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

There were 1,244,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 11-17, 2010, down 1 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 894,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 350,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.82 per hour during the July 2010 reference week, up 16 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.12 per hour, up 8 cents from last July, while livestock workers earned \$10.19 per hour compared with \$10.05 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.14 per hour, was up 10 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 41.0 for hired workers during the survey week, up 3 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), and Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia) regions. In the Lake, Corn Belt I, and Appalachian II regions, weather conditions were wetter than last year's reference week. Fieldwork progress was slowed for nearly two days in some areas, lowering the demand for hired workers. Heavy rains and flooding occurred in parts of Texas, halting most field activities and reducing the need for hired workers in the Southern Plains region. In the Delta region, declining demand from the nursery and greenhouse industries kept hired worker numbers below last year.

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California, and in the Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), and Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah) regions. Above normal winter precipitation in California allowed more acreage to be cropped due to increased availability of irrigation water. Therefore, more hired workers were needed. In the Northern Plains and Mountain II regions, weather conditions were drier than last year's reference week. This allowed field activities to progress rapidly and increased the need for hired workers. Strong demand from the cattle and poultry industries in the Corn Belt II region pushed hired worker numbers above last year. In the Appalachian II region, increased requirements from the tobacco, vegetable, and fruit industries kept hired worker levels above the previous year.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Northern Plains, Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), Corn Belt I, and Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina) regions. In the Northern Plains, Corn Belt I and Southeast regions, the higher wages were due to a lower proportion of part time workers. The higher wages in the Northeast II region were due to a larger percentage of higher paid equine workers.

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Hired Workers and Wage Rates - United States

[Excludes Alaska]

Farm employment	July 12-18, 2009	April 11-17, 2010	July 11-17, 2010
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Hired workers			
150 days or more	609	585	634
149 days or less	266	152	260
Total	875	737	894
Agricultural services			
Workers working on farms	381	261	350
Hired farm and service workers	1,256	998	1,244
	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)
Hours worked by hired workers	39.7	39.8	41.0
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Wage rate			
Field and livestock combined	10.04	10.12	10.14
Field	10.04	10.04	10.12
Livestock	10.05	10.30	10.19
All hired workers ^{1 2}	10.66	10.82	10.82

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

² Excludes agricultural service workers.

Number of Workers and Hours Worked - Regions and United States: July 11-17, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	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	38	25	13	43.7
Northeast II	37	25	12	39.2
Appalachian I	44	27	17	39.9
Appalachian II	24	13	11	35.4
Southeast	36	27	9	38.9
Florida	35	28	7	37.7
Lake	64	42	22	34.4
Cornbelt I	50	34	16	37.4
Cornbelt II	33	21	12	31.9
Delta	29	18	11	38.3
Northern Plains	46	36	10	43.7
Southern Plains	53	44	9	44.0
Mountain I	27	19	8	42.3
Mountain II	24	18	6	44.1
Mountain III	19	16	3	44.6
Pacific	120	65	55	42.5
California	209	171	38	44.6
Hawaii	6	5	1	37.8
United States ²	894	634	260	41.0

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker - Regions and United States: July 11-17, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	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	9.81	9.59	9.73	10.35
Northeast II	10.55	9.09	10.26	11.10
Appalachian I	8.77	9.07	8.82	9.40
Appalachian II	8.23	9.82	8.85	9.62
Southeast	9.12	9.69	9.30	9.97
Florida	9.40	9.40	9.40	10.68
Lake	11.09	9.47	10.45	11.10
Cornbelt I	10.57	11.17	10.75	11.20
Cornbelt II	10.51	11.45	10.95	11.20
Delta	9.02	8.96	9.00	9.34
Northern Plains	11.74	11.20	11.50	11.80
Southern Plains	8.98	9.54	9.20	9.90
Mountain I	9.95	9.39	9.70	10.32
Mountain II	9.61	8.99	9.40	10.05
Mountain III	9.70	9.69	9.70	10.50
Pacific	10.65	11.89	10.75	11.27
California	10.20	11.20	10.34	11.21
Hawaii	12.00	14.20	12.19	14.41
United States ²	10.12	10.19	10.14	10.82

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Number of Workers and Hours Worked - Regions and United States: April 11-17, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	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	36	29	7	40.4
Northeast II	31	25	6	40.6
Appalachian I	33	25	8	39.3
Appalachian II	26	17	9	33.4
Southeast	31	23	8	37.2
Florida	50	41	9	37.2
Lake	62	47	15	37.4
Cornbelt I	45	29	16	34.1
Cornbelt II	27	17	10	39.0
Delta	38	33	5	43.0
Northern Plains	28	22	6	40.9
Southern Plains	55	45	10	39.1
Mountain I	25	21	4	44.0
Mountain II	21	17	4	41.9
Mountain III	18	16	2	40.7
Pacific	65	53	12	41.4
California	140	120	20	43.0
Hawaii	6	5	1	36.6
United States ²	737	585	152	39.8

