



Florida Agricultural Statistics Service
 1222 Woodward Street
 Orlando, Florida 32803
 407 / 648-6013

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl>



FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE

FARM LABOR

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FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 76,000 for the week of January 9 through 15. Farmers hired 60,000 workers compared with 58,000 in October 1999 and 55,000 in January 1999. Agricultural services hired 16,000 compared with 5,000 last quarter and 12,000 a year ago. Nearly ideal weather allowed citrus harvesting to proceed on schedule during the survey week. Foggy mornings delayed some vegetable harvesting until plants dried in some southern Peninsula localities. Tobacco growers cared for beds. Sugarcane grinding and planting were active.

The January 2000 all hired workers wage rate averaged \$8.34 per hour, 25 cents or three percent above the \$8.09 per hour paid last quarter, but equal to the wage paid last year. Farmers paid an average of \$8.28 per hour, 23 cents above the \$8.05 paid last quarter, and three cents less than the \$8.31 paid last year. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$8.60 per hour compared with \$8.65 paid last quarter and \$8.50 paid last year.

UNITED STATES

There were 836,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches the week of January 9-15, 2000, down 3 percent from a year ago. There were 666,000 workers hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees working on farms and ranches made up the remaining 170,000 workers. Migrant workers accounted for 7.3 percent of the January hired workforce compared to 6.0 percent last year.

spring planting, equipment cleaning and repairs, hauling grain, and moving livestock.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$8.12 per hour during the January 2000 survey week, up 18 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$7.32 per hour, up 9 cents from last January. Livestock workers earned \$7.64 per hour compared with \$7.31 a year earlier. The Field and Livestock worker combined wage rate was up 18 cents from last year.

The largest declines in number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the California, Northeast I (New England and New York), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), and Pacific (Oregon and Washington) regions. In California, heavy rains moved into the northern part of the State and some light rainfall was reported in central and southern areas of the State during the survey week, which generally led to fewer field workers throughout the State. Heavy snow, accompanied by sharply colder weather, spread into the Northeast I region during the survey week reducing farm activities. In the Southeast, the survey week was characterized by rainfall early in the week followed by a late week cold front leading to less farm activity. In the Pacific region, frequent storms brought excessive rains to the coast and heavy snows on the Cascades. As a result, fewer farm workers were reported in the region during the survey week.

Number of hours worked averaged 38.2 hours for hired workers during the survey week compared with 38.1 hours a year ago.

Hired farm worker wage rates were above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Northeast I and Corn Belt I regions. The higher wages were generally attributable to higher paid workers retained on the payroll during the winter months in these regions.

The largest increases in number of hired farm workers over last year occurred in the Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming), Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), Northern Plains (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas), and Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio) regions. In Mountain I and II, warm weather gave farm workers more time for general farm maintenance and tending to livestock during the survey week. Calving and lambing were also beginning in these regions. In Mountain III, record high temperatures allowed farmers to work in fields and nurseries, prune orchards, and irrigate wheat where needed. Dry, mild weather in the Northern Plains and Corn Belt I regions gave farmers more opportunities for land preparation in advance of

Regions showing declines in the hired farm worker wage rates were Mountain II, Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), and Hawaii. Slight declines in the hired wage rates resulted from additional seasonal workers added to the payrolls in Mountain II; fewer higher paid, full-time workers reported in Appalachian I; and seasonal workers still stripping tobacco in Appalachian II.

Table 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, January 9 - 15, 2000, with comparisons

Employer, Year, and survey week	Hired by farm operators							
	Number of workers			Hours Worked Per Week	Wages Paid by Type of Work			
	All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock	
		150 days or more	149 days or less					
HIRED BY FARMERS								
2000		Thousands		Hours	Dollars Per Hour ^{1/}			
January 9 - 15	60.0	48.0	12.0	41.9	8.28	7.40	7.50	
1999								
October 10 - 16	58.0	47.0	11.0	38.8	8.05	7.05	7.00	
July 11 - 17	45.0	40.0	5.0	39.7	8.32	7.25	7.30	
April 11 - 17	54.0	46.0	8.0	41.1	8.18	7.40	6.90	
January 10 - 16	55.0	48.0	7.0	39.1	8.31	7.35	7.00	
1998								
October 11 - 17	47.0	42.0	5.0	43.0	7.82	7.10	7.30	
July 12 - 18	45.0	40.0	5.0	41.5	8.08	7.25	6.90	
April 12 - 18	57.0	43.0	14.0	39.7	7.57	6.75	7.20	
January 11 - 17	51.0	41.0	10.0	38.3	8.22	7.45	8.00	
HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES								
2000								
January 9 - 15	16.0			36.5	8.60			
1999								
October 10 - 16	5.0			32.0	8.65			
July 11 - 17	3.0			45.0	8.85			
April 11 - 17	9.0			38.0	8.30			
January 10 - 16	12.0			35.0	8.50			
1998								
October 11 - 17	6.0			30.0	8.05			
July 12 - 18	5.0			32.0	8.60			
April 12 - 18	13.0			40.0	8.40			
January 11 - 17	16.0			30.0	8.80			
HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS & AGRICULTURAL SERVICES								
2000								
January 9 - 15	76.0				8.34			
1999								
October 10 - 16	63.0				8.09			
July 11 - 17	48.0				8.36			
April 11 - 17	63.0				8.20			
January 10 - 16	67.0				8.34			
1998								
October 11 - 17	53.0				7.84			
July 12 - 18	50.0				8.12			
April 12 - 18	70.0				7.73			
January 11 - 17	67.0				8.33			

