

COMET-Farm Step-by-Step Animal Ag (Beef) Guide

Single Year Accounting

Tasks:

1. Navigate to COMET-Farm.com and Create an account

- a. Navigate to www.comet-farm.com
- b. Using the Navigating COMET-Farm document [HERE](#), familiarize yourself with the COMET-Farm user interface.
- c. Using the Creating a COMET-Farm Account document [HERE](#), create a COMET-Farm account (if you have not already done so).
 - i. While you can use any component of COMET-Farm *without* creating an account, creating an account has many benefits. Review how COMET stores your project information and the benefits of creating an account [HERE](#).

2. Create new project

- a. Select *Tool* in the upper right corner of the COMET-Farm web page.
- b. Follow the instructions on [Creating a New Project](#) help document to begin your project.
 - i. For users new to COMET Animal Agriculture accounting, we would recommend just selecting *Animal Agriculture* as your accounting activity. You can always add other accounting activities later.
 - ii. Select *define activities* to proceed to the next task.

3. Information collection:

- a. Data required for COMET-Farm: property location, animal types, animal characteristics, and your change in management for the scenario comparison.
- b. Due to the layout of the interface, it may be useful to collect your management information ahead of time and simply transfer to the user interface. This can aid in data organization and also provides a simple way viewing all inputs together.
 - i. We do have a [Animal Ag \(Beef\) Data Entry Spreadsheet](#) to assist in data collection prior to going through the user interface and outlines every data point COMET-Farm will ask for. Unfortunately, you cannot upload that spreadsheet to COMET. It is simply a tool to gather all of your management information before using the COMET-Farm interface.

4. Select Property Location

- a. COMET-Farm allows for zip code and animal specific greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting. When entering management details on the baseline and scenario management pages, you are tying the management details to that *specific zip code and animal*.

- b. Using the navigation window that appears after you define your accounting activity, enter the zip code of the general area of your property. Zip code will be used to determine temperatures for manure and housing related calculations.

Select Property Location

Enter your Zip code

What are your preferred units of measure? English

Please enter all data in Pounds except where noted

<< Back

Save & Continue >>

- c. Once you've entered your zip code, select the orange button, *Save & Continue*.

5. Select Animal Types

Step 1
Activities
Step 2
Animal Agriculture
Step 3
Report

Property Location →
Animal Types →
Animal Characteristics

Current Step

Select Animal Types

Select Animal Types

Cattle

Beef-Heifer Replacements ☐
Beef-Mature Cows/Cow-Calf ☐
Bulls ☐
Dairy-Dry Cows ☐
Feedlot Cattle ☐

Beef-Heifer Stockers ☐
Beef-Steer Stockers ☐
Dairy-Heifer Replacements ☐
Dairy-Lactating Cows ☐

Poultry

Broilers ☐
Laying Hens ☐

Ducks ☐
Turkeys ☐

Sheep

Feeder Sheep ☐

Flock Sheep ☐

Swine

Gestating Sows ☐
Lactating Sows ☐

Grow-Finish Pigs ☐
Weaning Pigs ☐

Other

American Bison ☐

Goats ☐


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Save & Continue >>


Set Baseline Period >>

a. The Animal Types pane allows COMET-Farm users to define different animals within their operation.


i. Check all of the animal types for which you want to include in your project. Once you have entered management data for these animals, you *cannot* go back and add or remove animal types to your project.




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- ii. Proceed to animal characteristics for *single-year accounting*. Single year accounting is recommended for:
 1. New COMET-Farm users
 2. Users looking to assess a single year of animal agriculture management
 3. When management is uniform across multiple years. For example, a producer manages their beef cattle the same year to year.
 - iii. For multi year accounting, see our [Step by Step Animal Ag \(Beef\) Multi Year](#)
 - iv. Click *Save & Continue*
6. **Enter Baseline Management Details:** In this section you will be asked to define your management practices for your Baseline Scenario (“business as usual,” current management, or how your animals are currently managed.).

The screenshot shows the 'Enter Animal Characteristics' interface. At the top, a navigation bar includes 'Step 1 Activities', 'Step 2 Animal Agriculture', and 'Step 3 Report'. Below this, a breadcrumb trail shows 'Property Location' → 'Animal Types' → 'Animal Characteristics'. A green box labeled 'Management Details' points to the 'Animal Characteristics' tab. On the left, a 'Current Step' panel shows 'Enter Animal Details' with a green checkmark next to 'Beef-Heifer Replacements' and 'Beef-Heifer Stockers'. A green box explains: 'Green check specifies which animal type and herd you are currently entering data for.' Below this, a 'Scenarios' panel shows a 'Scenario List' with 'Baseline' selected. A green box explains: 'Scenario list to keep track of whether you're entering data for your baseline or other management scenario'. The main content area has a progress bar with steps: 'Number of Herds', 'Weight', 'Feeding Situation', and 'Manure System Details'. A green box labeled 'Navigation pane helps you move through your management inputs' points to this progress bar. The main form is titled 'Enter Animal Characteristics - Beef-Heifer Replacements' and contains instructions: 'Please define your herds. You may add up to 5 herds per animal category. For the purpose of this tool, a herd is defined as a group of animals managed within the same animal category but with different diets or different manure handling practices, Please think about the **Beef-Heifer Replacements** and add additional herds if needed'. It includes a 'Default Herd' input field and an 'Add Additional Herd' button with a plus icon. At the bottom, there are '<< Back' and 'Save & Continue >>' buttons.

