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**2023 LEASE SURVEY  
SUMMARY REPORT  
K-State Research and Extension  
Post Rock District  
MITCHELL County**

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**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Post Rock  
District

# 2023 FARM LEASE ARRANGEMENT SURVEY SUMMARY FOR DRYLAND CROPS

## K-STATE RESEARCH & EXTENSION



### Post Rock District MITCHELL County



Number of survey responses: 21 (30% return rate)

#### Summary of Cash Rent Paid to Landlord

CROP ENTERPRISE	AVERAGE RENT/ACRE	CASH RENT RANGE
Cropland (dryland)	\$74.00	\$55 - \$125
Cropland (irrigated)	\$79.00	\$73 - \$85

Comment: 43% of respondents indicated no cash leases.

#### Estimated Trend for 2024 Dryland Crop/Pasture Leases in Mitchell County

Unsure of 2024 Trend	62%
No Change	15%
Lower	15%
Higher	8%

#### Trend of Lease Arrangements for 2024

NO CHANGE	MORE CASH RENT	MORE CROP SHARE
50%	43%	7%

#### Adjustments to Cash Rents due to rising input costs in 2023

NO ADJUSTMENTS	DECREASE	INCREASE
92%	8%	No responses

**Percentage of acres in the different Tillage Systems in 2023  
(Number of responses)**

<b>No -Till</b>	<b>Minimum Till</b>	<b>Conventional Till</b>	<b>Summer Fallow</b>
6 - 100% 2 - 80% to 90% 4 - 40% or less	1 - 65% 4 - 40% or less	3 - 60% or less	1 - 15% or less

**When were the cash rent payments made to the landlord for 2023?  
(% of responses)**

<b>All at once</b>	<b>Split payment</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>After Harvest</b>
15% (December)	54%	Jan./July March/Oct. July/Nov. July/Dec. August/Feb. August/Dec.	31% (November or December)

**Interest in Flexible Leasing Arrangements**

<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
100%	No responses

**Crop Share Summary**

<b>DRYLAND CROP ENTERPRISE</b>	<b>SHARE PAID TO LANDLORD</b>	<b>OTHER COMMENTS</b>
Wheat	1/3 - 78% 2/5 - 11% 25% - 11%	
Grain Sorghum	1/3 - 89% 2/5 - 11%	
Corn	1/3 - 74% 2/5 - 13% 25% - 13%	
Sunflowers	1/3 - 100%	
Soybeans	1/3 - 88% 2/5 - 12%	
Alfalfa	1/2 - 100%	
Other Dryland Crops (Brome Hay)	1/3 - 80% None - 20%	
Landlord's Share of Government Payments	1/3 - 63% None - 25% 2/5 - 12%	-Same as share
Landlord's Share of Crop Insurance Proceeds	1/3 - 71% None - 29%	-Landowner has own insurance. -Tenant has own insurance.

**Comment: 57% of respondents indicated no crop share leases.**

**Percentage of Written and Oral Leases  
For Pasture and Cropland (number of responses)**

Written Leases		Oral Leases	
7 - 100%	2 - 50% or less	4 - 100%	3 - 50% to 80%

**Landlord Share of Input or Cost  
(Percent of responses)**

EXPENSE OR INPUT	Landowners % Share of Crop Expenses	Other Comments
Fertilizer	1/3 - 88% 2/5 - 12%	
Fertilizer Application	None - 88% 1/3 - 12%	-Landowner pays 1/3 of urea application.
Herbicide	1/3 - 57% None - 29% 2/5 - 14%	-33% except herbicides that replace tillage. -Landowner does NOT pay for herbicides that replace tillage.
Herbicide Application	None - 88% 1/3 - 12%	
Insecticide	1/3 - 50% None - 50%	-Typically, only insecticide is used with seed at planting.
Insecticide Application	None - 83% 1/3 - 17%	
Harvesting Costs	None - 100%	
Hauling Grain	None - 100%	
Drying costs after harvest	None - 67% 1/3 - 33%	
Crop Insurance	1/3 - 62% None - 25% 2/5 - 13%	-Landowner has own insurance.
Other production costs (seed, fungicide, crop consulting, water, etc.)	None - 60% 1/3 - 40%	-Share 1/3 on fungicides. -Share 1/3 cost of GMO seed only. -No share on consulting. -Trying to get landowner to pay 1/3 of GMO seed.
Terrace/Conservation Structure Maintenance (annual upkeep costs)	None - 60% 100% - 20% 1/2 - 20%	
Terrace/Conservation Structure Construction (major land investments)	100% - 72% 2/5 - 14% 1/2 - 14%	

