#25-BC July 2026

# British Columbia 2025 Benchmarks

Baseline data for the seven British Columbia (B.C.) benchmark farms was originated from the *2024 10-Year Update of the Costs and Returns of Sample Ranching Businesses in Various Areas of British Columbia*. These baseline data were forward indexed to 2025 using provincial average changes in key production and financial variables to reflect changes over time.

There are differences in methodology between the B.C. study and the COP Network. The B.C. study reported metrics and per-head costs based on the number of cows wintered, while the COP Network reported based on the total cow herd. Operator labour was not included as an expense in the B.C. study, whereas the COP Network assigned a value of $25/hour for unpaid labour, with hours adjusted by herd size (i.e., hours per head decrease as herd size increases).

In terms of land reporting, both the B.C. study and the COP Network excluded rented grazing acres from the total reported land base but included rental costs under grazing and private pasture fees. Depreciation also varied: the B.C. study reported lower depreciation costs (3% on buildings and 5-10% on machinery), while the COP Network applied a 10% depreciation rate for machinery, 5% for buildings, and included 25% of the house value under building depreciation.

**What is the COP Network?**

The Canadian Cow-calf Cost of Production Network (COP Network) uses standardized data collection which allows for comparison both within and between provinces, and internationally. The COP Network has collected data from over 200 producers contributing to 60 cow-calf benchmark farms that represent various production systems. Each benchmark is based on data from 3-7 producers. Data collection occurs every 5 years with annual indexing of input and output prices, as well as crop and forage yields, in subsequent years. Individual benchmark farm summaries, can be found at: https://canfax.ca/resources/cost-of-production/cop-results.html

## Farm Descriptions

The B.C. benchmark farms were drawn from the *2024 10-Year Update of the Costs and Returns of Sample Ranching Businesses in Various Areas of British Columbia*. These farms represent seven regions across the province including Cranbrook, Vernon, Kamloops, Williams Lake, Vanderhoof, Dawson Creek and Vancouver Island. The current benchmark farms are designated as BC-1 through BC-7.

Across all seven benchmark farms, cow herd sizes range from 24 to 460 head, with an average of 234 cows per herd. When BC-7 is excluded—due to its significantly smaller herd size of 24 cows—the range shifts

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to 174 to 460 head, with an increased average of 269 cows per herd. The smaller scale of BC-7 contributes to notably higher costs per cow.

All benchmark farms calve between February and March. Calf weaning generally occurs in October, except for BC-1, which weans in November. All operations retain only replacement heifers. Regarding winter feeding, five out of seven farms rely exclusively on homegrown hay and greenfeed, while BC-4 and BC-6 use both homegrown and purchased feed. Winter feeding durations range from 135 to 229 days, with an average of 182 days. Five of the seven farms generate some income from selling surplus hay production. However, this revenue remains a minor component of their overall financial structure.


**Figure 1. Farm details for new B.C. benchmark farms[1]**

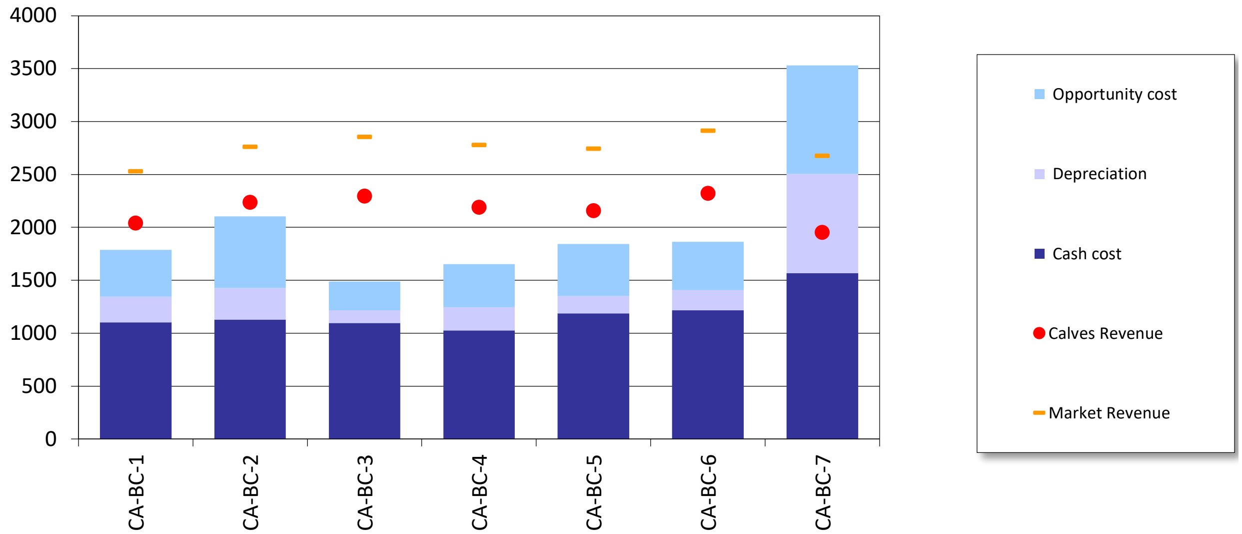
[1]Calving month is based on the month that the benchmark farms started calving

## Benchmarks

All B.C. benchmark farms were able to cover their cash costs, as well as their depreciation costs in 2025. However, only six of the seven farms were able to cover opportunity costs. On average, these farms achieved medium-term profits of $1,250/cow after covering cash and depreciation costs. Despite the one outlier farm, the group still averaged a long-term profit of $711/cow after accounting for all costs, including cash expenses, depreciation, and opportunity costs.