7. Number of Herds
- a. You may add up to 5 herds per animal category (e.g., 5 herds of beef-heifer replacements, 5 herds of beef-steer stockers). In this step, a herd is defined as a group of animals managed *within the same animal category* but with different diets, different manure handling practices, or different housing management. The default is 1 herd, and you will not be able to change the name of the default herd.

- i. Click *Add Additional Herd* to name and provide management details for another herd.
- ii. COMET-Farm will prompt you to focus on one of your animal types at a time. For instance, below the user is being asked to input herds of Beef-Heifer Replacements.

Enter Animal Characteristics - Beef-Heifer Replacements

Please define your herds . You may add up to 5 herds per animal category. For the purpose of this tool, a herd is defined as a group of animals managed within the same animal category but with different diets or different manure handling practices, Please think about the **Beef-Heifer Replacements** and add additional herds if needed

Default Herd

Add Additional Herd +

<< Back
Save & Continue >>

iii. Select *Save & Continue>>*

8. Animal Details

- a. You will next be prompted to enter animal details for the first herd of your first animal type. Enter how many cattle you have, on average, per month in your herd. If your number is the same across all months, you can use the 📋 icon to copy your January value to all months.

Enter Animal Characteristics - Beef-Heifer Stockers

How many **Beef-Heifer Stockers** do you have, on average, per month in **Default Herd**?

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85

<< Back
Save & Continue >>



9. Animal Weight

- a. If your operation includes Beef-Heifer Replacements, Beef-Heifer Stockers, or Beef-Steer Stockers, enter:
 - i. Average body weight (lbs)
 - ii. Average daily weight gain (lbs)
 - iii. Average mature weight (lbs)
- b. If your operation includes Beef-Mature Cows/Cow-Calf, enter:
 - i. Average beef-heifer stockers body weight (lbs)

10. Hours of Work (*if applicable*). If your operation includes Beef-Heifer Stockers or Beef-Steer Stockers, you will be prompted to enter information. *If you do not have this animal type, proceed to Step 11.*

- a. If livestock are used as draft animals, enter how many hours, on average, your animals work each day

11. Enter Pregnancy and Milk Production (*if applicable*). If your operation includes Beef-Mature Cows/Cow-Calf, you will be prompted to enter information. *If you do not have this animal type, proceed to Step 12.* Enter the following:

- a. Number of pregnant cows you have, on average, per month in this herd
 - i. Use the  icon to copy the same animal count to every month
- b. Percent of your pregnant cows that are lactating, on average, per month in this herd
 - i. Use the  icon to copy the same percentage to every month
- c. Average daily milk production (lbs)
- d. Average milk fat content (%)

12. Types of Feed

- a. First, select the months that the *same feed types are fed to the selected herd* in the “Date Range” table. If animals are fed the same feed types all year long, clicking on the box to the left of “Month” at the top of the “Date Range” table will select all of the months. Select “Remove all dates and start over” to delete the previous entries if needed.
 - i. Note that you will have to have feed types entered into all months before you can proceed to the next management pane.
 - ii. Feed stuff selected will need to include all types of feed the animal is provided, including representing feed the animal may consume on pasture.
 - iii. In the example below, the cattle are given the same feed types across all months.
- b. Once you’ve selected your first range of months of the same feed types (e.g. all months, May-August, December & January, etc.), you can choose *the types of feed consumed by the selected herd for the selected month(s)*. Selecting one of the “Feed Stuff” items (e.g., alfalfa, grass) allows you to then select a Category (e.g. silage, grain screenings, hay). Click Add to populate the Date Range above.

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1. Select a range of months for your **Dairy-Heifer Replacements** in the table below to enter in your feed types. Complete all months before proceeding to next panel. ?

Date Range		
Month	Completed	Feed
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Feb	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Mar	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Apr	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> May	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Jun	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Jul	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Aug	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Sep	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Oct	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Nov	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls
<input type="checkbox"/> Dec	Yes	Grass Hay, Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared, Corn Grain, Whole, Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP, Cottonseed Hulls

Remove all the dates and start over

2. Choose the types of feed consumed for your **Dairy-Heifer Replacements** for the month/months in your Replacements.

Feed Stuff ?	Category ?	Your Selections ?
<input type="text"/> Search Alfalfa Almond Ammonium Apple Artichoke Avocado Bahiagrass Bakery Bananas Barley Beans Beet Bermudagrass Birdsfoot Blureet Blood Meal Bluegrass Bluestem Bread		Cottonseed Hulls Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP Corn Grain, Whole Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared Grass Hay

Add >>

<< Remove

Confirm Selections

c. Once you Confirm Selection, enter the percentage of each feed for your herd. The percentages of all feeds for the selected months must equal 100%. Click **Done – Save feed types for current selected date** to either select a new range of months or move to the next step.

