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Cost to Produce Corn and Soybeans in Illinois—2025

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In 2025, the total of all economic costs per acre for growing corn in Illinois averaged $1,190 in the northern section, $1,216 in the central section for farmland with "high" soil ratings, $1,170 in the central section for farmland with "low" soil ratings, and $1,117 in the southern section. Soybean costs per acre were $874, $910, $857 and $820, respectively (see Table 1). Costs were lower in southern Illinois primarily because of lower land costs. The total of all economic costs per bushel in the different sections of the state ranged from $4.98 to $6.50 for corn and from $12.07 to $16.09 for soybeans. Variations in these costs were related to weather, yields, and land quality.

These figures were obtained from farm business records kept by farmers enrolled in the Illinois Farm Business Farm Management Association. The samples included only farms with more than 500 acres of productive and nearly level soils in each area of the state; these are farms without livestock. Farms located in the 22 counties north and northwest of the Illinois River are included in the sample for northern Illinois. Farms from 36 counties below a line from about Mattoon to Alton are in the sample for southern Illinois. The remaining 44 counties make up the sample for central Illinois. The sample farms averaged 1,661 tillable acres in northern Illinois, 1,622 acres in the central section with high soil ratings, 1,660 acres in the central section with lower soil ratings, and 1,777 acres in southern Illinois.

Cost of Production for Corn Compared to 2024

Costs per bushel of corn in 2025 as compared to 2024 were lower in all regions of the state, except southern Illinois. Costs per bushel were lower due to less nonland interest and land costs. Costs per bushel were 11 cents lower in northern Illinois, 10 cents lower in central Illinois with the higher rated soils, 15 cents lower in central Illinois with lower rated soils and 64 cents higher in southern Illinois.

The average corn yield in 2025 was 2 bushels per acre higher than in 2024 in northern Illinois, 2 to 3 bushels lower in central Illinois and 25 bushels lower than in southern Illinois. The 2025 average corn yield in the different geographical locations ranged from 21 bushel lower to 10 bushels per acre higher than the five-year average from 2021 to 2025.

Costs per acre for corn were lower in all the different geographic regions in Illinois compared to 2024. Across the state, total costs per acre to produce corn decreased from 1 to 4 percent. The non-land interest charge decreased the most statewide.

Cost of Production for Soybeans Compared to 2024

Production costs per bushel of soybeans in 2025 in Illinois compared to 2024 decreased across the state except for southern Illinois due to lower yields. Costs per bushel decreased due to yields staying similar to 2024, but with the same cost decreasing as for corn. Soybean yields ranged from 5 bushels less to 3 bushels per acre higher in 2025 compared to 2024. Changes in costs per bushel ranged from 78 cents lower in northern Illinois to 68 cents higher in southern Illinois.

Total costs per acre for soybeans decreased in Illinois when compared to 2024. Costs decreased $16 per acre in northern Illinois, $21 per acre in central Illinois with the higher rated soils, $28 per acre in central Illinois with the lower rated soils and $43 per acre in southern Illinois when compared to 2024. Average soybean yields in the different areas ranged from 7 bushels lower to 4 bushels higher per acre when compared to the five-year average from 2021 to 2025.

State Averages

Total costs to produce corn for all combined areas of the state were $1,187 per acre. This is $34 per acre lower than 2024. Variable costs decreased $10 per acre or 2 percent, other nonland costs decreased $20 per acre, and land costs decreased $4 per acre. In 2025, variable cash costs accounted for 47 percent of the total cost of production for corn, other nonland costs were 30 percent, and land costs were 23 percent. The average corn yield for all combined areas of the state was 230 bushels per acre resulting in a total cost of production of $5.16 per bushel. The average corn yield in 2025 was the second highest on record, only 5 bushels lower than 2024 which was the highest on record. Total costs per acre were the third highest on record while total costs per bushel were 4 cents less than 2024.

Total cost per acre to produce soybeans decreased, from $903 per acre in 2024 to $878 per acre in 2025. Variable cash costs accounted for 33 percent of the total cost of production for soybeans, other nonland costs 36 percent and land costs 31 percent. The average soybean yield for all combined areas of the state was 70 bushels per acre resulting in a total cost of production of $12.54 per bushel. The cost per bushel to raise soybeans in the last five years averaged $12.31 per bushel.