Cash costs ranged from $1,027 to $1,569/ cow, with an average of $1,190. Depreciation costs ranged from $119 to $936/cow, averaging $309. Opportunity costs ranged from $271 to $1,024/cow, with an average of $539. As a result, total costs ranged from $1,488 to $3,530/cow, averaging $2,038 (Figure 2).

As noted in the study, BC-7 reported substantially higher costs per cow, primarily due to indirect costs and depreciation being spread across a much smaller herd. Small operations like BC-7 often rely on additional income sources to remain viable. Many small farms in the region are supported by off-farm income and have diversified into complementary enterprises such as field vegetable production, agri-tourism, food processing, and direct farm marketing to boost overall revenues.




Market Revenue = Receipts from calves, calves transferred to backgrounding enterprise, cull animals and breeding stock
Calf Revenue = Receipts from calves and calves transferred to backgrounding enterprise

**Figure 2. Cost of Production for each individual benchmark farm ($/cow)**

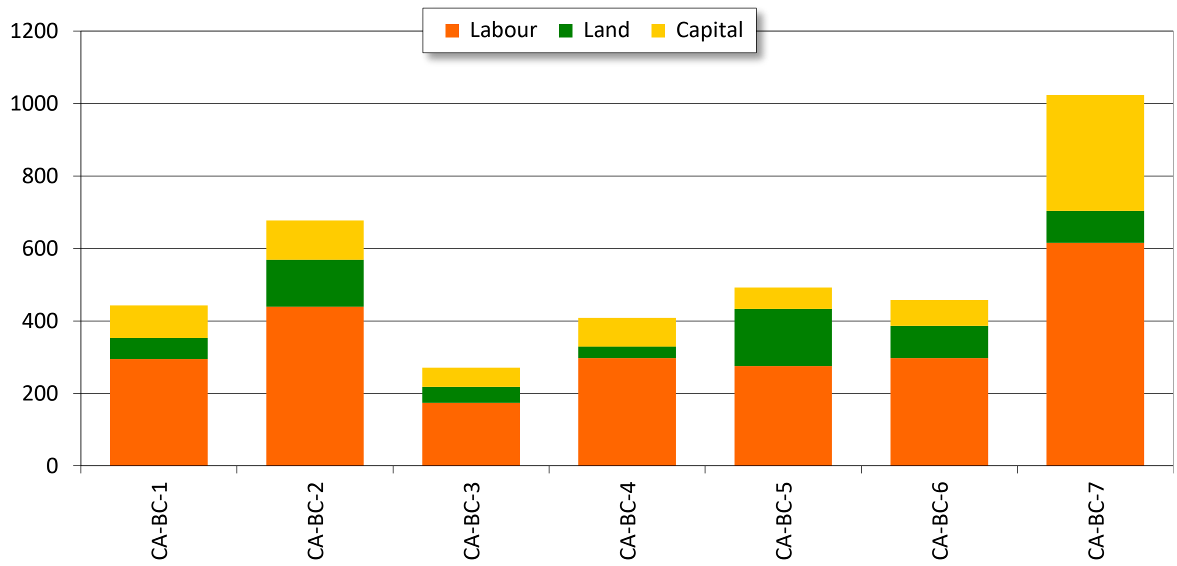



**Figure 3. Breakdown of land, labour and capital for each individual benchmark farm ($/cow)**

## Annual Trends

In B.C. the average cash cost per cow was $1,190 in 2025.

Cash costs generally trended upward from 2021 to 2023, followed by a slight decline in 2024, before rising again in 2025. Over the five-year period, cash costs increased by an average of $53/year, with annual changes ranging from a $12 decline to a $138 increase. The increase from 2024 to 2025 was relatively modest at $47/cow (Figure 4). Overall, cash costs increased by $214/cow over the five-year period from 2021 to 2025.

Depreciation have had an average annual increase of $28/cow, with a total increase of $110/cow from 2021 to 2025. Opportunity costs have had an average annual increase of $10/cow, with a total increase of $39/cow.

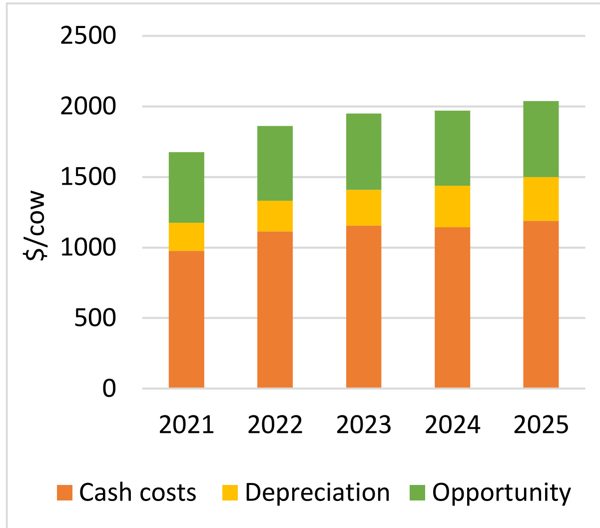



**Figure 4. B.C. cash, depreciation and opportunity costs from 2021-25**

For more information, on ways to stay competitive check out the other COP Network Fact Sheets at Cost of Production Analysis - CanFax