#25-QC July 2026

Quebec 2025 Benchmarks

In 2021, the COP Network launched its first round of data collection. Quebec's initial benchmark data was gathered between 2020 and 2021. The next round of data collection is scheduled for 2027.

Between 2021 and 2025, Quebec cow-calf operations operated through a period of changing weather conditions, rising input costs, and historically strong cattle markets. Despite rising input costs, record high cattle prices continued to support cow-calf returns across the benchmark farms.

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

There are seven Quebec benchmark farms which are consist with those featured in the [2025 COP Network summary](). The current benchmark farms are designated as QC-1, QC-2, QC-3, QC-4, QC-5, QC-6 and QC-7.

Herd sizes range from 60 to 270 head, with an average herd size of 140 head. Calving occurs between March and May, with most calving in March. QC-4 is the only benchmark that calves in September. Weaning time was not specified for any of the farms. QC-5 is the only farm that does not have retained ownership (Figure 1).

Ration composition varies, with half of the farms feeding only hay, and the other half using a combination of hay and corn silage. Mature cow weights range from 1,225 lbs to 1,425 lbs, averaging 1,291 lbs.

The main difference between these benchmarks is the reliance on purchased feeds vs. homegrown feeds. Most Quebec farms use hay as the primary feed source, QC-7 uses hay and corn silage. The COP network does not have a silage only benchmark, or a benchmark that is mixed with cash crops and therefore these management systems are under-represented here. All farms are medium maturity, except for QC-1 and QC-3. QC-1 is a mature farm (no longer growing); while QC-3 is in the start-up phase.

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QC-1

- 150 head
- March calving
- 90 days retained ownership
- 50 days supplemented on pasture, 150 days full winter feed
- 100% homegrown hay
- 100% homegrown replacement heifers
- Mature

QC-2

- **275 head**
- April Calving
- 120 days retained ownership
- 240 days full winter feed
- 75% homegrown hay
- 100% homegrown replacement heifers
- Medium

QC-3

- 60 head
- May Calving
- 45 days retained ownership
- 200 days full winter feed
- **100% purchased feed**
- **Hay**
- 100% purchased Bred heifers
- Starter

QC-4

- 60 head
- **September Calving**
- 90 days retained ownership (30 days confined then on pasture)
- 200 days full winter feed
- 50% homegrown feed
- Hay
- Medium

QC-5

- 60 head
- **March Calving**
- No retained ownership
- 45 days supplemented on pasture and 182 days full winter feed
- 97% homegrown feed
- Hay
- 100% purchased replacement heifers
- Medium

QC-6

- 150 head
- **March and September Calving**
- 70 days retained ownership
- 30 days supplemented on pasture and 192 days full winter feed
- 99% home grown feed
- Hay and grain
- Medium

QC-7

- 225 head
- **March and September Calving**
- 90 days retained ownership
- 200 days full winter feed
- 99% home grown feed
- **Hay and corn silage**
- Medium

Figure 1. Farm detail for Quebec benchmark farms

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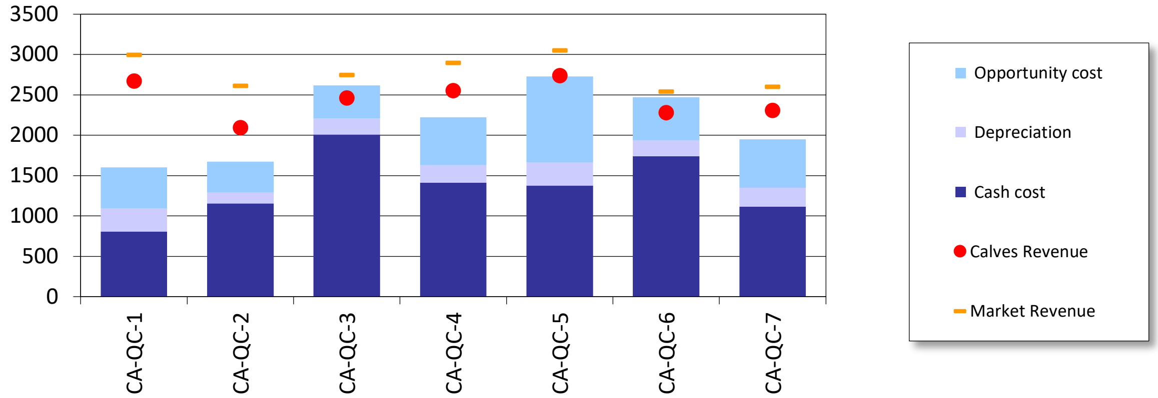
Benchmarks

For all Quebec benchmark farms, the total cost of production averaged $2,122/cow in 2025. On average, 64% of their costs were cash expenses, 10% depreciation and 26% opportunity cost. All farms covered their cash, depreciation and opportunity costs with an average long-term profit at $652/cow. In 2025, all farms covered their cash, depreciation and opportunity costs with an average long-term profit of $652/cow.

