



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service



FARM LABOR

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

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FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 58,000 for the week of January 6 through 12. Farmers hired 49,000 workers compared with 43,000 in October 2007. Agricultural services provided 9,000 paid workers, up 5,000 from last quarter.

Favorable weather conditions allowed planting and harvesting to progress on schedule during the survey week. Citrus producer's (preliminary) harvested 7,008,000 boxes during the survey week, up from the preliminary 228,000 boxes during October 2007 reference week. Early and midseason orange weekly harvest was up to its highest level of the season. Vegetable growers shipped about 10.22 million pounds of vegetables and non-citrus fruits during the survey week, up from the preliminary 3.49 million in October 2007. In Washington County, foggy mornings and mild temperatures were causing disease problems in cole crops. Sugarcane harvesting remained active in the Everglades region and potato planting started in the tri-county agricultural area (Flagler, Putnam, and St. Johns). Floriculture operations are in full swing as producers are getting prepared for the holiday.

The January all hired worker wage rate average was \$9.97 per hour, 23 cents more than the \$9.74 paid last quarter. Farmers paid an average of \$9.98 per hour, 22 cents higher than the \$9.76 paid in the previous quarter. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$9.90 per hour, 35 cents higher than the \$9.55 paid last quarter.

UNITED STATES

U.S. Hired Workers Total 778 Thousand, U.S. Wage at \$10.77

There were 778,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of January 6-12, 2008. Of these hired workers, 599,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 179,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.77 per hour during the January 2008 reference week. Field workers received an average of \$9.64 per hour, while livestock workers earned \$10.19 per hour. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate was \$9.87 per hour. The number of hours worked averaged 38.4 hours for hired workers during the survey week.

Dry weather returned to southern California and the Southwest early in the week, followed by a shift of stormy conditions into the Pacific Northwest. Mostly dry weather prevailed across the mid-section, except for light snow on the central Plains and a few showers and thunderstorms on the southeastern Plains. Muddy or snowy fields and feedlots caused livestock stress across the central Plains. Significant flooding developed across the central Corn Belt from Illinois to Indiana and southern Michigan, and a few rare tornadoes swept through parts of the Corn Belt. Heavy rain soaked areas from Missouri to Lake Michigan and eastward. In contrast, the upper Midwest was mostly dry. Rain provided Southeastern drought relief, although lake levels remained low. Winter grains and pastures benefited from the Southeastern showers, although Florida's Peninsula stayed mostly dry. East of the Rockies, temperatures soared during the early to mid-week period. Weekly readings averaged at least 20 degrees above normal in parts of the Midwest, with several locations reporting record highs. Temperatures averaged at least 10 degrees above normal in the eastern half of the U.S., except for southern Florida. In contrast, colder than normal weather prevailed over much of the Intermountain West.

Due to Agency budget constraints, the January 2007 Farm Labor Survey was not conducted. Since the data in all Farm Labor Surveys are tied to a specific reference week, it was not possible to conduct this survey at a later time. Therefore, year-to-year comparisons are not available in this report.

TABLE 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, January 6 through 12, 2008, 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 ^{1/} | <i>Thousands</i> | | | <i>Hours</i> | <i>Dollars Per Hour</i> ^{2/} | | |
| 2008 | | | | | | | |
| January 6 - 12 | 49.0 | 45.0 | 4.0 | 41.8 | 9.98 | 9.00 | 9.20 |
| 2007 | | | | | | | |
| October 7 - 13 | 43.0 | 39.0 | 4.0 | 41.8 | 9.76 | 8.70 | 8.95 |
| July 8 - 14 | 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 ^{3/} | | | | | | | |
| 2006 | | | | | | | |
| October 8 - 14 | 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 |
| | HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES | | | | | | |
| 2008 | | | | | | | |
| January 6 - 12 | 9.0 | | | 41.0 | 9.90 | | |
| 2007 | | | | | | | |
| October 7 - 13 | 4.0 | | | 42.0 | 9.55 | | |
| July 8 - 14 | 2.0 | | | 43.0 | 9.60 | | |
| April 8 - 14 | 8.0 | | | 40.0 | 10.45 | | |
| January 7 - 13 ^{3/} | | | | | | | |
| 2006 | | | | | | | |
| October 8 - 14 | 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 | | |
| | HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS & AGRICULTURAL SERVICES | | | | | | |
| 2008 | | | | | | | |
| January 6 - 12 | 58.0 | | | | 9.97 | | |
| 2007 | | | | | | | |
| October 7 - 13 | 47.0 | | | | 9.74 | | |
| July 8 - 14 | 43.0 | | | | 9.50 | | |
| April 8 - 14 | 63.0 | | | | 10.07 | | |
| January 7 - 13 ^{3/} | | | | | | | |
| 2006 | | | | | | | |
| October 8 - 14 | 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 | | |

^{1/} Excludes Agricultural Services workers.

