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Released February 18, 2010, by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

## Hired Workers Down 2 Percent, Wage Rates up 1 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 767,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of January 10-16, 2010, down 2 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 587,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 180,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$11.06 per hour during the January 2010 reference week, up 13 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.14 per hour, up 18 cents from last January, while livestock workers earned \$10.26 per hour compared with \$10.27 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.19 per hour, was up 11 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 37.3 hours for hired workers during the survey week, down 3 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California, and in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), and Northeast I (New England and New York) regions. Moderate to heavy rains over most of California caused major fieldwork delays. Therefore, fewer hired workers were needed. In the Southern Plains region, weather conditions were considerably wetter compared with last year's relatively dry period, and fieldwork was curtailed for several days. This led to a decreased demand for hired workers. Below normal temperatures and wet soils in the Southeast region halted cotton and soybean harvests, reducing the need for hired workers. In the Northeast I region, cold, snowy weather hindered most outside farm activities, and reduced the need for hired workers.

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in Florida, and in the Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), and Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) regions. In Florida, freezing temperatures caused producers of oranges, vegetables, strawberries, sugarcane, and nursery crops to scramble to minimize crop damage. Therefore, demand for hired workers was considerably higher. Larger hog inventories in the Corn Belt I region increased the demand for livestock workers. Also, late corn harvest was ongoing, and above normal grain movement to market pushed field worker numbers above last year. In the Northeast II region, continued strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industries led to more field workers being needed. The late corn harvest was also ongoing. Mild conditions in the Corn Belt II region led to heightened movement of grain to market and increased the demand for hired workers. In the Lake region, above normal temperatures and very little precipitation allowed late corn harvest to progress. Therefore, more hired workers were necessary.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), Florida, Northeast II, and Northeast I regions. Increased snow cover in the Mountain II region caused more supplemental feeding on cattle operations. This led to a greater demand for skilled workers. In the Northern Plains region, late corn harvest raised the demand for skilled machine operators. This pushed the average wage higher than last year. The higher wages in Florida were due to a lower percentage of part time workers. In the Northeast II region, a higher percentage of workers on nursery and greenhouse operations led to higher average wages. Salaried workers working fewer hours in the Northeast I region kept hourly wage levels above a year earlier.



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## Hired Workers and Wage Rates, United States, with Comparisons

[Excludes Alaska]

Farm employment	January 11-17, 2009	October 11-17, 2009	January 10-16, 2010
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Hired workers .....	595	807	587
150 days or more .....	497	585	501
149 days or less .....	98	222	86
Agricultural services			
Workers working on farms .....	190	285	180
Hired farm and service workers .....	785	1,092	767
	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)
Hours worked			
Hired .....	38.3	39.0	37.3
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Wage rate for			
All hired workers <sup>1 2</sup> .....	10.93	10.91	11.06
Type of worker			
Field and livestock combined .....	10.08	10.24	10.19
Field .....	9.96	10.25	10.14
Livestock .....	10.27	10.23	10.26

<sup>1</sup> Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes agricultural service workers.

## Number of Workers and Hours Worked by Region and United States: January 10-16, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region <sup>1</sup>	Hired			
	Number of workers	Expected to be employed		Number of hours worked
		150 days or more	149 days or less	
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours per week)
Northeast I .....	21	18	3	37.2
Northeast II .....	25	22	3	36.5
Appalachian I .....	23	20	3	35.4
Appalachian II .....	19	14	5	31.5
Southeast .....	23	17	6	33.3
Florida .....	48	43	5	37.1
Lake .....	46	41	5	33.8
Cornbelt I .....	32	27	5	32.4
Cornbelt II .....	23	18	5	33.5
Delta .....	29	23	6	30.8
Northern Plains .....	21	19	2	41.2
Southern Plains .....	55	47	8	36.5
Mountain I .....	16	14	2	40.0
Mountain II .....	15	14	1	40.2
Mountain III .....	19	18	1	49.4
Pacific .....	52	43	9	37.0
California .....	114	98	16	42.2
Hawaii .....	6	5	1	35.5
United States <sup>2</sup> .....	587	501	86	37.3

<sup>1</sup> Region map on page 16.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes Alaska.

