



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service



FARM LABOR

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Florida

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 55,000 during the survey week of January 10 through 16. Farmers hired 48,000 workers, 2,000 more than last quarter, and 10,000 more than a year ago. Agricultural services provided 7,000 paid workers, up 4,000 from last quarter, but down 2,000 from January 2009.

Temperatures in major Florida cities averaged 9-12 degrees below normal during the survey week with many areas covered in frost. Harvesting of vegetables was reduced due to freeze damage; however, workers were still out salvaging crops and working in the fields. Citrus producer's harvested 7,556,000 boxes (preliminary) during the survey week, up from 423,516 preliminary boxes during the October 2009 reference week. Vegetable growers shipped about 144 million pounds of vegetables and non-citrus fruits during the survey week, up from the preliminary 12.4 million in October 2009.

The January combined farmer and agricultural all hired worker wage rate average was \$10.79 per hour, 9 cents more than the \$10.70 paid last quarter, and 65 cents more than the \$10.14 paid a year ago. Farmers paid an average of \$10.84 per hour, 19 cents more than the \$10.65 paid in the previous quarter, and 68 cents more than the \$10.16 paid the previous year. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$10.50 per hour, 85 cents less than last quarter, but 45 more than last year.

United States

Hired Workers Down 2 Percent, Wage Rates up 1 Percent from a Year Ago

There were 767,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of January 10-16, 2010, down 2 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 587,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 180,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$11.06 per hour during the January 2010 reference week, up 13 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.14 per hour, up 18 cents from last January, while livestock workers earned \$10.26 per hour compared with \$10.27 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.19 per hour, was up 11 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 37.3 hours for hired workers during the survey week, down 3 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California, and in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), and Northeast I (New England and New York) regions. Moderate to heavy rains over most of California caused major fieldwork delays. Therefore, fewer hired workers were needed. In the Southern Plains region, weather conditions were considerably wetter compared with last year's relatively dry period, and fieldwork was curtailed for several days. This led to a decreased demand for hired workers. Below normal temperatures and wet soils in the Southeast region halted cotton and soybean harvests, reducing the need for hired workers. In the Northeast I region, cold, snowy weather hindered most outside farm activities, and reduced the need for hired workers.

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Florida All Hired Workers, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates by Type of Worker, with Comparisons

Employer, year, and survey week	Number of hired workers			Number of hours worked	Wages paid by type of worker ¹		
	All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock
		150 days or more	149 days or less				
Hired by Farmers²	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours Per week)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
January 10 – 16, 2010	48	43	5	37.1	10.84	9.60	10.35
October 11 – 17, 2009	46	41	5	38.6	10.65	9.30	10.10
July 12 – 18, 2009.....	36	32	4	37.3	10.51	9.14	9.50
April 12 – 18, 2009.....	46	39	7	38.3	10.33	9.15	9.35
January 11 – 17, 2009	38	31	7	37.8	10.16	8.95	9.45
October 12 – 18, 2008	38	32	6	39.7	10.09	8.90	9.30
July 6 – 12, 2008.....	42	39	3	40.9	9.90	8.84	9.25
April 6 – 12, 2008.....	51	45	6	41.5	10.25	9.32	9.59
January 6 – 12, 2008	49	45	4	41.8	9.98	9.00	9.20
Hired by Agricultural Services³							
January 10 – 16, 2010	7			41.0	10.50		
October 11 – 17, 2009	3			44.0	11.35		
July 12 – 18, 2009.....	2			43.0	10.65		
April 12 - 18, 2009.....	7			33.0	10.30		
January 11 - 17, 2009	9			37.0	10.05		
October 12 – 18, 2008	3			42.0	10.05		
July 6 - 12, 2008.....	2			43.0	9.85		
April 6 - 12, 2008.....	8			40.0	10.05		
January 6 - 12, 2008	9			41.0	9.90		
Hired by Farmers & Agricultural Services³							
January 10 – 16, 2010	55				10.79		
October 11 – 17, 2009	49				10.70		
July 12 – 18, 2009.....	38				10.52		
April 12 - 18, 2009.....	53				10.33		
January 11 - 17, 2009	47				10.14		
October 12 – 18, 2008	41				10.09		
July 6 - 12, 2008.....	44				9.90		
April 6 - 12, 2008.....	59				10.22		
January 6 - 12, 2008	58				9.97		

¹ Includes all paid staff, supervisors, and field and livestock workers. Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided to some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

² Excludes agricultural services workers.