^{2/} Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

^{3/} The January Farm Labor Survey was not conducted.

TABLE 2 -- Number of workers hired by farmers, wage rates, and hours worked, Selected States, January 6 through 12, 2008, with comparisons ^{1/}

| Item | Florida | California | Texas & Oklahoma | Arizona & New Mexico | Hawaii | United States ^{2/} |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| | <i>Thousands</i> | | | | | |
| ALL HIRED WORKERS | | | | | | |
| January 6 – 12, 2008 | 49 | 137 | 59 | 15 | 6 | 599 |
| October 7 – 13, 2007 | 43 | *188 | 69 | 22 | 6 | *817 |
| January 7 – 13, 2007 ^{3/} | | | | | | |
| EXPECTED TO WORK | | | | | | |
| 150 days or more | | | | | | |
| January 6 – 12, 2008 | 45 | 119 | 52 | 14 | 5 | 511 |
| October 7 – 13, 2007 | 39 | *152 | 55 | 21 | 5 | *603 |
| January 7 – 13, 2007 ^{3/} | | | | | | |
| 149 days or less | | | | | | |
| January 6 – 12, 2008 | 4 | 18 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 88 |
| October 7 – 13, 2007 | 4 | *36 | 14 | 1 | 1 | *214 |
| January 7 – 13, 2007 ^{3/} | | | | | | |
| | <i>Average hours per week</i> | | | | | |
| HOURS WORKED BY ALL HIRED WORKERS | | | | | | |
| January 6 – 12, 2008 | 41.8 | 40.7 | 38.4 | 46.6 | 38.4 | 38.4 |
| October 7 – 13, 2007 | 41.8 | *45.5 | 39.0 | 46.1 | 40.0 | *42.2 |
| January 7 – 13, 2007 ^{3/} | | | | | | |
| | <i>Dollars per hour ^{4/}</i> | | | | | |
| WAGES BY TYPE OF WORKER | | | | | | |
| Field | | | | | | |
| January 6 – 12, 2008 | 9.00 | 10.10 | 8.49 | 8.68 | 10.80 | 9.64 |
| October 7 – 13, 2007 | 8.70 | 9.70 | 8.59 | 8.26 | 11.00 | 9.62 |
| January 7 – 13, 2007 ^{3/} | | | | | | |
| Livestock | | | | | | |
| January 6 – 12, 2008 | 9.20 | 10.70 | 10.03 | 10.47 | ^{5/} | 10.19 |
| October 7 – 13, 2007 | 8.95 | *11.00 | 10.46 | 9.91 | ^{5/} | *10.02 |
| January 7 – 13, 2007 ^{3/} | | | | | | |
| Field & Livestock Combined | | | | | | |
| January 6 – 12, 2008 | 9.03 | 10.25 | 9.30 | 9.41 | 10.92 | 9.87 |
| October 7 – 13, 2007 | 8.74 | *9.89 | 9.45 | 8.85 | 11.13 | *9.73 |
| January 7 – 13, 2007 ^{3/} | | | | | | |
| ALL HIRED WORKER WAGE RATE | | | | | | |
| January 6 – 12, 2008 | 9.98 | 11.37 | 9.81 | 9.95 | 13.04 | 10.77 |
| October 7 – 13, 2007 | 9.76 | *10.74 | 10.05 | 9.21 | 13.19 | *10.38 |
| January 7 – 13, 2007 ^{3/} | | | | | | |

* Revised

^{1/} Excludes Agricultural Service workers.

^{2/} United States exclude Alaska.

^{3/} The January Farm Labor was not conducted

^{4/} Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

^{5/} Insufficient data for livestock.

Reliability of Farm Labor Estimates

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 6-12, 2008.

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 0.9 percent. The relative sampling error was 0.9 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 18 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 2007 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.