# Pasture Lease Summary

## Physical Location of Pasture Land

Mitchell Co.	63%	Russell Co.	5%
Lincoln Co.	16%	Cloud Co.	5%
Ottawa Co.	11%		

## Pasture Land Rental Rates

Average rent/acre	\$27.00/acre
Range per acre	\$15-\$40/acre

## Expected Trend for Stocking Rates for 2024

No Change	67%
Increase	8%
Decrease	25%

## Livestock Stocking Rate

Average	9 acres/pair
Mature Weight Average	1300 lbs.

## Backgrounding stocking rates/weights

Average	4 acres/hd.
Starting Weight	575 lbs.
End Weight	800 lbs.

## Livestock Water Supply

Pond	55%
Well	18%
Stream	5%
Transported to site	23%

## Summary of Tenant/Landlord Responsibilities

Responsibility	Tenant	Landlord
Maintaining Water Supply	83%	17%
Maintaining Fences - Furnishing Materials	33%	67%
Maintaining Fences - Furnishing Labor	92%	8%
Controlling Weeds	67%	33%

### Comments:

- If extra weed control help is needed, then the tenant will help.
- Tenant helps with musk thistle.
- Tenant pays to have pasture sprayed for weeds.

## Grazing Period in 2023

Pasture season length (months)	Month Started	Month Ended
3 mo. - 17%	May - 67% June - 33%	Aug. - 17%
5 mo. - 33%		Oct. - 17%
6 mo. - 50%		Nov. - 50%
		Dec. - 17%

## Grazing Period in 2022 (previous year)

Pasture season length (months)	Month Started	Month Ended
5 mo. - 25%	May - 88% June - 12%	Oct. - 25%
6 mo. - 75%		Nov. - 63%
		Dec. - 12%

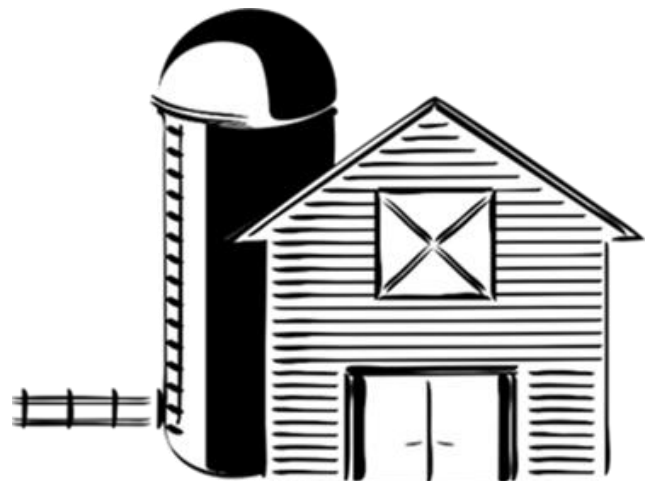
## Kinds of Pastureland – 2023

(number of responses to percent of their pastures)

Upland	Lowland/River	Mixture
10 - 100%	No Responses	No responses

### Comments:

- All prices affected by drought and high calf and cull cow prices.



## Crop Residue Grazing Summary

### Physical Location of Crop Residue Land

Mitchell Co. 89%  
Jewell Co. 11%

### Crop Residue Rental Rates

#### Corn/Sorghum Stalks:

Average: \$17.00/acre  
Range/acre: \$5.00 to \$40.00  
Other: \$1.00/hd./day for 30 days

#### Cover Crops/Alfalfa/Winter Wheat:

Average: \$4.00/acre

### Type of Cattle/Livestock On Crop Residue

Cow/Calf Pairs 38%  
Dry Cows 38%  
Stocker/Feeder 24%

### Livestock Stocking Rate

3 ac./head (average)