## Wage Rates by Type of Worker by Region and United States: January 10-16, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region <sup>1</sup>	Type of worker			Wage rates for all hired workers
	Field	Livestock	Field and livestock combined	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast I .....	10.30	10.56	10.45	11.45
Northeast II .....	11.57	9.63	10.82	12.00
Appalachian I .....	9.09	9.14	9.11	10.24
Appalachian II .....	9.36	10.11	9.84	11.10
Southeast .....	9.01	8.74	8.91	9.40
Florida .....	9.60	10.35	9.70	10.84
Lake .....	11.12	9.97	10.30	11.22
Cornbelt I .....	11.81	10.35	11.00	11.95
Cornbelt II .....	11.40	10.77	11.00	10.98
Delta .....	8.86	9.35	9.05	9.85
Northern Plains .....	12.32	10.14	11.35	11.71
Southern Plains .....	9.01	10.21	9.66	10.00
Mountain I .....	11.53	10.55	10.82	11.24
Mountain II .....	10.74	11.30	11.04	11.73
Mountain III .....	8.47	9.59	8.90	9.44
Pacific .....	9.77	10.55	9.95	11.05
California .....	10.50	11.05	10.64	11.68
Hawaii .....	11.70	13.60	11.82	14.14
United States <sup>2</sup> .....	10.14	10.26	10.19	11.06

<sup>1</sup> Region map on page 16.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes Alaska.

## Number of Workers and Hours Worked by Region and United States: October 11-17, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region <sup>1</sup>	Hired			
	Number of workers	Expected to be employed		Number of hours worked
		150 days or more	149 days or less	
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours per week)
Northeast I .....	41	28	13	38.5
Northeast II .....	37	28	9	41.0
Appalachian I .....	31	21	10	37.1
Appalachian II .....	24	14	10	37.1
Southeast .....	32	23	9	35.0
Florida .....	46	41	5	38.6
Lake .....	67	46	21	38.0
Cornbelt I .....	47	29	18	33.6
Cornbelt II .....	30	20	10	31.1
Delta .....	33	26	7	38.0
Northern Plains .....	34	25	9	41.0
Southern Plains .....	56	44	12	39.0
Mountain I .....	25	20	5	45.0
Mountain II .....	22	18	4	41.3
Mountain III .....	20	18	2	44.9
Pacific .....	99	55	44	38.0
California .....	157	124	33	42.1
Hawaii .....	6	5	1	36.7
United States <sup>2</sup> .....	807	585	222	39.0

<sup>1</sup> Region map on page 16.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes Alaska.

## Wage Rates by Type of Worker by Region and United States: October 11-17, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region <sup>1</sup>	Type of worker			Wage rates for all hired workers
	Field	Livestock	Field and livestock combined	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast I .....	9.96	9.93	9.95	10.41
Northeast II .....	10.28	9.50	10.05	10.88
Appalachian I .....	8.67	9.15	8.85	9.55
Appalachian II .....	9.85	10.38	10.10	11.05
Southeast .....	8.87	9.33	9.00	9.53
Florida .....	9.30	10.10	9.40	10.65
Lake .....	11.03	10.10	10.65	11.24
Cornbelt I .....	11.30	10.51	11.00	11.17
Cornbelt II .....	10.46	11.23	10.75	10.85
Delta .....	8.86	9.16	8.95	9.50
Northern Plains .....	11.77	10.23	11.20	11.80
Southern Plains .....	9.17	10.64	9.85	10.17
Mountain I .....	10.45	8.89	9.70	10.05
Mountain II .....	11.01	11.70	11.25	11.55
Mountain III .....	9.10	10.06	9.50	10.30
Pacific .....	11.07	10.42	11.00	11.82
California .....	10.25	11.05	10.40	11.25
Hawaii .....	11.55	13.40	11.69	13.60
United States <sup>2</sup> .....	10.25	10.23	10.24	10.91

<sup>1</sup> Region map on page 16.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes Alaska.