³ Data are for agricultural services performed on the farm by custom service units. Blank data cells for these statistics are not included in the State-Regional tables.

Hired Workers by Farmers, Wage Rates, and Hours Worked, Selected States, with Comparisons

[Excludes Agricultural Service workers]

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States ¹
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
All hired workers						
January 10-16, 2010	48	114	55	19	6	587
October 11-17, 2009	46	157	56	20	6	807
January 11-17, 2009	38	132	65	20	6	595
Expected to work						
150 days or more						
January 10-16, 2010	43	98	47	18	5	501
October 11-17, 2009	41	124	44	18	5	585
January 11-17, 2009	31	112	55	18	5	497
149 days or less						
January 10-16, 2010	5	16	8	1	1	86
October 11-17, 2009	5	33	12	2	1	222
January 11-17, 2009	7	20	10	2	1	98
	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)
Hours worked by all hired workers						
January 10-16, 2010	37.1	42.2	36.5	49.4	35.5	37.3
October 11-17, 2009	38.6	42.1	39.0	44.9	36.7	39.0
January 11-17, 2009	37.8	41.3	40.4	49.7	37.9	38.3
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Wages by type of worker ²						
Field						
January 10-16, 2010	9.60	10.50	9.01	8.47	11.70	10.14
October 11-17, 2009	9.30	10.25	9.17	9.10	11.55	10.25
January 11-17, 2009	8.95	9.80	10.06	9.27	10.70	9.96
Livestock						
January 10-16, 2010	10.35	11.05	10.21	9.59	13.60	10.26
October 11-17, 2009	10.10	11.05	10.64	10.06	13.40	10.23
January 11-17, 2009	9.45	10.95	10.24	10.58	13.50	10.27
Field and livestock combined						
January 10-16, 2010	9.70	10.64	9.66	8.90	11.82	10.19
October 11-17, 2009	9.40	10.40	9.85	9.50	11.69	10.24
January 11-17, 2009	9.00	10.09	10.15	9.75	10.93	10.08
All hired worker wage rate						
January 10-16, 2010	10.84	11.68	10.00	9.44	14.14	11.06
October 11-17, 2009	10.65	11.25	10.17	10.30	13.60	10.91
January 11-17, 2009	10.16	11.15	10.70	10.30	12.69	10.93

¹ Excludes Alaska.

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

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in Florida, and in the Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), and Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) regions. In Florida, freezing temperatures caused producers of oranges, vegetables, strawberries, sugarcane, and nursery crops to scramble to minimize crop damage. Therefore, demand for hired workers was considerably higher. Larger hog inventories in the Corn Belt I region increased the demand for livestock workers. Also, late corn harvest was ongoing, and above normal grain movement to market pushed field worker numbers above last year. In the Northeast II region, continued strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industries led to more field workers being needed. The late corn harvest was also ongoing. Mild conditions in the Corn Belt II region led to heightened movement of grain to market and increased the demand for hired workers. In the Lake region, above normal temperatures and very little precipitation allowed late corn harvest to progress. Therefore, more hired workers were necessary.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), Florida, Northeast II, and Northeast I regions. Increased snow cover in the Mountain II region caused more supplemental feeding on cattle operations. This led to a greater demand for skilled workers. In the Northern Plains region, late corn harvest raised the demand for skilled machine operators. This pushed the average wage higher than last year. The higher wages in Florida were due to a lower percentage of part time workers. In the Northeast II region, a higher percentage of workers on nursery and greenhouse operations led to higher average wages. Salaried workers working fewer hours in the Northeast I region kept hourly wage levels above a year earlier.

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 10-16, 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 9 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 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 2009 and January 2009 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.