How Much Risk is Right for You?

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Bureau of Labor Statistics Data - Agricultural Wages
2025 Annual Averages for Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming



RightRisk has compiled updated agricultural wage information for Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming using 2025 annual averages from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). The reports focus on private-sector employment in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (NAICS 11) and reflect average annual pay for covered workers. These figures provide useful benchmarks for farm and ranch managers evaluating labor costs, employee compensation, and future operating budgets.

Key findings

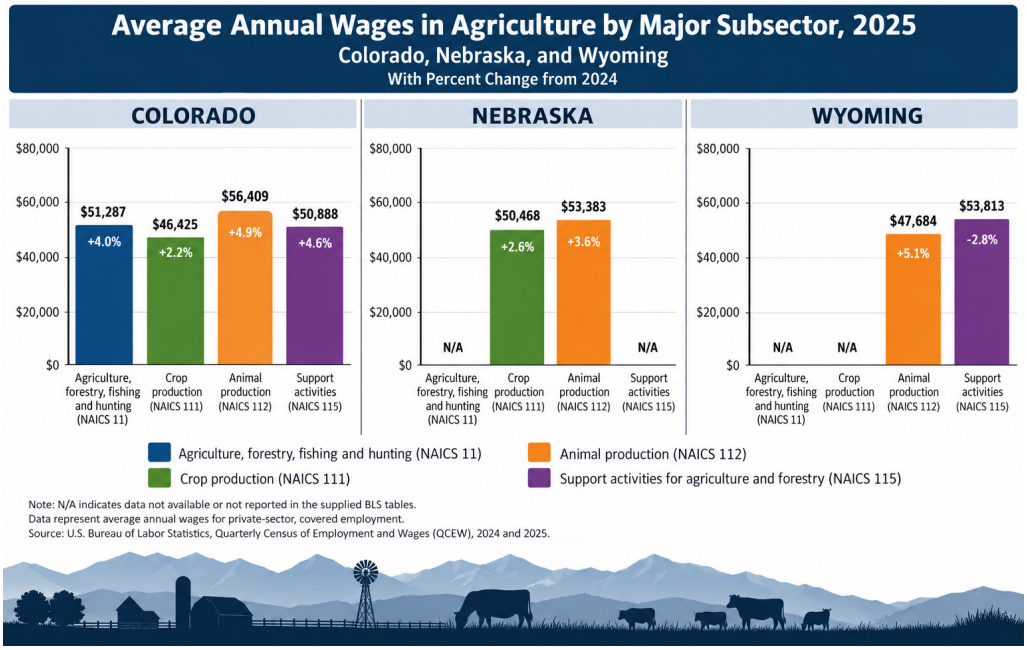
Agricultural wages rose in most major subsectors across all three states during 2025, although the size of those increases varied and a few specialized categories declined.

Colorado's overall agricultural wage averaged $51,287, up 4.0 percent from $49,299 in 2024. Statewide sector totals for Nebraska and Wyoming were not disclosed in the 2025 QCEW data. (In 2024, Nebraska led the region at $51,883 and Wyoming averaged $44,637.) Available subsector averages provide useful comparisons across the three states, although some industry totals are also withheld.

By major subsector, the three states show distinct profiles

- ***Crop production (NAICS 111)***: Nebraska reported an average annual wage of $50,468, up 2.6 percent from 2024. Colorado followed at $46,425, an increase of 2.2 percent. Wyoming's overall crop production wage was withheld, although oilseed and grain farming wages rose 12.9 percent to $40,488. Nebraska's potato farming wages climbed 8.2 percent to $61,848, and Colorado's hay farming wages increased 4.2 percent to $47,819. Wyoming hay farming moved the other way, slipping 3.7 percent to $43,108.
- ***Animal production and aquaculture (NAICS 112)***: Colorado led the three states at $56,409, an increase of 4.9 percent from 2024. Nebraska followed at $53,383, up 3.6 percent, and Wyoming at $47,684, up 5.1 percent. Cattle ranching and farming wages averaged $56,746 in Colorado, $53,349 in Nebraska, and $46,501 in Wyoming. Nebraska's cattle feedlots reported $58,499, slightly above Colorado's $57,818, while Wyoming's beef cattle ranching wages increased 5.4 percent to $46,166. Hog and pig farming posted some of the highest animal production wages in the region: Wyoming at $59,122 (up 6.3 percent), Colorado at $58,383 (up 9.4 percent), and Nebraska at $53,951. Colorado's dairy wages averaged $57,869, up 4.9 percent.
- ***Support activities for agriculture and forestry (NAICS 115)***: Colorado reported average annual wages of $50,888, up 4.6 percent from 2024. Wyoming averaged $53,813, a decline of 2.8 percent. Nebraska's overall support activities figure was

withheld, but its support activities for crop production averaged $63,925, up 5.0 percent. Specialized services continued to command some of the highest pay, including Nebraska farm management services at $80,854 and postharvest crop activities at $72,221. Soil preparation, planting, and cultivating rose sharply in all three states, reaching $65,632 in Colorado (up 9.6 percent), $64,152 in Wyoming (up 14.4 percent), and $50,753 in Nebraska (up 11.6 percent). Farm management services declined in Colorado (down 15.4 percent to $42,869) and Wyoming (down 11.0 percent to $61,161).



What this means for employers and workforce planners

The 2025 figures extend a multi-year increase in average reported agricultural wages across several major industries. Since 2022, average animal production wages have increased 15.7 percent in Colorado, 13.5 percent in Nebraska, and 12.2 percent in Wyoming. Colorado's overall agricultural wage is up 11.4 percent over the same period.

- Colorado's higher animal production wages suggest that livestock employers face substantial compensation requirements, especially in cattle, dairy, and hog operations.
- Nebraska's relatively high crop production and crop support wages highlight the importance of budgeting for skilled employees and specialized services such as farm management and postharvest handling.
- Wyoming's rising cattle ranching and hog wages point to increasing compensation requirements in important livestock industries, despite generally lower reported wages in several comparable subsectors. Wyoming's smaller agricultural support sector may experience greater year-to-year variation in reported average wages, making longer-term trends especially useful.

Farm and ranch managers can use these figures when preparing labor budgets, reviewing compensation, or evaluating alternatives such as contract services and labor-saving equipment.

About the data

QCEW statistics are compiled primarily from employer unemployment insurance reports. They exclude self-employed owners, unpaid family members, and certain other agricultural workers. Average annual wages are not equivalent to full-time salaries or hourly wage rates. Seasonal employment, hours worked, and differences in industry composition can affect comparisons. Categories with few employers or employees can change sharply from one year to the next. Some data are withheld for confidentiality and should not be interpreted as zero wages.

For more information:

For more information or other reports on agricultural labor statistics available from RightRisk, see: https://rightrisk.org/news.shtml > Ag Labor Updates.
For more information on wages across the U.S. economy or to access the complete set of labor statistics available from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, see: https://www.bls.gov.