



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
NEW ENGLAND FIELD OFFICE
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USDA TAKES A CLOSER LOOK AT AGRICULTURAL LABOR

Concord, NH – Beginning on October 17, U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct its Agricultural Labor Survey to collect information about hired labor on New England farms. More than 260 operations in New England will be asked to respond to this survey.

“During these tough economic times, it is important to maintain accurate information about labor in all industrial sectors, including agriculture,” said Gary Keough, Director of the NASS New England Field Office. “The data we will gather from farm operators will allow New England and federal legislators to establish labor policies based on objective information.”

Statistics from the Agricultural Labor Survey are used by USDA and the Department of Labor to help establish minimum wage rates for agricultural workers, administer farm labor recruitment and placement service programs, and assist legislators in determining labor policies.

Information gathered by NASS in the Agricultural Labor Survey will include total number of hired farm workers, hours worked, and wage rates paid during that week of October 9-15. For their convenience, survey participants will have the option of responding online.

“Considering the impact these data may have on future agricultural labor practices, it is extremely important for all operators selected for this survey to respond,” said Keough.

NASS will compile, analyze, and publish survey results in the quarterly *Farm Labor* report, to be released on November 17. This and all other NASS reports are available online at www.nass.usda.gov. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS New England Field Office at: 1-800-642-9571.

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