## Number of Workers and Hours Worked by Region and United States: January 11-17, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region <sup>1</sup>	Hired			
	Number of workers	Expected to be employed		Number of hours worked
		150 days or more	149 days or less	
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours per week)
Northeast I .....	26	22	4	41.3
Northeast II .....	21	19	2	37.0
Appalachian I .....	22	20	2	35.9
Appalachian II .....	17	12	5	31.0
Southeast .....	30	22	8	38.8
Florida .....	38	31	7	37.8
Lake .....	43	36	7	34.0
Cornbelt I .....	26	24	2	35.5
Cornbelt II .....	20	16	4	34.0
Delta .....	27	21	6	30.7
Northern Plains .....	20	18	2	33.1
Southern Plains .....	65	55	10	40.4
Mountain I .....	15	13	2	40.0
Mountain II .....	15	14	1	41.5
Mountain III .....	20	18	2	49.7
Pacific .....	52	39	13	37.8
California .....	132	112	20	41.3
Hawaii .....	6	5	1	37.9
United States <sup>2</sup> .....	595	497	98	38.3

<sup>1</sup> Region map on page 16.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes Alaska.

## Wage Rates by Type of Worker by Region and United States: January 11-17, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region <sup>1</sup>	Type of worker			Wage rates for all hired workers
	Field	Livestock	Field and livestock combined	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast I .....	10.66	10.03	10.25	10.91
Northeast II .....	10.80	9.69	10.30	11.40
Appalachian I .....	10.08	9.91	10.00	10.80
Appalachian II .....	8.92	10.52	9.80	10.99
Southeast .....	9.65	9.65	9.65	10.05
Florida .....	8.95	9.45	9.00	10.16
Lake .....	10.83	9.96	10.20	11.02
Cornbelt I .....	11.85	10.85	11.30	11.90
Cornbelt II .....	11.06	11.27	11.20	11.40
Delta .....	9.43	9.83	9.55	10.04
Northern Plains .....	10.29	10.53	10.42	10.90
Southern Plains .....	10.06	10.24	10.15	10.70
Mountain I .....	11.49	10.65	10.85	11.50
Mountain II .....	9.37	8.90	9.05	10.32
Mountain III .....	9.27	10.58	9.75	10.30
Pacific .....	10.35	9.48	10.25	11.40
California .....	9.80	10.95	10.09	11.15
Hawaii .....	10.70	13.50	10.93	12.69
United States <sup>2</sup> .....	9.96	10.27	10.08	10.93

<sup>1</sup> Region map on page 16.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes Alaska.

## Combined Field and Livestock Worker Wage Rates, by Type of Farm, by Region and 48 States: January 11-17, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region <sup>1</sup>	Field crops	Other crops	Livestock and poultry	All farms
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast .....	(D)	10.63	9.94	10.27
Appalachian .....	9.23	10.10	10.03	9.92
Southeast .....	9.99	9.06	9.75	9.31
Lake .....	11.25	9.80	10.16	10.20
Cornbelt .....	11.35	11.05	11.16	11.26
Delta .....	9.04	9.60	10.07	9.55
Northern Plains .....	10.41	10.16	10.43	10.42
Southern Plains .....	10.88	8.60	10.50	10.15
Mountain .....	10.75	9.15	10.12	9.87
Pacific .....	11.36	9.95	10.45	10.14
48 States .....	10.67	9.68	10.28	10.08

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

## Combined Field and Livestock Worker Wage Rates, by Type of Farm, by Region and 48 States: January 10-16, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region <sup>1</sup>	Field crops	Other crops	Livestock and poultry	All farms
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast .....	(D)	11.05	10.33	10.65
Appalachian .....	9.01	9.07	9.68	9.42
Southeast .....	8.96	9.52	9.42	9.44
Lake .....	12.60	11.11	9.95	10.30
Cornbelt .....	11.52	10.63	10.54	11.00
Delta .....	8.66	9.89	9.28	9.05
Northern Plains .....	12.57	(D)	9.70	11.35
Southern Plains .....	9.50	8.79	10.18	9.66
Mountain .....	(D)	10.14	9.93	10.16
Pacific .....	12.55	10.13	11.00	10.45
48 States .....	11.01	10.01	10.19	10.19

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

<sup>1</sup> Regions consist of the following States:

Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

Appalachian: Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.

