cents.
4. Tractors, combines and peanut pickers accounted for 69 per cent of the total investment in machinery.
5. The average machinery investment was \$10.73 per acre in crops, excluding cover crops.
6. The average cost of operating tractor equipment, excluding tractors, combines and peanut pickers, was \$1.83 per 10-hour day, 18 cents an hour or 65 cents an acre.
7. The average annual cost of operating 49 six-foot combines was \$178.06. The average six-foot combine harvested 144 acres of grain, soybeans, and lespedeza at a cost of \$1.24 an acre.
8. The average annual cost of operating 56 peanut pickers was \$115.60. The average machine picked 124 acres of peanuts at a cost of 93 cents an acre.
9. The average annual gross cost of keeping workstock, excluding the cost of shelter and taxes, was \$197.87 per head; the average annual net cost was \$185.87 per head.

10. The average mule on non-mechanized farms worked an average of 800 hours per year at a net cost of 23 cents an hour, excluding cost of shelter and taxes, but with credit for manure.
11. High feed prices accounted for the relatively high cost of animal power in 1943. Feed accounted for 73 per cent of the gross cost of keeping workstock.
12. Workstock equipment costs averaged 2.2 cents per hour of use.
13. On the basis of the average work performed, one medium-size tractor replaces approximately six mules.
14. Mechanized methods of farming required fewer hours of man labor to produce the principal field crops in 1943. The largest relative reduction in labor requirements was obtained for soybeans, small grains, corn, peanuts and cotton in the order enumerated.
15. Crops were produced at lower cost where tractor power was used. The relative reduction in per acre operating costs in 1943 was largest for soybeans, followed by, small grains, corn, peanuts, and cotton.

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