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker - Regions and United States: April 11-17, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	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	10.43	9.89	10.25	10.87
Northeast II	10.43	9.12	10.00	10.60
Appalachian I	9.87	10.59	10.10	10.63
Appalachian II	9.47	9.69	9.55	10.20
Southeast	8.86	9.73	9.10	9.47
Florida	9.10	10.00	9.25	10.22
Lake	10.95	10.18	10.55	11.18
Cornbelt I	11.11	9.75	10.70	11.25
Cornbelt II	10.47	11.23	10.75	10.87
Delta	9.37	8.92	9.20	9.85
Northern Plains	11.84	10.92	11.40	11.83
Southern Plains	9.56	10.25	9.90	10.30
Mountain I	9.63	9.56	9.60	10.14
Mountain II	10.90	11.15	11.00	11.93
Mountain III	9.18	10.97	10.25	11.10
Pacific	10.02	11.73	10.25	11.18
California	10.00	11.00	10.20	11.11
Hawaii	11.65	13.90	11.84	13.99
United States ²	10.04	10.30	10.12	10.82

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Number of Workers and Hours Worked - Regions and United States: July 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	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	37	24	13	38.5
Northeast II	38	27	11	39.1
Appalachian I	40	24	16	37.9
Appalachian II	29	18	11	34.5
Southeast	40	28	12	37.4
Florida	36	32	4	37.3
Lake	76	50	26	34.6
Cornbelt I	56	34	22	36.2
Cornbelt II	28	20	8	33.6
Delta	34	28	6	38.5
Northern Plains	40	28	12	41.0
Southern Plains	61	42	19	39.5
Mountain I	29	22	7	41.1
Mountain II	20	14	6	40.1
Mountain III	18	16	2	45.4
Pacific	117	62	55	40.4
California	170	135	35	45.6
Hawaii	6	5	1	37.4
United States ²	875	609	266	39.7

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker - Regions and United States: July 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	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	10.32	9.86	10.15	10.92
Northeast II	9.83	9.09	9.65	10.20
Appalachian I	9.18	10.40	9.50	9.88
Appalachian II	9.36	9.76	9.55	10.34
Southeast	8.92	8.84	8.90	9.27
Florida	9.14	9.50	9.20	10.51
Lake	10.55	10.27	10.45	11.04
Cornbelt I	9.78	9.45	9.70	10.30
Cornbelt II	10.88	10.05	10.55	11.01
Delta	8.69	9.15	8.85	9.42
Northern Plains	10.67	10.20	10.50	10.73
Southern Plains	8.94	9.72	9.30	9.88
Mountain I	9.67	9.33	9.50	10.00
Mountain II	10.16	8.54	9.60	10.21
Mountain III	10.09	10.94	10.38	11.19
Pacific	10.93	11.77	11.00	11.43
California	10.10	11.30	10.30	11.08
Hawaii	11.60	13.60	11.81	13.97
United States ²	10.04	10.05	10.04	10.66

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Combined Field and Livestock Worker Wage Rates by Type of Farm - Regions and 48 States: July 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region ¹	Field crops	Other crops	Livestock and poultry	All farms
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast	10.99	9.97	9.57	9.89
Appalachian	8.32	10.13	9.76	9.52
Southeast	8.29	9.09	9.10	9.03
Lake	11.57	10.50	10.07	10.45
Cornbelt	10.44	9.48	9.97	9.97
Delta	8.26	9.24	9.22	8.85
Northern Plains	10.83	10.16	10.12	10.50
Southern Plains	(D)	8.77	9.49	9.30
Mountain	(D)	9.46	9.22	9.85
Pacific	10.78	10.39	11.33	10.55
48 States	10.16	10.05	9.95	10.04

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

¹ 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.