Southeast: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina.

Lake: Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin.

Cornbelt: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio.

Delta: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi.

Northern Plains: Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.

Southern Plains: Oklahoma, Texas.

Mountain: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming.

Pacific: California, Oregon, Washington.

48 States: All States, excluding Alaska and Hawaii.

## All Hired Worker Wage Rates, by Economic Class of Farm, by Region and 48 States: January 11-17, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region <sup>1</sup>	Gross value sales-\$1,000						All farms
	<50	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000+	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast .....	13.20	8.85	9.39	10.50	9.95	11.80	11.12
Appalachian .....	9.22	10.82	8.65	9.51	10.45	12.04	10.88
Southeast .....	8.22	9.37	10.83	9.08	10.53	10.46	10.11
Lake .....	(D)	8.02	9.42	9.35	10.41	11.50	11.02
Cornbelt .....	10.14	11.60	9.38	10.51	12.25	12.64	11.69
Delta .....	9.57	8.27	8.36	8.43	8.24	11.05	10.04
Northern Plains .....	11.51	(D)	9.95	10.07	11.48	11.68	10.90
Southern Plains .....	9.03	10.39	(D)	11.35	9.34	10.13	10.70
Mountain .....	9.05	10.59	10.42	13.40	8.40	10.87	10.63
Pacific .....	9.39	10.66	12.33	11.70	12.19	11.14	11.22
48 States .....	9.45	10.52	10.85	10.93	10.52	11.20	10.91

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

## All Hired Worker Wage Rates, by Economic Class of Farm, by Region and 48 States: January 10-16, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region <sup>1</sup>	Gross value sales-\$1,000						All farms
	<50	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000+	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast .....	(D)	9.28	9.39	10.49	10.58	12.92	11.75
Appalachian .....	9.43	12.05	9.89	10.69	11.26	10.74	10.60
Southeast .....	10.32	9.57	9.69	9.40	11.68	10.56	10.41
Lake .....	9.44	7.19	8.89	9.54	10.54	12.50	11.22
Cornbelt .....	11.01	10.09	11.64	10.58	12.71	11.71	11.54
Delta .....	10.47	7.49	9.25	9.45	(D)	10.35	9.85
Northern Plains .....	11.51	(D)	7.86	11.62	11.83	12.94	11.71
Southern Plains .....	9.57	9.62	11.44	13.79	8.56	9.89	10.00
Mountain .....	9.76	9.50	9.47	(D)	11.88	10.67	10.60
Pacific .....	11.69	11.26	12.42	10.83	12.05	11.45	11.50
48 States .....	10.29	10.10	10.47	10.49	11.65	11.39	11.03

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

<sup>1</sup> Regions consist of the following States:

Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

Appalachian: Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.

Southeast: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina.

Lake: Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin.

Cornbelt: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio.

Delta: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi.

Northern Plains: Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.

Southern Plains: Oklahoma, Texas.

Mountain: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming.

Pacific: California, Oregon, Washington.

48 States: All States, excluding Alaska and Hawaii.

## Field and Livestock Workers by Type of Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Type of farm	January 11-17, 2009	October 11-17, 2009	January 10-16, 2010
	(percent of field and livestock workers)	(percent of field and livestock workers)	(percent of field and livestock workers)
Field crops .....	11	15	12
Other crops .....	44	54	47
Livestock, dairy, and poultry .....	45	31	41

## Hired Workers by Economic Class of Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Gross value of sales	January 11-17, 2009	October 11-17, 2009	January 10-16, 2010
	(percent of hired workers)	(percent of hired workers)	(percent of hired workers)
Less than \$50,000 .....	10	9	11
\$50,000-\$99,999 .....	4	5	4
\$100,000-\$249,999 .....	9	11	10
\$250,000-\$499,999 .....	12	11	12
\$500,000-\$999,999 .....	11	14	12
\$1,000,000 and over .....	54	50	51

