



# FARM LABOR

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
1222 Woodward St. · Orlando, FL 32803  
(407) 648-6013 · FAX (407) 648-6029 · [www.nass.usda.gov/fl](http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl)

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## FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 47,000 for the week of October 7 through 13. Farmers hired 43,000 compared with 41,000 in July 2007 and 44,000 in October 2006. Agricultural services provided 4,000 paid workers, down 2,000 from last quarter and 1,000 less than those supplied a year ago.

Dry conditions allowed ground preparations and planting to stay very active and advance during the survey week. Dry weather aided the progress of field activities for field crops in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas. The pecan crop was reported as heavier than normal with some limb breakage due to prior storms in the Panhandle areas. Vegetable growers marketed light supplies of cucumbers, okra, squash, and tomatoes. In Washington County, vegetable crops were being negatively impacted by the highest levels of white flies recorded in many years. Market News Service reported a preliminary 3.49 million pounds shipped during the survey week versus 7.15 million pounds shipped last year. Citrus growers were still irrigating as needed, since yearly amounts of rainfall remained well below average and afternoon temperatures were mostly warm. Limited activity in the groves included fertilizing, mowing middles, cleaning groves, and getting ready for harvest. Citrus producers harvested 288,000 boxes during the survey week compared to the 507,000 boxes harvested a year ago.

The October all hired worker wage rate average was \$9.74 per hour, 24 cents more than the \$9.50 paid last quarter, and 27 cents more than last year. Farmers paid an average of \$9.76 per hour, 27 cents higher than the \$9.49 paid in previous quarter, and 34 cents above the \$9.42 paid last year. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$9.55 per hour, 5 cents lower than the \$9.60 paid last quarter, and 35 cents below the \$9.90 paid last year.

## UNITED STATES

### Hired Workers Up 3 Percent, Wage Rates Up 4 Percent from a Year Ago

There were 1,122,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 7-13, 2007, up 3 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 806,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 316,000 workers. Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.33 per hour during the October 2007 reference week, up 37 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$9.62 per hour, up 36 cents from last October, while livestock workers earned \$9.98 per hour compared with \$9.42 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.72 per hour, was up 42 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 42.1 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up fractionally from a year ago.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), and Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia) regions. In the Southern Plains and Lake Regions, considerably drier conditions compared with last year's reference week resulted in a stronger demand for hired workers. Warm, dry conditions in the Appalachian I region caused vegetables to mature rapidly, and cotton harvest in North Carolina was well ahead of last year's pace. These factors led to an increased need for hired workers. In the Appalachian II region, worker demand was higher due to increased sorghum harvest in Kentucky and increased cotton harvest in Tennessee compared with last year's pace.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Pacific (Oregon and Washington), California, Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), and Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi) regions. In the Pacific region, wetter conditions compared with last year's reference week caused some fieldwork delays and reduced the demand for hired workers. In California, worker numbers were down slightly from last year due to continued shortages caused by unsettled political issues on immigration. Some California grape growers have resorted to mechanical harvest methods because of the worker shortages. Persistent dryness in the Mountain II region delayed completion of small grain seeding. The lack of precipitation also caused pastures to deteriorate and led some livestock producers to reduce inventories. Therefore, fewer hired workers were needed. In the Northeast II region, lingering effects from the season-long drought caused production of corn and soybeans to be considerably below last year, lowering worker demand. Dry conditions in the Delta region slowed the progress of winter wheat seeding, decreasing the demand for hired workers.

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**TABLE 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, October 7 through 13, 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>	<i>Thousands</i>			<i>Hours</i>	<i>Dollars Per Hour <sup>2/</sup></i>			
<b>2007</b>								
<b>October 7 - 13</b>	43.0	39.0	4.0	41.8	9.76	8.70	8.95	
<b>July 8 - 14</b>	41.0	39.0	2.0	41.0	9.49	8.50	8.60	
April 8 - 14	55.0	46.0	9.0	39.2	10.01	9.20	9.00	
January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>								
2006								
<b>October 8 - 14</b>	44.0	40.0	4.0	41.1	9.42	8.50	9.10	
July 9 - 15	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	
	HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES							
<b>2007</b>								
<b>October 7 - 13</b>	4.0			42.0	9.55			
<b>July 8 - 14</b>	2.0			43.0	9.60			
April 8 - 14	8.0			40.0	10.45			
January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>								
2006								
<b>October 8 - 14</b>	5.0			42.0	9.90			
July 9 - 15	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			
	HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS & AGRICULTURAL SERVICES							
<b>2007</b>								
<b>October 7 - 13</b>	47.0				9.74			
<b>July 8 - 14</b>	43.0				9.50			
April 8 - 14	63.0				10.07			
January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>								
2006								
<b>October 8 - 14</b>	49.0				9.47			
July 9 - 15	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			

<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, October 7 through 13, 2007, with comparisons <sup>1/</sup>**

