



# FARM LABOR

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August 21, 2007

## FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 43,000 for the week of July 8 through 14. Farmers hired 41,000 workers compared with 43,000 in July 2006 and 55,000 in April 2007. Agricultural services provided 2,000 paid workers, down 6,000 from last quarter, and 1,000 less than those supplied a year ago.

Scattered rains brought welcomed moisture to some spots of the Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas with many areas remaining dry during the survey reference week. In areas of the Panhandle, showers skipped some areas which lowered yield potentials for cotton and peanuts. Soil moisture supplies across the State remained mostly very short to short. There were no citrus shipments during the survey week with some light vegetable shipment activity. Cultural practices included fertilizing, applications of summer oils, copper spraying, and resetting of young trees. Trees continued to make good progress, with some new growth due to scattered rains.

The July combined Farmers and Agricultural Services all hired worker wage rate averaged \$9.50 per hour, 57 cents less than the \$10.07 paid last quarter, but 9 cents more than last year. Farmers paid an average of \$9.49 per hour, 52 cents lower than the \$10.01 paid in the previous quarter month, but 9 cents above the \$9.40 paid last year. Agricultural Services paid workers an average of \$9.60 per hour, 85 cents lower than the \$10.45 paid last quarter, but 10 cents above the \$9.50 paid last year.

## UNITED STATES

### Hired Workers Up 1 Percent, Wage Rates Up 3 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 1,205,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 8-14, 2007, up 1 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 847,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 358,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.04 per hour during the July 2007 reference week, up 32 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$9.31 per hour, up 38 cents from last July, while livestock workers earned \$9.80 per hour compared with \$9.49 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.44 per hour, was up 37 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 41.6 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 Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), and Northeast I (New England and New York) regions. In the Lake region, continued strong demand from the dairy industry in Minnesota and Wisconsin and increased fruit harvest in Michigan led to a greater need for hired workers. In the Southern Plains region, wet conditions due to flooding in Oklahoma were more than offset by drier conditions over most of Texas, resulting in an overall increased demand for hired workers. Strong demand from the equine industry in Kentucky caused a greater need for livestock workers in the Appalachian II region. Also, drier conditions compared with last year's reference week in Kentucky and West Virginia led to a higher demand for field workers. In the Northeast I region, hot and dry conditions in New York offset the effects of wet weather in parts of New England, causing a slightly greater demand for hired workers. Drought conditions were slowly working their way into the region, necessitating more irrigation of fruit and vegetable crops in New York.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming), Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), and Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi) regions. In the Northeast II and Southeast regions, extreme drought conditions severely curtailed crop growth. Therefore, the demand for hired workers was down considerably in both regions. Winter wheat harvest in the Mountain I and II regions was behind last year's pace, reducing the need for hired workers. In the Delta region, wet weather in Louisiana and Mississippi delayed field activities and led to a decreased demand for hired workers. Drier conditions in Arkansas were not enough to offset the wetness in the other two States. Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Northeast II, Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), California, Delta,

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**TABLE 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, July 8 through 14, 2007, 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 <sup>1/</sup>	Thousands			Hours	Dollars Per Hour <sup>2/</sup>		
<b>2007</b>							
<b>July 8 - 14</b>	41.0	39.0	2.0	41.0	9.49	8.50	8.60
<b>April 8 - 14</b>	55.0	46.0	9.0	39.2	10.01	9.20	9.00
January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>							
2006							
October 8 - 14	44.0	40.0	4.0	41.1	9.42	8.50	9.10
<b>July 9 - 15</b>	43.0	38.0	5.0	41.0	9.40	8.39	9.10
April 9 - 15	52.0	44.0	8.0	40.4	9.19	8.37	8.50
January 8 - 14	49.0	38.0	11.0	39.2	9.55	8.80	8.80
2005							
October 9 - 15	42.0	37.0	5.0	39.4	9.33	8.60	8.45
July 10 - 16	41.0	39.0	2.0	41.3	9.70	8.75	9.15
April 10 - 16	49.0	41.0	8.0	38.7	9.31	8.20	9.90
	HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES						
<b>2007</b>							
<b>July 8 - 14</b>	2.0			43.0	9.60		
<b>April 8 - 14</b>	8.0			40.0	10.45		
January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>							
2006							
October 8 - 14	5.0			42.0	9.90		
<b>July 9 - 15</b>	3.0			45.0	9.50		
April 9 - 15	8.0			40.0	9.60		
January 8 - 14	9.0			40.0	9.20		
2005							
October 9 - 15	3.0			41.0	9.65		
July 10 - 16	2.0			45.0	9.90		
April 10 - 16	10.0			39.0	9.10		
	HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS & AGRICULTURAL SERVICES						
<b>2007</b>							
<b>July 8 - 14</b>	43.0				9.50		
<b>April 8 - 14</b>	63.0				10.07		
January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>							
2006							
October 8 - 14	49.0				9.47		
<b>July 9 - 15</b>	46.0				9.41		
April 9 - 15	60.0				9.24		
January 8 - 14	58.0				9.49		
2005							
October 9 - 15	45.0				9.35		
July 10 - 16	43.0				9.71		
April 10 - 16	59.0				9.27		

