



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service

# FARM LABOR



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## Florida

The total number of workers hired by farms and agricultural service operations during the survey week of January 9-15 was 53,000. Farms hired 45,000 workers, 2,000 more than last quarter but 3,000 less than last year. Agricultural service operations provided 8,000 workers, 5,000 more than last quarter and 1,000 more than a year earlier.

Florida had record setting freezing temperatures and little precipitation during the reference week. Unseasonably cold temperatures averaged four to fourteen degrees below normal. Harvesting of vegetables was curtailed due to cold. Shipment levels were reported below normal for this time of year. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, there was moderate to severe drought in most of Florida's citrus area. The Citrus Administrative Committee estimate of citrus fruit harvested during the survey week of 7,088,856 boxes, up from the 247,000 boxes in the October survey week, but down from the 7,556,000 boxes in the corresponding week in January 2010.

The average wage rate for workers hired by farms and agricultural service operations was \$10.83 per hour, down from the \$11.09 reported last quarter but up slightly from the \$10.79 of last year. Farmers paid an average of \$10.70 per hour, below the \$11.00 reported last quarter and the \$10.84 in January last year. Agricultural service operations paid an average of \$11.50 per hour, below last quarter's \$12.20 but above the \$10.50 from last year.

## United States

### Hired Workers Up 1 Percent, Wage Rates Up 2 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 807,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of January 9-15, 2011, up 1 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 602,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 205,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$11.29 per hour during the January 2011 reference week, up 21 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.23 per hour, up 13 cents from last January, while livestock workers earned \$10.52 per hour compared with \$10.31 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.35 per hour, was up 17 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 38.9 for hired workers during the survey week, up 5 percent from a year ago.

The largest increases in the number of hired 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 I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming) regions. Subzero conditions and heavy snow in the Northern Plains region led to increased supplemental feeding, and early calving was underway. Therefore, more livestock workers were needed. Also, nursery and greenhouse operations required more workers to protect their crops against the bitter cold. In the Northeast I and Mountain I regions, the increase in hired workers was due to strong demand from the dairy industry.

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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 <sup>1</sup>		
	All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock
		150 days or more	149 days or less				
<b>Hired by Farmers <sup>2</sup></b>	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours Per week)			
January 9 – 15, 2011.....	45	38	7	36.9	10.70	9.45	10.05
October 10 – 16, 2010.....	43	37	6	39.0	11.00	9.79	9.05
July 11 – 17, 2010.....	35	28	7	37.7	10.68	9.40	9.40
April 11 – 17, 2010.....	50	41	9	37.2	10.22	9.10	10.00
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
<b>Hired by Agricultural Services <sup>3</sup></b>							
January 9 – 15, 2011.....	8			39.0	11.50		
October 10 – 16, 2010.....	3			46.0	12.20		
July 11 – 17, 2010.....	2			46.0	11.95		
April 11 – 17, 2010.....	6			41.0	10.80		
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		
<b>Hired by Farmers &amp; Agricultural Services <sup>3</sup></b>							
January 9 – 15, 2011.....	53				10.83		
October 10 – 16, 2010.....	46				11.09		
July 11 – 17, 2010.....	37				10.76		
April 11 – 17, 2010.....	56				10.29		
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		

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes agricultural services workers.

<sup>3</sup> 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 <sup>1</sup>
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
All hired workers						
January 9-15, 2011.....	45	132	50	18	7	602
October 10-16, 2010.....	43	193	52	17	7	827
January 10-16, 2010.....	48	139	55	19	6	612
Expected to work						
150 days or more						
January 9-15, 2011.....	38	111	42	16	6	505
October 10-16, 2010.....	37	157	43	15	6	589
January 10-16, 2010.....	43	121	47	18	5	524
149 days or less						
January 9-15, 2011.....	7	21	8	2	1	97
October 10-16, 2010.....	6	36	9	2	1	238
January 10-16, 2010.....	5	18	8	1	1	88
	(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 9-15, 2011.....	36.9	42.4	40.5	46.8	37.4	38.9
October 10-16, 2010.....	39.0	44.7	42.0	47.1	37.0	41.7
January 10-16, 2010.....	37.1	40.9	36.5	49.4	35.5	37.2
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Wages by type of worker <sup>2</sup>						
Field						
January 9-15, 2011.....	9.45	9.87	9.34	9.77	11.35	10.23
October 10-16, 2010.....	9.79	10.20	9.68	9.43	12.00	10.49
January 10-16, 2010.....	9.60	10.32	9.01	8.47	11.70	10.10
Livestock						
January 9-15, 2011.....	10.05	10.75	9.91	9.85	13.25	10.52
October 10-16, 2010.....	9.05	11.25	10.01	10.07	14.30	10.28
January 10-16, 2010.....	10.35	11.24	10.21	9.59	13.60	10.31
Field and livestock combined						
January 9-15, 2011.....	9.55	10.05	9.70	9.80	11.48	10.35
October 10-16, 2010.....	9.65	10.35	9.85	9.75	12.16	10.43
January 10-16, 2010.....	9.70	10.56	9.66	8.90	11.82	10.18
All hired worker wage rate						
January 9-15, 2011.....	10.70	11.05	10.30	10.60	13.51	11.29
October 10-16, 2010.....	11.00	11.20	10.30	10.45	14.38	11.13
January 10-16, 2010.....	10.84	11.68	10.00	9.44	14.14	11.08

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Alaska.

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

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), and Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas) regions. In both of the Corn Belt regions, mild conditions during last year's reference week allowed late corn harvest to progress. This year, a return to more normal winter weather patterns reduced the demand for hired workers. Reduced demand from the nursery and greenhouse industries in the Delta and Appalachian I regions kept hired worker numbers below last year. East Texas received four inches of rain, which slowed citrus and sugarcane harvests and lowered the need for hired workers in the Southern Plains region.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), Corn Belt I, and Northern Plains regions. In the Mountain III and Southeast regions, the higher wages were due to strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industry. The higher wages in the Corn Belt I region were due to a higher percentage of supervisors. In the Northern Plains region, the higher wages were due to a larger percentage of more highly skilled workers on livestock operations.

**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 2010 and January 2010 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.