^{1/} Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

**Table 2 -- Number of workers hired by farmers, wage rates, and hours worked,
selected States, January 9 - 15, 2000, with comparisons ^{1/}**

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States ^{2/}
Thousands						
All hired workers						
January 9 - 15, 2000	60	185	44	20	8	666
October 10 - 16, 1999	58	261	52	22	8	989
January 10 - 16, 1999	55	240	48	16	7	705
Expected to work						
150 days or less						
January 9 - 15, 2000	48	140	32	18	7	528
October 10 - 16, 1999	47	171	39	19	7	665
January 10 - 16, 1999	48	191	39	15	6	568
149 days or less						
January 9 - 15, 2000	12	45	12	2	1	138
October 10 - 16, 1999	11	90	13	3	1	324
January 10 - 16, 1999	7	49	9	1	1	137
Dollars per hour ^{3/}						
All hired worker wage rate						
January 9 - 15, 2000	8.28	8.00	7.52	7.22	10.40	8.12
October 10 - 16, 1999	8.05	7.86	7.24	7.12	*10.88	7.83
January 10 - 16, 1999	8.31	7.97	6.93	7.18	10.80	7.94
Wages by type of worker						
Field & Livestock						
January 9 - 15, 2000	7.41	7.28	7.08	6.57	8.90	7.43
October 10 - 16, 1999	7.04	7.30	6.74	6.69	9.24	7.33
January 10 - 16, 1999	7.32	7.26	6.53	6.75	9.35	7.25
Field						
January 9 - 15, 2000	7.40	7.15	7.06	6.51	8.96	7.32
October 10 - 16, 1999	7.05	7.25	6.48	6.51	9.21	7.31
January 10 - 16, 1999	7.35	7.13	6.49	6.66	9.38	7.23
Livestock						
January 9 - 15, 2000	7.50	8.40	7.10	6.83	^{4/}	7.64
October 10 - 16, 1999	7.00	8.03	7.29	7.40	^{4/}	7.43
January 10 - 16, 1999	7.00	8.40	6.58	7.06	^{4/}	7.31
Average hours per week						
Hours worked by all hired workers						
January 9 - 15, 2000	41.9	42.0	37.6	43.5	36.6	38.2
October 10 - 16, 1999	38.8	46.7	39.2	44.9	36.9	42.5
January 10 - 16, 1999	39.1	41.6	38.4	43.4	36.7	38.1

^{1/} Excludes Agricultural Service workers. ^{2/} United States excludes Alaska. ^{3/} Value of any perquisites provided are not included in wage rates. ^{4/} Insufficient data for this category; included in all hired wages. *Revised.

RELIABILITY OF FARM LABOR ESTIMATES

Survey Procedures: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the last two weeks of January using sampling procedures to ensure every employer of agricultural workers had a chance of being selected.

Two samples of farm operators are selected. First, NASS maintains a list of farms that hire farm workers. Farms on this list are classified by size and type. Those expected to employ large numbers of workers are selected with greater frequency than those hiring few or no workers. A second sample consists of segments of land scientifically selected from an area sampling frame. Each June, highly trained interviewers locate each selected land segment and identify every farm operating land within the sample segment's boundaries. The names of farms found in these area segments are matched against the NASS list of farms; those not found on the list are included in the labor survey sample to represent all farms. This methodology is known as multiple frame sampling, with an area sample used to measure the incompleteness of the list. Additionally, a list of agricultural service firms was sampled in California and Florida. The survey reference week was January 9-15, 2000.

Reliability: Two types of errors, sampling and nonsampling, are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both types affect the "precision" of the estimates. Sampling error occurs because a complete census is not taken. The sampling error measures the variation in estimates from the average of all possible samples. An estimate of 100 with a sampling error of 1 would mean that chances are 19 out of 20 that the estimates from all possible samples averaged together would be between 98 and 102; which is the survey

estimate, plus or minus two times the sampling error. The sampling error expressed as a percent of the estimate is called the relative sampling error. The relative sampling error for number of hired workers at the U.S. level was 3.8 percent. The relative sampling error for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 9 and 35 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 1.0 percent. The relative sampling error was 1.0 percent for the combined field and livestock worker wage rate. Relative sampling errors for the all hired farm worker wage rate generally ranged between 2 and 7 percent at the regional levels. Relative sampling errors for wage rates published by type of farm and economic class of farm ranged between 2 and 19 percent at the regional level.

Nonsampling errors can occur in a complete census as well as in sample surveys. They are caused by the inability to obtain correct information from each operation sampled, differences in interpreting questions or definitions, and mistakes in editing, coding, or processing the data. Special efforts are taken at each step of the survey to minimize nonsampling errors.

Revision Policy: Farm labor information is subject to revision the next time the information is published for the year after the original publication date. The basis for revision must be supported by additional data that directly affect the level of the estimate. Worker numbers and wage rates for October 1999 and January 1999 were subject to revision with this report. Revisions were made and previous data are reprinted in this report for your information.