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FLORIDA
 AGRICULTURE

FARM LABOR

November 2004

FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and the agricultural services totaled 55,000 for the week of October 10 through 16. Farmers hired 52,000 workers compared with 39,000 in July 2004 and 49,000 in October 2003. Agricultural services provided 3,000 paid workers; the same as last quarter but 1,000 less than those supplied a year ago.

Mostly warm, dry conditions allowed vegetable and field crop harvesting to progress at a normal pace with scattered showers in some areas during the survey week. Some peanut digging slowed because of rains during the latter part of the week. Cotton picking was active with Washington County growers reporting some loss due to Hurricane Ivan. Drier conditions for most of the week allowed producers to make hay. Vegetables growers marketed very light supplies of okra, pickles, squash, tomatoes, and watermelons. Soggy

ground in low-lying groves with heavy soils in the western and central areas still continue to be a problem for Citrus growers. Growers maintained middles and lateral ditches to keep water moving away from tree roots, since many trees were still recovering from the storms.

The October all hired worker wage rate average \$9.20 per hour, down 44 cents from the July 2004 wage of \$9.64, and down 34 cents or four percent from the \$9.54 paid last year. Farmers paid an average of \$9.14 per hour, 49 cents less than \$9.63 cents paid in July, but 39 cents or four percent less than the \$9.53 paid last year. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$10.20 per hour, fifty cents higher than the \$9.70 paid in July, and 55 cents or 6 percent above the October 2003 wage.

UNITED STATES

There were 1,173,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 10-16, 2004, down 2 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 851,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 322,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.30 per hour during the October 2004 reference week, up 25 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.60 per hour, up 18 cents from last October, while livestock workers earned \$8.91 per hour compared with \$8.64 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$8.67 per hour, was up 20 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 40.5 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 1 percent from a year ago.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in the Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota), Northeast I (New England and New York), and Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico) regions, and in Florida. After a cool, wet growing season, reference week weather in the Northern Plains region was virtually ideal. This allowed field crop harvests to progress rapidly, necessitating more hired workers. In the Northeast I region, a return to dry, seasonable conditions compared to last year's rain and strong winds allowed field activities to accelerate. Therefore, the demand for field workers was stronger. Nurseries were gearing up for fall plantings in the Mountain III region, and cotton harvest progress exceeded last year's pace, both of which caused more field workers to be needed. Also, more livestock workers were required due to increased movement of cattle from summer pastures. In Florida, warm and dry conditions returned after several weeks of tropical storms, allowing most field activities to resume. Thus, more field workers were necessary.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in California and in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Pacific (Oregon and Washington), Southeast

(Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina), Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri) and Mountain I (Idaho, Montana and Wyoming) regions. In California, an early start to the spring growing season pushed the maturity of many fruit and vegetable crops well ahead of normal through the summer and fall. Therefore, much of the harvest had been completed by the reference week, which caused fewer workers to be needed. Apple harvest in the Pacific region was winding down earlier than normal, so field worker demand was down. Precipitation prior to the reference week kept pastures green, minimizing supplemental feeding, and decreasing the need for livestock workers. Rain and muddy conditions delayed field activities in much of the Southern Plains, Southeast, Appalachian I and Corn Belt II regions, reducing the demand for field workers. In the Mountain I region, pasture and range conditions were improved from last year, which enabled cattle to graze longer and minimized supplemental feeding. Therefore, fewer livestock workers were required.

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Southern Plains, Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi), Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana and Ohio), and Mountain I regions. The higher wages in the Southern Plains and Delta regions were due to a larger concentration of salaried workers putting in fewer hours and a lower percentage of part-time seasonal workers in the work force. Corn Belt I wages were up due to a higher percentage of nursery and greenhouse workers in the work force. In the Mountain I region, wages were higher because of more salaried livestock workers working fewer hours which pushed their hourly wage higher.

The 2004 U.S. all hired worker annual average wage rate was \$9.22, up 2 percent from the 2003 annual average wage rate of \$9.08. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was \$8.45, up 14 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate at the U.S. level was \$8.55, up 2 percent from last year's annual average wage rate of \$8.42.

TABLE 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, October 10 - 16, 2004, with comparisons

Employer, Year, and survey week	Hired Workers						
	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							
		<i>Thousands</i>		<i>Hours</i>	<i>Dollars Per Hour ^{1/}</i>		
2004							
October 10 - 16	52.0	44.0	8.0	39.4	9.14	7.95	9.10
July 11 - 17	39.0	33.0	6.0	39.2	9.63	8.70	9.10
April 11 - 17	57.0	53.0	4.0	38.3	8.79	7.85	8.60
January 11-17	61.0	54.0	7.0	41.7	8.85	7.70	8.60
2003							
October 12 -18	49.0	43.0	6.0	39.1	9.53	8.55	7.95
July 6 - 12	45.0	39.0	6.0	39.0	9.55	8.55	8.30
April 6 - 12	53.0	42.0	11.0	38.3	8.86	8.05	8.10
January 12 - 18	70.0	56.0	14.0	37.2	8.81	7.80	8.30
2002							
October 6 - 12	57.0	51.0	6.0	38.9	8.67	7.50	8.60
HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES							
2004							
October 10 - 16	3.0			40.0	10.20		
July 11 - 17	3.0			45.0	9.70		
April 11 - 17	9.0			38.0	9.25		
January 11-17	14.0			38.5	9.25		
2003							
October 12 -18	4.0			38.0	9.65		
July 6 - 12	3.0			41.0	9.25		
April 6 - 12	17.0			33.0	9.40		
January 12 - 18	17.0			32.0	9.35		
2002							
October 6 - 12	5.0			31.5	9.00		
HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS & AGRICULTURAL SERVICES							
2004							
October 10 - 16	55.0				9.20		
July 11 - 17	42.0				9.64		
April 11 - 17	66.0				8.85		
January 11-17	75.0				8.92		
2003							
October 12 -18	53.0				9.54		
July 6 - 12	48.0				9.53		
April 6 - 12	70.0				8.98		
January 12 - 18	87.0				8.90		
2002							
October 6 - 12	62.0				8.69		