## Hired Workers by Number of Workers on Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Number of workers on farm	January 11-17, 2009	October 11-17, 2009	January 10-16, 2010
	(percent of hired workers)	(percent of hired workers)	(percent of hired workers)
Employed on farms hiring			
1 worker .....	11	9	11
2 workers .....	10	9	11
3-6 workers .....	20	19	23
7-10 workers .....	10	9	8
11-20 workers .....	12	11	11
21-50 workers .....	13	14	12
51 or more workers .....	24	29	24

## Agricultural Services

Agricultural service operations provided 180,000 workers for the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of January 10-16, 2010. Agricultural service workers in California numbered 80,000 this January, down 22 percent from last year. Florida's number of agricultural service workers was 7,000, down 22 percent from last year.

The average wages received by agricultural service workers in California and Florida were \$10.60 and \$10.50 per hour, respectively. Comparable wages in January 2009 were \$11.05 per hour in California and \$10.05 per hour in Florida.

### Number of Agricultural Service Workers, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates, for California, Florida, and United States

[Data are for agricultural services performed on the farm by custom service units. These statistics are not included in the State-Regional tables]

State	Number of workers working on farms			Hours worked			Wage rates <sup>1</sup>		
	January 2009	October 2009	January 2010	January 2009	October 2009	January 2010	January 2009	October 2009	January 2010
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours)	(hours)	(hours)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
California .....	103.0	120.0	80.0	34.7	36.1	36.9	11.05	10.75	10.60
Florida .....	9.0	3.0	7.0	37.0	44.0	41.0	10.05	11.35	10.50
United States .....	190.0	285.0	180.0	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

(NA) Not available.

<sup>1</sup> Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided to some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

## Farm Labor Regions



USDA/NASS

### Region

### States

Northeast I	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont.
Northeast II	Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania.
Appalachian I	North Carolina, Virginia.
Appalachian II	Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia.
Southeast	Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina.
Lake	Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin.
Cornbelt I	Illinois, Indiana, Ohio.
Cornbelt II	Iowa, Missouri.
Delta	Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi.
Northern Plains	Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.
Southern Plains	Oklahoma, Texas.
Mountain I	Idaho, Montana, Wyoming.
Mountain II	Colorado, Nevada, Utah.
Mountain III	Arizona, New Mexico.
Pacific	Oregon, Washington.

## Farm Labor Definitions

The following definitions are provided to assist in interpreting statistics published in quarterly Farm Labor reports. To ensure consistency in data collection, the questionnaires and instruction manual used by the interviewers provide more in-depth explanations of these terms.

**Farm or Ranch:** A place that sells, or would normally sell, at least \$1,000 worth of agricultural products during the year.

**Agricultural Work:** Work done on a farm or ranch in connection with the production of agricultural products, including nursery and greenhouse products and animal specialties such as fur farms or apiaries. Also included is work done off the farm to handle farm related business, such as trips to buy feed or deliver products to local market.

**Hired Worker:** Anyone, other than an agricultural service worker, who was paid for at least one hour of agricultural work on a farm or ranch. Worker type is determined by what the employee was primarily hired to do, not necessarily what work was done during the survey week. Type of workers include:

**Field Workers:** Employees engaged in planting, tending and harvesting crops including operation of farm machinery on crop farms.

**Livestock Workers:** Employees tending livestock, milking cows or caring for poultry, including operation of farm machinery on livestock or poultry operations.

**Supervisors:** Hired managers, range foremen, crew leaders, etc.

**Other Workers:** Employees engaged in agricultural work not included in the other three categories. Bookkeepers and pilots are examples.

**Methods of Pay:** All wage rates are calculated based on total wages paid and total hours worked during the survey reference week. Wages paid other than hourly (bi-weekly, monthly, etc.) are converted to an hourly basis prior to summarization. Wages paid by piece rate (per quantity of produce picked, etc.) are also converted to an hourly basis.

**Perquisites:** Benefits, such as cash bonuses, housing, or meals, provided to an employee in addition to pay are included in perquisites. Wage rates published in this release do not include the value of these benefits.