### Goals of crop residue grazing

Maintain body condition 100%

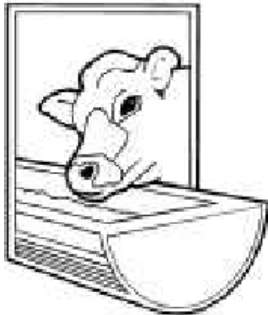
### Livestock Water Supply

Transported to Site 63%  
Well 25%  
Other (Rural Water) 12%

### Crops Utilized for Grazing

Milo 50%  
Corn 38%  
Cover Crops 12%

(Cover crops included: collards, forage sorghum, barley, triticale, spring forage pea, oats, turnips, millet, sudan, rye, sunflowers, radishes, and volunteer wheat.)



## Crop Residue Grazing Period 2023

Grazing Season Length (months)	Month Started	Month Ended
1 mo. - 20% 2 mo. - 60% 3 mo. - 20%	Nov. - 80% Dec. - 20%	Jan. - 80% Mar. - 20%

## Crop Residue Summary of Tenant/Landlord Responsibilities 2023

Responsibilities	Tenant	Landlord
Maintaining water supplies	67%	33%
Maintaining Fences-Furnishing Materials	60%	40%
Maintaining Fences - Furnishing Labor	60%	40%
Livestock Care	80%	20%

### Other comments with crop residue grazing

- Protein tubs also brought in to provide source of nutritional supplement
- Cattle are taken off stalks if there is a lot of rain.
- Never can plan and make a prediction on being able to graze grass, wheat or cover crops due to the lack of rain the last 3 years.



# General Lease Concepts

## Rules & Regulations:

- Leases must be longer than two years to allow tenants to sublease.
- When a farm is sold, the new owner substitutes for the old.
- Leases are binding on executors and heirs.
- Written leases can cover any length of time.
- Oral leases are **unenforceable** if they are one year or more in length.

## Test of a Good Lease:

- Is it written?
- Does it encourage proper amounts of yield increasing expenses?
- Does it plan for new or needed improvements?
- Does it promote conservation?
- Is the crop shared in the same percentage as the contribution?

## Lease Termination Notice:

- In writing
- At least 30 days prior to March 1
- **Spring planted crops:** must fix termination date of tenancy to take place on March 1
- **Fall seeded crops:** will be terminated the day after harvest or August 1
- **Exception to above:** written lease providing otherwise.

## Crop Share Leases

### A good crop share lease should follow five basic principles:

- Yield increasing inputs should be shared.
- Share arrangements should be re-evaluated as technology changes.
- Total returns divided in same proportion as resources contributed.
- Compensation for unused long-term investments at termination.
- Good landlord/tenant communications

## Advantages of Crop Share Leases:

- Yield and price risks and opportunities are shared by tenant and landlord.
- Less operating capital needed by the tenant.
- Management skills may be shared by an experienced landlord and tenant.
- Tax management opportunities from timing of sales and input purchases.
- Material participation issues

## Disadvantages of Crop Share Leases:

- The landlord's income is more variable.
- More record keeping is required.
- Landlords have marketing decisions to make.
- Joint management decisions must be made and disagreements may occur.
- Material participation/Social Security issues

## Cash Rental Leases

### Methods to Determine Cash Rental Rates:

- **Market going rate (if available)**  
Local competitive rental rates
- **Landowner's cost**  
Depreciation, Interest, Repairs, Taxes, Insurance - Based on the premise of landowner's continuing to receive comparable returns to what has been received in the past.
- **Crop share equivalent (adjusted for risk)**  
Converts equitable crop share rent to an expected dollar amount per acre.
- **What Tenant Can Afford to Pay**  
 $\text{Revenue} - \text{Non-land Costs} = \text{Rent}$

(The last three require yield, price, and government payment projections as well as cost information used for crop share.)



### Advantages of Cash Leases:

- **For Landlords**
  - Less involvement in management.
  - No production costs to share.
  - No marketing decisions to make.
- **For Tenants**
  - More managerial control and freedom.
  - More income for above-average managers.
  - More potential for windfall profits in good years.

### Disadvantages of Cash Leases:

- **For Landlords**
  - No potential for windfall profits in good years.
  - Less tax management flexibility from timing sales and expenses.
  - Risk of exploiting or “mining” of the farmland by a tenant.
- **For Tenants**
  - Bears all yield and price risk.
  - Crop production and expenses are higher.