3. Enter the percentage of each feed for your **Dairy-Heifer Replacements** in Replacements. ?

Cottonseed Hulls	<input type="text" value="6"/>
Soybean Meal, Solv. Ext. 44% CP	<input type="text" value="8"/>
Corn Grain, Whole	<input type="text" value="10"/>
Corn Silage, Mature Well Eared	<input type="text" value="37"/>
Grass Hay	<input type="text" value="39"/>
Total % of Diet	<input type="text" value="100"/>

Done - Save feed types for current selected date

- d. If you cannot find a feed type that matches your animal feed type in the selection box, please refer to the feed stuff table in the [Blue Book](#) (page 369 or Appendix 5-B) to choose the feed that closely matches yours based on dry matter intake and other parameters.

13. Feeding Situation

- a. Select the primary feeding situation for your herd from the following: stall, pasture, or large grazing land

14. Manure System Types


- a. Select which *manure management systems are currently in use*. Begin by entering whether or not you use a solid/liquid separator.
 - i. If you do use a solid/liquid separator, select from the drop-down menus:
 - 1. The separator type (e.g., roller press, vibrating screen, etc.)
 - 2. The percentage of solids removed
 - a. Depending on the separator type selected, COMET provides default values on the percent solids removed. Users can modify this default value.
 - 3. The primary solid treatment method
 - 4. The primary liquid treatment method
 - ii. If you do *not* use a solid/liquid separator, select from the drop-down menu:
 - 1. The final or end treatment/outdoor storage method (e.g., composting, daily spread, etc.)

15. Manure System Details

- a. If you *selected temporary stack and long-term stockpile*, enter:
 - i. The system cover type
 - ii. If the manure is stored short term (less than six months) or long term (more than six months)
- b. If you selected *composting*, select the composting method.
- c. If you selected *aerobic lagoon*, enter:
 - i. The total volume of the lagoon (cubic feet)
 - ii. If the system aeration is natural or forced
- d. If you selected *anaerobic digester*, select the digester type
- e. If you selected *aerobic treatment*, enter:

- i. The system cover type
- ii. The exposed surface area (square feet)

16. Manure Details - based on what you have entered in the previous panel, COMET will provide default values for total dry manure produced and percent nitrogen content of manure each month. Users can modify any of these default values.

- a. Enter the total dry manure produced per head per day (lbs). Use the  icon to copy your animal count to every month.
- b. Enter the average percent nitrogen content of the manure each month. COMET-Farm will provide default values if you do not have a lab report.
- c. Click *Save & Continue*

17. Repeat these steps

- a. If you have *multiple herds or multiple animal types* in your baseline scenario, you will have to repeat these steps for each herd/type before moving on to your future scenario.

18. Enter Future Management Details: Once baseline scenario is completed, you will be able to define new scenarios for future management. You can either copy your entire baseline scenario and then modify only the necessary fields or start a completely new future scenario (using the same animal type).

- a. COMET-Farm allows for a maximum of 10 scenarios.

19. A small window will appear where you will be given the option to run a report, create a new scenario, or continue editing your baseline scenario. If you choose to *create a new scenario*:

- a. We would recommend a short (25 characters), descriptive title. This will help when interpreting reports.
- b. If making small changes to the future scenario (ex. Installing an anaerobic digester or switching feed types), **select the box *Copy management information from Baseline*** to minimize the data entry process for the future scenario.
 - If you would like to start from scratch for your future scenario, Add the descriptive title and select *Start or Create new scenario*.
- b. If you only want to report on your current management practices, you will still need to create a new scenario. You can select copy management from baseline, and click Continue to Report. There should be no change between the two scenarios.

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Scenario Complete!

You may choose to continue to **Report**, **create a new scenario** or **close this window and continue editing your current scenario**.

☒ Copy management information from:

When copying management information from the baseline scenario into a new scenario, baseline yearly data is copied into the new activity years. If the baseline scenario consisted of less than 10 years, management information is recycled into remaining years.

[Continue to Report >>](#) [Create new Scenario >>](#) [Close](#)

20. If you copied the management information from your baseline to the future scenario, your future scenario will now look *identical* to the *baseline scenario*.
21. Management details can be added, modified, or deleted in the *exact* same manner as the *baseline management* you completed in steps 7-17. The only thing you cannot change is animal type (but you can adjust number of herds).
22. When you have completed modifying and checking all management for your first scenario, click *Save & Continue* until you're prompted to either *Continue to the report, add another scenario*, or keep editing.
 - a. *Create a new scenario*- Each project can accommodate up to 10 future scenarios.
 - i. If you have more than one scenario, you can only proceed to the report if all management data in all scenarios are completed.
 - b. *Keep editing* if you need to review your changes
23. **Continue to Report Page.** You will be taken to the report page. If you have created an account, you can navigate away from the browser and the system will keep your report active.
24. For a detailed breakdown of the report, please visit this page on [Interpreting Animal Agriculture Report](#).

This document was created by Haley Nagle & Andie Conlon, Outreach Specialists on the COMET Team.