<sup>1/</sup> Excludes Agricultural Services workers.

<sup>2/</sup> Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

<sup>3/</sup> The January Farm Labor Survey was not conducted.

**TABLE 2 -- Number of workers hired by farmers, wage rates, and hours worked, Selected States, July 8 through 14, 2007, with comparisons <sup>1/</sup>**

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States <sup>2/</sup>
	<i>Thousands</i>					
ALL HIRED WORKERS						
<b>July 8 – 14, 2007</b>	41	192	58	22	6	847
April 8-14, 2007	55	*176	50	17	7	*736
July 9 – 15, 2006	43	191	53	25	7	876
EXPECTED TO WORK						
150 days or more						
<b>July 8 – 14, 2007</b>	39	155	43	19	5	600
April 8-14, 2007	46	*148	38	16	6	*593
July 9 – 15, 2006	38	160	38	23	6	630
149 days or less						
<b>July 8 – 14, 2007</b>	2	37	15	3	1	247
April 8-14, 2007	9	*28	12	1	1	*143
July 9 – 15, 2006	5	31	15	2	1	246
	<i>Average hours per week</i>					
HOURS WORKED BY ALL HIRED WORKERS						
<b>July 8 – 14, 2007</b>	41.0	47.9	41.0	45.0	39.0	41.6
April 8-14, 2007	39.2	45.5	37.9	*44.5	39.2	*40.7
July 9 – 15, 2006	41.0	46.4	37.6	47.2	39.1	41.0
	<i>Dollars per hour <sup>3/</sup></i>					
WAGES BY TYPE OF WORKER						
Field						
<b>July 8 – 14, 2007</b>	8.50	9.80	8.14	8.34	10.70	9.31
April 8-14, 2007	9.20	9.62	8.35	8.25	10.60	9.35
July 9 – 15, 2006	8.39	8.92	8.53	7.55	10.26	8.93
Livestock						
<b>July 8 – 14, 2007</b>	8.60	11.00	9.67	9.65	<sup>4/</sup>	9.80
April 8-14, 2007	9.00	10.90	9.41	8.88	<sup>4/</sup>	*9.59
July 9 – 15, 2006	9.10	10.24	9.12	9.10	<sup>4/</sup>	9.49
Field & Livestock Combined						
<b>July 8 – 14, 2007</b>	8.51	9.95	8.85	8.80	10.89	9.44
April 8-14, 2007	9.17	*9.82	8.80	8.51	10.77	*9.42
July 9 – 15, 2006	8.48	9.09	8.75	8.12	10.38	9.07
ALL HIRED WORKER WAGE RATE						
<b>July 8 – 14, 2007</b>	9.49	10.48	9.18	9.47	12.87	10.04
April 8-14, 2007	10.01	*10.71	9.22	9.28	12.85	*10.20
July 9 – 15, 2006	9.40	9.89	9.38	8.70	12.31	9.72

<sup>1/</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service workers.

<sup>2/</sup> United States exclude Alaska.

<sup>3/</sup> Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

<sup>4/</sup> Insufficient data for livestock.

\* Revised

and Mountain II regions. In the Northeast II region, the higher wages were due to a lower proportion of part time workers. The higher wages in the Mountain III, Delta and Mountain II regions were due to a greater percentage of salaried workers putting in fewer hours, which pushed the average hourly wage higher. In California, there has been continued concern about potential labor shortages due to increased border security. Therefore, farm operators paid workers more in order to compete with the higher paying construction industry.

### **Reliability of Farm Labor Estimates**

**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 8-14, 2007.

**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 11 and 19 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 0.7 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 5 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 17 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 April 2007 and July 2006 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.