

Beef Replacement Heifer Planning Budget

Using this planning budget, farmers raising beef heifers may estimate their costs and returns for bred heifers developed in 2026 and sold in December 2026. Table 1 presents estimates for calves purchased and sold later as bred replacement heifers in Missouri. Assumptions were based on price forecasts as of October 2025. Detailed inputs, feed requirements and machinery investments are summarized in Tables 2, 3 and 4. The production practices used to develop these cost estimates are common in Missouri beef farms. Use the “Your estimate” column to plan your operation’s costs and returns for 2026.

Table 1. Missouri beef heifer planning budget for 2026.

	Dollars per heifer sold	Your estimate
Income adjusted for 1% death loss		
Bred heifer sales (0.875 head × \$4,000)	3,465.00	
Open heifer sales (0.035 head culled and 0.08 head open)	338.93	
Total income	3,803.94	
Operating costs		
Purchased heifer calf	2,636.70	
Pasture (rent, fertilizer, weed control, infrastructure)	213.40	
Feed, mineral and stored forage	286.72	
Labor	110.00	
Veterinary, drugs and supplies	35.00	
Marketing	95.10	
Breeding costs	64.03	
Machinery, utilities and repairs	154.53	
Professional fees and miscellaneous	20.00	
Interest on calf purchase and operating costs	255.23	
Total operating costs	3,870.71	
Ownership costs		
Farm business overhead	38.04	
Depreciation and interest on livestock facilities	33.13	
Insurance and taxes on capital assets	30.28	
Total ownership costs	101.44	
Total cash-based costs¹	3,662.83	
Total costs	3,972.15	
Income over cash-based costs	141.11	
Income over operating costs	−66.77	
Income over total costs	−168.21	
Bred heifer breakeven price per head, cash costs	3,323.89	

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

1. Cash-based costs exclude operator labor, depreciation, business overhead and opportunity interest.

Table 2. Input assumptions used in replacement beef heifer planning budget for 2026.

Selected input quantities	Per unit	Selected input prices	Dollars per unit
Heifer purchase weight, pounds	550	Heifer purchase price, per hundredweight	479.40
Cull heifer sale weight, pounds	700	Cull heifer sale price, per hundredweight	367.52
Open heifer sale weight, pounds	900	Open heifer sale price, per hundredweight	350.44
Bred heifer sale weight, pounds	950	Bred heifer sale price, per head	4,000.00
Labor, hours per head	5	Labor cost, per hour	22.00

Table 3. Feed and stored forage requirements in replacement beef heifer planning budget for 2026, on a per-heifer basis.

	Dollars per unit	Amount fed, per head	Total dollars
Pasture, acres	106.70	2.0	213.40
Mixed hay, per ton	90.00	1.8	158.82
Corn, per bushel	4.70	9.5	49.63
Dried distillers grains, per ton	175.00	0.3	44.74
Salt and mineral mix, per pound	0.60	55.9	33.52
Total			500.12

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Table 4. Pasture cost assumptions in Missouri replacement heifer budget.

	Dollars per acre
Pasture rent	50.00
Nitrogen, 30 pounds N	21.00
Phosphorous, 10 pounds P ₂ O ₅	7.30
Potassium, 20 pounds K ₂ O	8.40
Weed control	15.00
Grazing system management	5.00
Total pasture cost	106.70

Table 5. Machinery assumptions used in replacement beef heifer planning budget for 2026.

Description	Dollars per hour	Hours	Total dollars	Dollars per replacement heifer
Tractor, 105 MFWD	55.00	50	2,751	55.02
Rotary mower, 10 Foot	10.00	30	300	6.00
1 ton 4x4 Pickup	40.00	30	960	19.20
Livestock trailer	20.00	24	480	9.60
4-wheeler	12.00	180	2,160	43.20
Total			6,651	133.20

Abbreviations: MFWD = mechanical front-wheel drive tractor.

Farmers can customize this budget using the [Missouri Beef Budget workbook \(XLSX\)](https://extension.missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/Pro/AgBusinessPolicyExtension/Docs/beef-budgets.xlsx) (extension.missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/Pro/AgBusinessPolicyExtension/Docs/beef-budgets.xlsx).



Check out the complete collection of Missouri crop and livestock enterprise budgets at muext.us/MissouriAgBudgets