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States <sup>2/</sup>
	<i>Thousands</i>					
<b>ALL HIRED WORKERS</b>						
<b>October 7 – 13, 2007</b>	43	177	69	22	6	806
July 8 – 14, 2007	41	*188	58	22	6	*843
October 8 – 14, 2006	44	*186	49	21	7	*800
<b>EXPECTED TO WORK</b>						
150 days or more						
<b>October 7 – 13, 2007</b>	39	139	55	21	5	590
July 8 – 14, 2007	39	*151	43	19	5	*596
October 8 – 14, 2006	40	*152	36	20	6	*595
149 days or less						
<b>October 7 – 13, 2007</b>	4	38	14	1	1	216
July 8 – 14, 2007	2	37	15	3	1	247
October 8 – 14, 2006	4	34	13	1	1	205
	<i>Average hours per week</i>					
<b>HOURS WORKED BY ALL HIRED WORKERS</b>						
<b>October 7 – 13, 2007</b>	41.8	45.7	39.0	46.1	40.0	42.0
July 8 – 14, 2007	41.0	*46.9	41.0	45.0	39.0	*41.4
October 8 – 14, 2006	41.1	*45.7	39.7	45.1	37.9	*41.9
	<i>Dollars per hour <sup>3/</sup></i>					
<b>WAGES BY TYPE OF WORKER</b>						
Field						
<b>October 7 – 13, 2007</b>	8.70	9.70	8.59	8.26	11.00	9.62
July 8 – 14, 2007	8.50	*9.60	8.14	8.34	10.70	*9.24
October 8 – 14, 2006	8.50	*9.14	8.14	7.56	10.61	*9.26
Livestock						
<b>October 7 – 13, 2007</b>	8.95	10.80	10.46	9.91	<sup>4/</sup>	9.98
July 8 – 14, 2007	8.60	*10.60	9.67	9.65	<sup>4/</sup>	*9.73
October 8 – 14, 2006	9.10	*10.41	10.09	8.86	<sup>4/</sup>	*9.42
Field & Livestock Combined						
<b>October 7 – 13, 2007</b>	8.74	9.86	9.45	8.85	11.13	9.72
July 8 – 14, 2007	8.51	*9.72	8.85	8.80	10.89	*9.37
October 8 – 14, 2006	8.58	*9.32	9.02	8.05	10.69	*9.30
<b>ALL HIRED WORKER WAGE RATE</b>						
<b>October 7 – 13, 2007</b>	9.76	10.56	10.05	9.21	13.19	10.33
July 8 – 14, 2007	9.49	*10.32	9.18	9.47	12.87	*9.99
October 8 – 14, 2006	9.42	*10.11	9.60	8.50	12.47	*9.96

<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

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Northeast II, Lake, Mountain II, Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), and Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri) regions. In the Northeast II, Mountain II, and Corn Belt II regions, the higher wages were due to a lower proportion of part time workers. Strong demand for skilled workers in the dairy industry pushed wages higher in the Mountain III region. In the Lake Region, the higher wages were due to the heavy demand for skilled fruit pickers and dairy workers.

The 2007 U.S. all hired worker annual average wage rate was \$10.21, up 3 percent from the 2006 annual average wage rate of \$9.87. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was \$9.40, up 34 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate at the U.S. level was \$9.49, up 4 percent from last year's annual average wage rate of \$9.15.

### ANNUAL WAGES, HIRED WORKERS AND HOURS

The 2007 U.S. hired worker annual average wage rate was \$10.21, up 3 percent from the 2006 annual wage rate of \$9.87. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was \$9.40, up 34 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate at the U.S. level was \$9.49, up 4 percent from last year's annual wage of \$9.15.

The 2007 hired worker annual wage rate for Florida average \$9.73, up 35 cents from the 2006 annual average of \$9.38. The annual average wage rate for Florida field workers was \$8.82, up 31 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate for Florida was \$8.82, up 26 cents from last year's annual average wage rate of \$8.56.

**TABLE 3--Annual average wage rates, number of hired workers, and hours worked  
2006 and 2007 <sup>1/ 2/</sup>**

State and Region	Wages by Type of Worker			Number of Hired Workers	Hours Worked by Hired Workers
	All Hired <sup>3/</sup>	Field	Field & Livestock		
<b>2007</b>					
Florida	9.73	8.82	8.82	46.8	40.3
Texas & Oklahoma	9.53	8.38	9.02	54.8	39.0
Arizona & New Mexico	9.37	8.26	8.70	20.8	45.7
California	10.51	9.56	9.72	160.3	45.2
Hawaii	12.84	10.70	10.86	6.5	39.1
United States <sup>4/</sup>	10.21	9.40	9.49	739.8	40.7
<b>2006</b>					
Florida	9.38	8.51	8.56	47.0	40.4
Texas & Oklahoma	9.33	8.17	8.66	50.0	38.9
Arizona & New Mexico	8.91	7.78	8.27	21.0	46.9
California	10.09	9.00	9.20	159.0	44.2
Hawaii	12.18	10.20	10.32	7.0	37.8
United States <sup>4/</sup>	9.87	9.06	9.15	751.8	40.5

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

<sup>2/</sup> 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.

<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> Excludes AK.