^{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, October 10 - 16, 2004, with comparisons ^{1/}

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States ^{2/}
<i>Thousands</i>						
ALL HIRED WORKERS						
October 10 - 16, 2004	52	200	44	23	8	851
July 11 - 17, 2004	39	*218	68	24	7	*961
October 12 - 18, 2003	49	230	54	18	7	891
EXPECTED TO WORK						
150 days or more						
October 10 - 16, 2004	44	155	32	19	7	605
July 11 - 17, 2004	33	167	48	21	6	637
October 12 - 18, 2003	43	179	43	15	6	626
149 days or less						
October 10 - 16, 2004	8	45	12	4	1	246
July 11 - 17, 2004	6	*51	20	3	1	*324
October 12 - 18, 2003	6	51	11	3	1	265
<i>Dollars per hour ^{3/}</i>						
ALL HIRED WORKER WAGE RATE						
October 10 - 16, 2004	9.14	9.28	9.34	7.75	11.52	9.30
July 11 - 17, 2004	9.63	*9.26	8.58	8.34	11.46	*9.04
October 12 - 18, 2003	9.53	9.13	8.01	8.18	11.56	9.05
WAGES BY TYPE OF WORKER						
Field & Livestock						
October 10 - 16, 2004	8.05	8.57	8.53	7.36	10.01	8.67
July 11 - 17, 2004	8.78	*8.60	7.81	7.73	9.90	*8.43
October 12 - 18, 2003	8.48	8.54	7.39	7.63	9.88	8.47
Field						
October 10 - 16, 2004	7.95	8.37	8.44	7.03	9.97	8.60
July 11 - 17, 2004	8.70	*8.41	7.59	7.45	9.77	*8.34
October 12 - 18, 2003	8.55	8.37	7.12	7.16	9.82	8.42
Livestock						
October 10 - 16, 2004	9.10	9.57	8.68	8.04	^{4/}	8.91
July 11 - 17, 2004	9.10	*9.91	8.18	8.24	^{4/}	*8.74
October 12 - 18, 2003	7.95	9.80	7.70	8.73	^{4/}	8.64
<i>Average hours per week</i>						
HOURS WORKED BY ALL HIRED WORKERS						
October 10 - 16, 2004	39.4	44.8	40.3	44.0	37.5	40.5
July 11 - 17, 2004	39.2	*44.6	37.8	45.0	39.4	*39.2
October 12 - 18, 2003	39.1	42.7	41.7	47.9	38.9	40.2

^{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.

ANNUAL WAGES, HIRED WORKERS AND HOURS

The 2004 U.S. hired worker annual average wage rate was \$9.22, up two percent from the 2003 annual average wage rate of \$9.08. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was \$8.45, up 14 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average rate at the U.S. level was \$8.55, up two percent from last year's annual average wage rate of \$8.42.

The 2004 hired worker annual wage rate for Florida averaged \$9.04, down 10 cents or one percent from the 2003 annual average of \$9.14. The annual average wage rate for Florida field workers was \$7.97, down 21 cents or three percent from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate for Florida was \$8.07, down 11 cents or one percent from last year's annual average wage rate of \$8.18.

TABLE 3--ANNUAL AVERAGE WAGE RATES, NUMBER OF HIRED WORKERS, AND HOURS WORKED, 2004 AND 2003 ^{1/2/}

State and Region	Wages by Type of Worker			Number of Hired Workers	Hours Worked by Hired Workers
	All Hired	Field	Field & Livestock		
2004					
Florida	9.04	7.97	8.07	52.2	39.7
Texas & Oklahoma	8.60	7.72	7.89	54.5	37.9
Arizona & New Mexico	8.18	7.33	7.63	20.0	44.8
California	9.32	8.40	8.56	210.5	44.3
Hawaii	11.34	9.64	9.75	7.2	38.4
United States ^{3/}	9.22	8.45	8.55	825.2	39.6
2003					
Florida	9.14	8.18	8.18	54.2	38.2
Texas & Oklahoma	8.30	7.61	7.73	53.5	39.5
Arizona & New Mexico	8.08	7.07	7.54	18.5	47.5
California	9.25	8.34	8.50	227.5	43.0
Hawaii	11.33	9.56	9.60	7.0	37.2
United States ^{3/}	9.08	8.31	8.42	836.0	39.5

^{1/} Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

^{2/} Annual rates are averages of the published wage rates for each survey week weighted by the number of hours worked during the week. The annual average for all States, Regions, and the U.S. is based on data collected for January, April, July, and October.

^{3/} Excludes AK.