



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

FARM LABOR



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August 19, 2011

Florida

During the survey week of July 10-16, the average wage rate for workers hired by farms and agricultural service operations (weighted by worker-hours) was \$12.18 per hour, up from the \$10.76 reported last year. The average wage rate for workers hired by farms (\$12.15 per hour) was slightly below that of agricultural service operations (\$12.45 per hour). This period's wages are above the previous year's wages of \$10.68 for workers hired by farmers and \$11.95 for those hired by agricultural service operations.

The total number of workers hired by farms and agricultural service operations during the survey week was 43,000. Farms hired 40,000 workers, 5,000 above last year. Agricultural service operations provided 3,000 workers, 1,000 above last year.

Drought ratings continued to be exceptionally high. Reports from the U.S. Drought monitor showed 90 percent of the State experiencing drought; whereas, this time last year, only seven percent of the State had drought. Average temperatures ranged from one to three degrees above normal. Field crops were in need of rains to improve crop conditions. Minimal to no vegetable activity took place during the week.

United States

Hired Workers Down 5 Percent, Wage Rates Up 1 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 1,186,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 10-16, 2011, down 5 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 836,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 350,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.90 per hour during the July 2011 reference week, up 11 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.24 per hour, up 15 cents from last July, while livestock workers earned \$10.28 per hour compared with \$10.15 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.25 per hour, was up 14 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 41.3 for hired workers during the survey week, up 1 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California and in the Pacific (Oregon and Washington), Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), and Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio) regions. In California and in the Pacific region, the wet spring and cooler than normal summer temperatures delayed crop development, reducing the demand for hired workers. Above normal temperatures, heavy rains, and high winds in the Northern Plains and Corn Belt I regions discouraged crop progress and slowed field activity. Therefore, fewer hired workers were needed.

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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 Farmers ²	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours Per week)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
July 10 – 16, 2011	40	37	3	40.3	12.15	9.90	10.20
April 10 – 16, 2011 ³							
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
Hired by Agricultural Services ⁴							
July 10 – 16, 2011	3			49.7	12.45		
April 10 – 16, 2011 ³							
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		
Hired by Farmers & Agricultural Services ⁴							
July 10 – 16, 2011	43				12.18		
April 10 – 16, 2011 ³							
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		

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 The April 2011 Farm Labor Survey was not conducted.

⁴ 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						
July 10 – 16, 2011	40	179	51	16	7	836
April 10 – 16, 2011 ²						
July 11 – 17, 2010	35	200	53	19	6	885
Expected to work						
150 days or more						
July 10 – 16, 2011	37	145	40	15	6	606
April 10 – 16, 2011 ²						
July 11 – 17, 2010	28	164	44		5	627
149 days or less				16		
July 10 – 16, 2011	3	34	11	1	1	230
April 10 – 16, 2011 ²						
July 11 – 17, 2010	7	36	9	3	1	258
Hours worked by all hired workers	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)
July 10 – 16, 2011	40.3	44.7	40.0	46.8	38.0	41.3
April 10 – 16, 2011 ²						
July 11 – 17, 2010	37.7	43.4	44.0	44.6	37.8	40.7
Wages by type of worker ³	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Field						
July 10 – 16, 2011	9.90	10.00	10.14	9.89	12.70	10.24
April 10 – 16, 2011 ²						
July 11 – 17, 2010	9.40	10.10	8.98	9.70	12.00	10.09
Livestock						
July 10 – 16, 2011	10.20	10.80	10.25	10.65	13.25	10.28
April 10 – 16, 2011 ²						
July 11 – 17, 2010	9.40	11.10	9.54	9.69	14.20	10.15
Field and livestock combined						
July 10 – 16, 2011	9.95	10.10	10.20	10.20	12.76	10.25
April 10 – 16, 2011 ²						
July 11 – 17, 2010	9.40	10.23	9.20	9.70	12.19	10.11
All hired worker wage rate						
July 10 – 16, 2011	12.15	10.80	10.60	11.10	14.91	10.90
April 10 – 16, 2011 ²						
July 11 – 17, 2010	10.68	11.12	9.90	10.50	14.41	10.79

¹ Excludes Alaska.

² The April 2011 Farm Labor Survey was not conducted.

³ 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 the Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) and Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia) regions and in Florida. In the Lake and Appalachian II regions, the wet conditions during last year's reference week slowed field activity for two days. Drier conditions this year allowed fieldwork to progress rapidly, increasing the demand for hired workers. Recent rains in Florida improved crop growth which led to heightened activity on farms causing more hired workers to be necessary.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in Florida and in the Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Appalachian II, and Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas) regions. The higher wages in Florida were due to strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industry. In the Corn Belt II region, the higher wages were due to a lower proportion of part time workers. There were also a larger percentage of more highly skilled machine operators on grain farms. Fewer hours worked combined with fewer part time workers in the Appalachian II region led to the increase in wages. In the Southern Plains region, there were more salaried workers working fewer hours which pushed the average wage up.

Survey Methodology

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 10-16, 2011.

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 10 and 20 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 0.7 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 19 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 following quarter that the information is published and 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 July 2010 were subject to revision with this report.