Cash costs ranged from $808 to $1,986/cow (Figure 2), averaging $1,355/cow. Depreciation costs ranged from $134 to $287/cow, averaging $209/cow. Opportunity costs ranged from $371 to $1,062/cow, with an average of $558/cow. These opportunity costs were primarily driven by labour (Figure 3).



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

Figure 2. Cost of Production for each individual benchmark farm

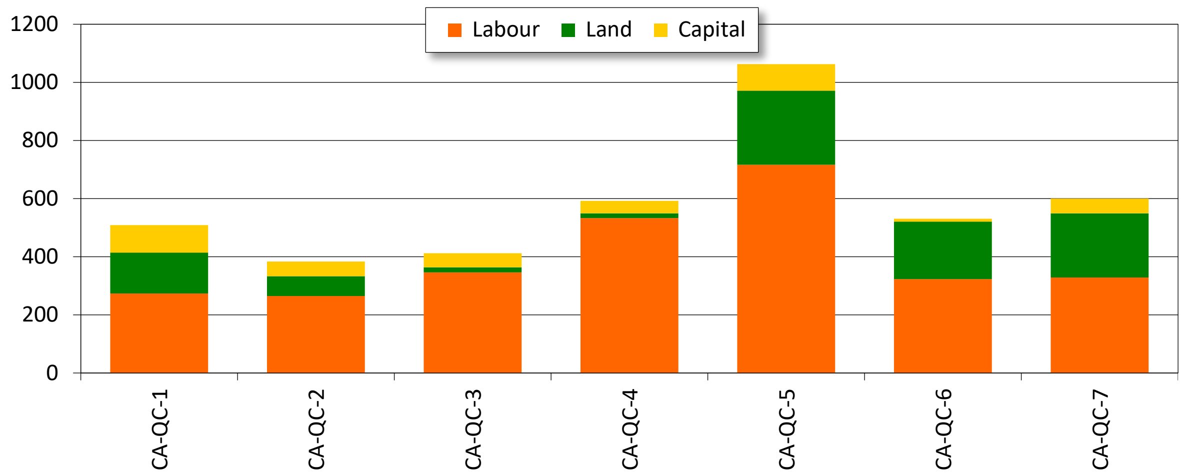


Figure 3. Breakdown of land, labor and capital for each individual benchmark farm

Annual Trends

In 2025, average cash costs were $1,355/cow in Quebec. Over the past five years, Quebec has experienced a steady rise in cash costs, with an average annual increase of $80/cow. Overall, cash costs increased $319/cow, going from $1,036 in 2021 to $1,355 in 2025 (see Figure 4). In 2025, high market prices eliminated compensation from the Farm Income Stabilization Insurance program (ASRA). The negative net ASRA amounts were included as an extra variable cost per head, contributing to the increased cash costs in 2025.

Depreciation costs have had an average annual increase of $15/cow, with a total increase of $61/cow, going from $148 in 2021 to $209 in 2025.

Opportunity costs have had an average annual increase of $15/cow, with a total increase of $61/cow, going from $497 in 2021 to $558 in 2025.

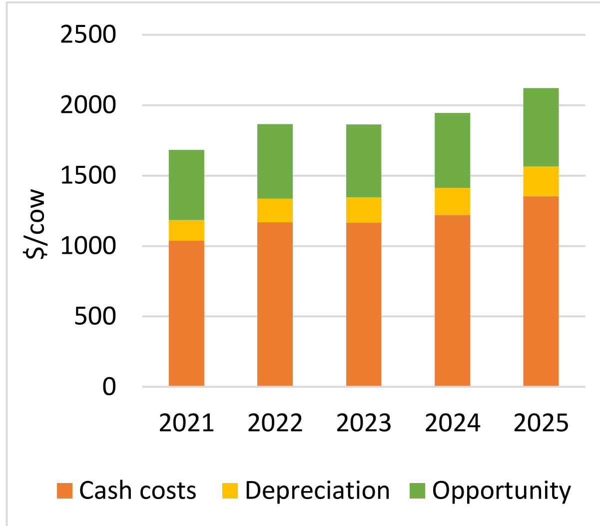


Figure 4. Quebec cash, depreciation and opportunity costs from 2021-2025

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

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