**Term of Employment:** The length of time during the year the farm operator expects to employ those workers who were on the payroll during the survey week.

## Definitions - continued

**Agricultural Service:** Any farm-related service performed on a farm or ranch on a contract or fee basis. This primarily includes activities performed by contract workers on fruit, vegetable, or berry operations. It also includes custom work (see below), veterinarian work, artificial insemination, sheep shearing, milk testing, or any other farm-related activity performed on a farm or ranch on a “fee per service” basis rather than hourly.

**Contract Labor:** Contract workers are paid by a crew leader, contractor, buyer, processor, cooperative, or other person who has an oral or written agreement with a farmer/rancher. Pruning, thinning, weeding or harvesting of fruit, vegetable or berry crops are examples. A machine is not a part of the service activity provided by the contractor.

**Custom Work:** Work performed by machines and labor hired as a unit. Hay baling, combining, corn or cotton picking, spraying, fertilizing, and laser leveling are examples of custom work when the equipment is included in the service activity.

**Type of Farm (or Ranch):** An operation is classified in the farm type which accounts for the largest portion of the total gross value of sales for its agricultural production.

### The three types of farms broken out in this publication are:

**Field Crops:** A farm producing wheat, rice, corn, soybeans, barley, dry beans, rye, sorghum, cotton, popcorn, tobacco, or other such crops.

**Other Crops:** A farm producing vegetables, melons, berry crops, grapes, tree nuts, citrus fruits, deciduous tree fruits, avocados, dates, figs, olives, nursery, or greenhouse crops. This category also includes farms producing potatoes, sugar crops, hay, peanuts, hops, mint, and maple syrup.

**Livestock or Poultry:** A farm producing cattle, hogs, sheep, goats, milk, chickens, eggs, turkeys, or animal specialties such as furs, fish, honey, etc.

**Gross Value of Sales:** This includes all income during a year from the sale of crops, livestock, dairy, poultry, or other related agricultural products, including the landlord's share and the value of products produced under contract. When commodities are placed under CCC loan, they are considered as sold.

## Survey Methodology

**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 10-16, 2010.

**Reliability:** Two types of errors, sampling and non-sampling, are always present in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both types affect the "accuracy" 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 is normally less than 5 percent. The relative sampling error for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 9 and 20 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 0.8 percent. The relative sampling error was 0.8 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 6 percent at the regional levels. Relative sampling errors for wage rates published by type of farm and economic class of farm generally ranged between 2 and 20 percent at the regional level.

Non-sampling 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 non-sampling errors.

**Revision Policy:** Farm labor information is subject to revision the next time the information is published or 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 2009 and January 2009 were subject to revision with this report. If any revisions were made to previous data, they are reprinted in this report for your information, and they are identified as such.

## Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity statisticians in the Environmental and Demographics Section of the Environmental, Economics, and Demographics Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to [nass@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

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Mark R. Miller, Head, Environmental and Demographics Section .....(202) 720-0684

Mark Aitken – Farm Labor .....(202) 720-9525

Jerry Campbell – Field Crops Chemical Usage .....(202) 720-5581

Liana Cuffman – Livestock Chemical Usage, Postharvest Chemical Usage .....(202) 690-0392

Vincent Davis – Census of Agriculture.....(202) 690-3228

Doug Farmer – Fruit Chemical Usage, Vegetable Chemical Usage .....(202) 720-7492

Kim Nielsen – Census of Agriculture .....(202) 720-7644

## Access to NASS Reports

For your convenience, you may access NASS reports and products the following ways:

- All reports are available electronically, at no cost, on the NASS web site: [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov).
- Both national and state specific reports are available via a free e-mail subscription. To set-up this free subscription, visit [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov) and in the “Syndication” box under “Receive reports by E-mail,” click on “National” or “State” to select the reports you would like to receive.
- Printed reports and products may be purchased by calling toll-free (800) 999-6779, or (703) 605-6220 if calling from outside the United States or Canada. Accepted methods of payment are Visa, MasterCard, check, or money order.

For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, or e-mail: [nass@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

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