

Increase in U.S. Agricultural Workers

Hired agricultural workers in the Lake Region (Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota) totaled 69,000 during the week of July 11-17, 2004, an increase of 7,000 workers from the comparable week in July 2003. Warmer weather during the week required additional workers to keep up with the vegetable harvest. The average number of hours worked increased to 36.4, compared to 36.2 in the previous year. The average wage rate for all hired agricultural workers was \$9.30 per hour, down from \$9.36 per hour the previous July. Field workers earned on average \$8.29 per hour during the week, down \$0.05. Livestock workers average wage rate was \$9.13 per hour, up \$0.18 per hour from the previous year.

U.S. agricultural operators hired 1.29 million during the week of July 11-17, 2004. Agricultural service workers accounted for 340,000 of this total. Workers directly hired by agricultural operators totaled 953,000, a 1 percent increase from July 2003. The average number of hours worked for all hired workers was 39.3. Average wage rate for all U.S. agricultural workers was \$9.10 per hour, up \$0.22 from a year ago. Field workers earned on average \$8.42 per hour, up \$0.25 from 2003. Livestock workers average wage rate was \$8.75 per hour, up \$0.18 from the comparable week in July 2003.