## Trends in Leases and Values of Agricultural Land in Kansas

by Robin Reid, K-State Research and Extension, Ag Economist

After experiencing higher commodity prices and farm profitability in recent years, 2023 started to bring uncertainty into the agricultural industry again. Higher input costs coupled with lower commodity prices, with the exception of cattle, have slowed the growth of agricultural land values and have had farmers questioning what an affordable cash rent may be.

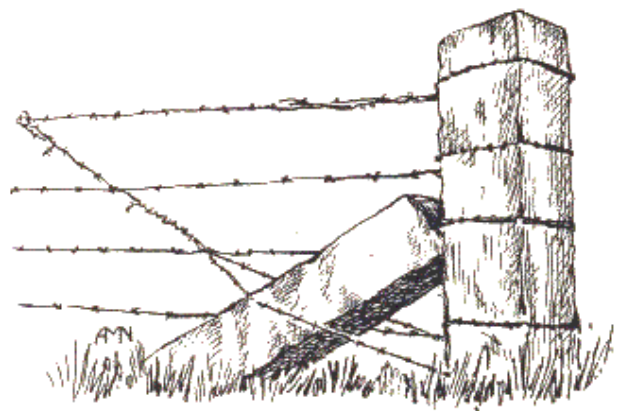
Land prices in 2020-2022 have seen an exceptional increase in value due to recent higher profitability in farming returns, historically high inflation rates, and increases in investment outside of agriculture. While interest rates increased dramatically for the past 2 years, it seems that land prices are only minimally affected at this point. Likely interest rates will become a larger factor as cash for land purchases dwindles. According to surveys by USDA-NASS, the statewide average land value for cropland in 2023 increased by 16.6% over the 2022 value, reaching an all-time high of \$3,440 per acre. A similar pattern

can be observed in pasture values. The state average of pasture was \$2,150 per acre in 2023; an increase of 16.2% over the 2022 value.

For most producers, high volatility in commodity and input prices translates into higher risk exposure from rental rates. During periods of high profitability, such as has been seen in recent years, rental rates will increase and competition for land can be fierce as producers try to expand their land base to capture more returns. However, a decline in profitability in the sector will not necessarily translate into lower rents in the short run, which becomes a very risky situation for a farmer or rancher. This may be a common situation in 2024, if commodity prices remain below cost of production.

Rental rates tend to lag behind commodity prices and profitability because land contracts and cash rental rates are often set for 3-5 year periods to allow both producers and landowners to plan for expected costs and returns. As a result, producers can be locked into rents that are not aligned with the current market; either higher or lower. In addition, from a landowner's perspective, higher profitability in agriculture will eventually translate into higher real estate taxes, putting upward pressure on rental rates.

Regardless of the particular situation a producer faces, strong communication with their landowner can be very beneficial to the long-run economic viability of their operation. Tenants who take extra time to work with their landowners, answer questions, and keep them up to date on the farm's situation will find it easier to have those difficult conversations.





# Flexible Cash Rents

## Principles:

- Flexible cash rents simply refer to land rental arrangements where the amount of cash rent paid (received) can vary based upon some pre-determined formula (i.e. formalizes bonus rents).
- Methods of “flexing” rental rates, i.e., formulas are based on:
  - Yield (actual for producer, co. avg., etc.)
  - Price (harvest, season average, actual)
  - Revenue (yield x price, crop insurance, residue)
  - Costs (i.e. fertilizer price)
  - Other

## Advantages of Flexible Cash Rents:

- Method of allowing rents to vary year-to-year without having to renegotiate rents annually.
- Way of sharing/managing risks associated with volatile markets (without hassles of crop share lease).
- Somewhat “forces” a higher level of communication relative to fixed cash rent (poor/lack of communication is often an issue with problem lease arrangements).
- Trend in Kansas has been moving away from crop share leases to more cash leases.
- Volatility of last few years has significantly increased the risk of **fixed** cash rents.