2026 Forecast

Forecasts for Illinois production costs in 2026 look to increase using the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois's 2026 crop budgets and the USDA's Cost-of-Production Forecasts as a guide. For corn, 2026 variable costs are projected to increase 1.5 percent, mainly due to higher soil fertility costs. For 2026, soybeans have a projected percentage increase of variable costs of 1.4 percent. This increase is also primarily due to higher soil fertility costs. These increases coupled with slightly higher overhead costs and lower land costs have the possibility to lead to higher costs with currently lower projected grain prices for 2026. These projections are prior to the Iran Conflict; however, many farmers had already paid for the majority of their inputs prior to this conflict, making it hard to project the impact on the 2026 crop costs.

The author would like to acknowledge that data used in this study comes from Illinois Farm Business Farm Management (FBFM) Associations across the state. Without their cooperation, information as comprehensive and accurate as this would not be available for educational purposes. FBFM, which consists of 4,900 plus farmers and 70 plus professional field staff, is a not-for-profit organization available to all farm operators in Illinois. FBFM field staff provide on-farm counsel with recordkeeping, farm financial management, business entity planning and income tax management. For more information, please contact the State FBFM Office located at the University of Illinois Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at 217-333-8346 or visit the FBFM website at www.fbfm.org.

A more complete discussion of how some of the costs are calculated can be found under Illinois Farm Management Handbook in the management section of *farmdoc*:
https://farmdoc.illinois.edu/handbook/cost-to-produce-corn-and-soybeans-in-illinois

Table 1. Cost Per Acre for Growing Corn and Soybeans on Illinois Grain Farms Without Livestock in 2025

	Corn				Soybeans			
	Northern	Central [1] High	Central [2] Low	Southern	Northern	Central [1] High	Central [2] Low	Southern
Number of Farms	284	511	267	158	284	511	267	158
Acres in crop	980	834	875	716	638	766	759	858
NONLAND COSTS								
Variable Costs:								
Soil Fertility	$199	$210	$208	$211	$58	$63	$61	$63
Pesticides	98	116	117	107	61	70	71	70
Seed	133	130	130	128	82	84	76	78
Drying	14	14	12	8	-	-	1	0
Repairs, fuel and hire	103	88	90	86	89	77	81	78
Total variable costs	$547	$558	$557	$541	$290	$293	$290	$289
Percent change from 2024	1%	-3%	-4%	0%	0%	-2%	-1%	-4%
Other nonland costs								
Labor	$54	$57	$59	$66	$48	$54	$56	$60
Buildings	30	23	24	29	15	19	17	18
Storage	7	14	10	5	3	8	4	4
Machinery depreciation	88	91	82	98	75	79	70	84
Nonland interest	111	115	105	106	92	103	92	99
Overhead	67	66	70	69	65	62	65	63
Total, other costs	$357	$365	$350	$373	$298	$324	$304	$328
Total, nonland costs	$904	$923	$907	$914	$588	$617	$594	$617
Percent change from 2024	-1%	-3%	-5%	-4%	-2%	-3%	-4%	-6%
LAND COSTS								
Total land costs [3]	$286	$293	$263	$203	$286	$293	$263	$203
TOTAL, all costs	$1,190	$1,216	$1,170	$1,117	$874	$910	$857	$820
Percent change from 2024	-1%	-3%	-4%	-3%	-2%	-2%	-3%	-5%
2025 yields, bushels per acre	239	242	234	172	71	75	71	51
Nonland costs per bushel	$3.78	$3.81	$3.87	$5.32	$8.28	$8.22	$8.37	$12.11
Total, all costs per bushel	$4.98	$5.03	$5.00	$6.50	$12.31	$12.13	$12.07	$16.09
2021-2025 average yield	229	235	225	193	67	74	68	58
Nonland costs per bushel	$3.95	$3.93	$4.03	$4.74	$8.78	$8.33	$8.74	$10.64
Total, all costs per bushel	$5.20	$5.17	$5.20	$5.79	$13.04	$12.29	$12.60	$14.14

Note: The last two lines of the table are costs based on 2021-2025 average yields

[1] Soil productivity ratings of 86 to 100

[2] Soil productivity ratings of 56 to 85

[3] Weighted average of owned, crop share and cash rent land costs

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