Combined Field and Livestock Worker Wage Rates by Type of Farm - Regions and 48 States: July 11-17, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region ¹	Field crops	Other crops	Livestock and poultry	All farms
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast	9.62	9.75	10.41	9.97
Appalachian	8.37	8.86	9.65	8.83
Southeast	7.99	9.30	9.76	9.35
Lake	11.14	11.36	9.20	10.45
Cornbelt	11.06	10.00	11.20	10.82
Delta	9.06	9.94	8.71	9.00
Northern Plains	(D)	10.16	11.08	11.50
Southern Plains	8.86	8.86	9.58	9.20
Mountain	10.39	9.42	9.56	9.60
Pacific	12.17	10.30	11.46	10.49
48 States	10.17	10.05	10.28	10.14

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

¹ 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 - Regions and 48 States: July 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region ¹	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	10.68	8.08	8.61	10.44	9.59	11.34	10.55
Appalachian	8.75	8.89	10.39	9.37	8.99	10.77	10.06
Southeast	10.15	8.23	10.38	8.58	9.54	10.18	9.86
Lake	(D)	7.12	9.45	10.02	9.53	12.22	11.04
Cornbelt	9.16	9.96	11.79	9.61	11.24	10.91	10.53
Delta	9.77	(D)	9.68	9.55	9.30	8.92	9.42
Northern Plains	(D)	9.57	9.64	11.19	10.43	11.12	10.73
Southern Plains	9.52	10.10	10.49	9.19	10.29	9.84	9.88
Mountain	11.40	8.48	8.45	10.05	10.47	10.69	10.41
Pacific	10.65	10.76	11.58	11.42	10.98	11.18	11.15
48 States	10.13	9.69	10.16	10.26	10.31	11.03	10.62

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

¹ 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 - Regions and 48 States: July 11-17, 2010

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region ¹	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	11.99	10.13	9.58	9.60	10.91	10.97	10.70
Appalachian	8.78	10.14	8.55	8.89	9.03	10.25	9.47
Southeast	9.94	9.37	9.78	10.40	10.21	10.53	10.31
Lake	10.54	(D)	9.40	9.91	11.98	11.26	11.10
Cornbelt	10.17	9.57	10.73	10.31	10.93	11.93	11.20
Delta	8.44	(D)	9.34	9.77	9.30	10.08	9.34
Northern Plains	10.46	9.53	10.54	12.29	12.32	12.01	11.80
Southern Plains	9.66	9.04	10.30	9.06	10.46	10.49	9.90
Mountain	10.23	9.39	9.44	10.19	11.27	10.31	10.28
Pacific	10.04	(D)	11.82	11.39	11.19	11.19	11.23
48 States	9.98	10.37	10.31	10.38	11.07	11.06	10.79

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

¹ 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	July 12-18, 2009	April 11-17, 2010	July 11-17, 2010
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Field crops	16	15	13
Other crops	54	52	58
Livestock, dairy, and poultry	30	33	29

Hired Workers by Economic Class of Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Gross value of sales	July 12-18, 2009	April 11-17, 2010	July 11-17, 2010
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Less than \$50,000	12	11	11
\$50,000-\$99,999	5	5	5
\$100,000-\$249,999	10	10	9
\$250,000-\$499,999	11	11	12
\$500,000-\$999,999	12	12	13
\$1,000,000 and over	50	51	50

Hired Workers by Number of Workers on Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Number of workers on farm	July 12-18, 2009	April 11-17, 2010	July 11-17, 2010
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Employed on farms hiring			
1 worker	10	10	9
2 workers	9	10	8
3-6 workers	19	20	16
7-10 workers	9	8	7
11-20 workers	11	12	12
21-50 workers	13	11	13
51 or more workers	29	29	35

Agricultural Services

Agricultural service operations provided 350,000 workers for the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 11-17, 2010. Agricultural service workers in California numbered 120,000 this July, down 4 percent from last year. Florida's number of agricultural service workers was 2,000, unchanged from last year.

The average wages received by agricultural service workers in California and Florida were \$10.85 and \$11.95 per hour, respectively. Comparable wages in July 2009 were \$10.25 per hour in California and \$10.65 per hour in Florida.

Number of Agricultural Service Workers, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates - 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 ¹		
	July 2009	April 2010	July 2010	July 2009	April 2010	July 2010	July 2009	April 2010	July 2010
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours)	(hours)	(hours)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
California	135.0	101.0	130.0	38.4	35.0	39.9	10.25	10.80	10.85
Florida	2.0	6.0	2.0	43.0	41.0	46.0	10.65	10.80	11.95
United States	381.0	261.0	350.0	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

(NA) Not available.

¹ 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.

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.

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 July 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 July 11-17, 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 10 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 following quarter that the information is published and 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 April 2010 and July 2009 were subject to revision with this report.

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.

Kevin Barnes, Chief, Environmental, Economics, and Demographics Branch	(202) 720-6146
Mark R. Miller, Head, Environmental and Demographics Section	(202) 720-0684
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Jerry Campbell – Energy, Census of Agriculture.....	(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
Theresa Varner – Field Crops Chemical Usage	(202) 690-2284

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: <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 <http://www.nass.usda.gov> and in the “Receive NASS Updates” box under “Receive reports by Email,” click on “National” or “State” to select the reports you would like to receive.
- Printed reports may be purchased from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) 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.

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