## Disadvantages of Flexible Cash Rents:

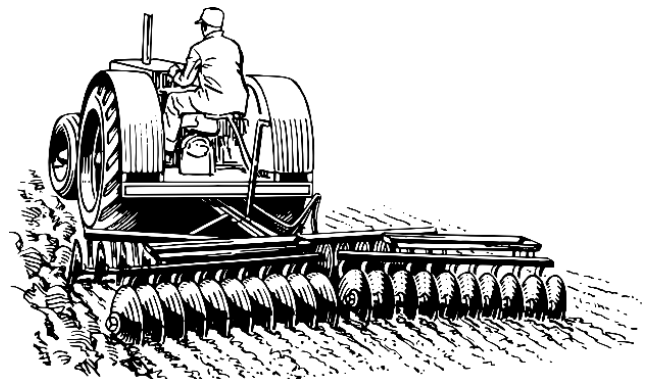
- Complex!
- Theory and intuition guide conceptual design, but little help with specific details.
- Not needed if cash rents are renegotiated frequently every year.
- Hard to think of everything, which means we might need to be “tweaking” the arrangements regularly.
- If designed wrong, might increase risk.
- Appealing for certain situations, but not appropriate in all cases (depends on why you are considering flexible cash rent).

## How to determine Flexible cash rents:

- There is not a single right way to do this! (But there are plenty of wrong ways.)
- Establish a base cash rent:
  - Budget-derived value (KSU-Lease.xls) Online KSU spreadsheet (Excel) tailors to a specific situation and an equitable crop share can be calibrated to the local area
- **Questions to ask:**
  - Does cash rent flex up and down or only up?
  - What yields and prices are used to determine actual gross revenue?
  - What crops should be included in calculations?
  - Are crop insurance and government payments included/accounted for?
  - What about flexing cash rent based on costs of crop inputs?
  - What will final rent be under alternative potential outcomes?

## Summary:

- Flexible cash leases are simply a way of sharing risks of unpredictable markets and yields without the hassles of crop ownership.
- Why not simply give landowner ad hoc “bonuses” when times are good?
- There are many types of flex leases – no one method is right or best in all cases.
- Communication, communication, communication! (Remember, it likely is a learning process for both parties.)
- The KSU website [www.agmanager.info](http://www.agmanager.info) has more information on **Flexible Cash Rents**.



# Net Share Lease Arrangements

There are many different kinds of leasing arrangements for producers to choose from today. In addition, many farmers, rent 80-90% of their acres and it is increasing every year. So it is critical that tenants and landowners have all the leasing tools that are available to them to determine the most equitable arrangements for their unique situation.

The traditional one-third/two-thirds lease arrangement has been very common for many years, however, even 40/60 is becoming more common along with a fairly new arrangement such as a net-share lease. The net share leasing arrangement may be 75/25 or 80/20 for the crop share percentages with the larger percentage going to the tenant.

A fairly new type of leasing arrangement is called a Net-share lease. In a Net-share lease, the tenant, covers 100% of the input costs, while landlords cover property taxes, crop insurance and a few other minor expenses. Then, the two parties agree on the percentage of the crop that goes to the landlord to sell.

This may be a lease arrangement worth looking into to determine if it may work in your specific situation. So generally, when the good times are really good, both parties get a share in that; but when the times are not as good, their sharing in that as well.



## Advantages:

- Both parties win when yields and prices are high, and if they aren't, crop insurance is available to help put a floor under the return for the landlord.
- Can work very well in areas where the risk of crop production can vary widely from one year to the next.
- There is much less capital investment to add leased acres versus owned acres.
- The risk-reward to both the landlord and farmer are shared more equally under net-share leases.
- Lease rate self-adjusts when commodity prices change.
- Landowner still markets their own percentage of the grain.
- Landowner does not have inputs to pay.
- Tenant does not have to keep track of inputs and billing landlords.

## Disadvantages:

- While the risk in crop production and crop prices is shared between the landowner and tenant, the cost of input prices is not.
- In years like 2022 when fertilizer prices soared, the tenant would be burdened by the entire fertilizer bill which could have caused them to lose money on the crop while the landowner still made money.
- Also, not sharing yield-increasing inputs (like a traditional crop-share) may disincentive tenants to utilize the optimal amount or the more expensive products.
- The landowner will not know their exact income until after harvest, which can be difficult for landowners that rely on rental income for living expenses.

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