



FARM LABOR

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
2290 Lucien Way, Suite 300, Maitland, FL 32751
407-648-6013 · (407-648-6029 FAX) · www.nass.usda.gov/fl

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Florida

During the reference week of April 8-14, average agricultural wage rates were \$11.56 per hour for all hired workers, \$10.60 for field workers, and \$10.35 for livestock workers. There were a total of 55,000 hired workers. During this time period, the U.S. Drought Monitor recorded 68% percent of Florida's landmass rated as being in a severe, extreme or exceptional drought. Clear skies allowed producers to progress in planting field and vegetable crops and harvesting vegetables.

During the reference week of January 8-14, average agricultural wage rates were \$11.43 per hour for all hired workers, \$10.35 for field workers, and \$10.65 for livestock workers. This time in January, there was a total of 50,000 hired workers. In January, most areas across the State experienced below freezing or near freezing temperatures. An increase in number of workers was largely driven by strong demand from fruit and vegetable producers during recovery from a prior week freeze event. Also, higher wages resulted from the increased demand from fruit and vegetable producers. Several stations reported lows in the 20s but as the week progressed evening lows peaked in the mid-30s. Nearly all stations received insignificant rains during the week. Winter vegetables were being harvested.

United States

Hired Workers Down Nearly 5 Percent, Wage Rates Up Nearly 2 Percent From a Year Ago

Beginning in 2012, two quarters of farm labor data are published semi-annually. Additionally, the agricultural service component was discontinued in 2012. Hired worker estimates exclude agricultural service employees.

There were 575,000 workers hired directly by farm operators on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of January 8-14, 2012, down nearly 5 percent from a year ago. Workers hired directly by farm operators numbered 748,000 for the following quarter's reference week of April 8-14, 2012. Because NASS did not publish estimates for the April 2011 quarter, no previous year comparison is available for April.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$11.52 per hour during the January 2012 reference week, up nearly two percent from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.39 per hour, up more than 1 percent, while livestock workers earned \$10.96 per hour compared with \$10.52 a year ago. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.58 per hour, was up 21 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 39.6 for hired workers during the reference week, up fractionally from a year ago.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$11.41 per hour during the April 2012 reference week, down 11 cents from the January quarter. Field workers received an average of \$10.50 per hour, up 11 cents from January. Livestock workers earned \$10.95, down just one cent from January. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.62 per hour, was up four cents from January. The number of hours worked averaged 39.2 for hired workers during the April reference week.

For the January reference week, the largest percentage increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio) region and in Florida. The increase in Corn Belt I was largely driven by strong demand for livestock workers resulting from increased cattle and hog inventories.

For the January reference week, the largest percentage decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi) Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), and Northeast I (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire) regions. The decrease in the Delta region resulted primarily from softening demand for cotton workers, ahead of a substantial decrease in cotton acreage. In the Northern Plains and Northeast I regions, record mild January temperatures reduced the need for livestock overwintering activities and associated labor requirements.

For the January reference week, hired worker wage rates were above a year ago in the majority of regions. The largest increases occurred in Hawaii, Florida, and the Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) regions. The increase in Hawaii was mainly driven by a higher proportion of supervisory and specialty labor combined with wage increases for all worker groups. In the Lake region, generally higher wages followed a drop in overall hired workers.

Revision Policy: Farm labor statistics are subject to revision semi-annually and annually. The basis for revision must be supported by additional data that directly affect the level of the estimate. Worker numbers and wage rates for January 2011 and October 2011 were subject to revision with this report.

Number of Workers, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates - Selected Regions and United States

[Excludes agricultural service workers and Alaska]

	Florida	Southeast	Delta	Southern Plains	California	United States
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
All hired workers						
April 8-14, 2012.....	55	36	23	58	156	748
January 8-14, 2012.....	50	26	16	47	135	575
October 9-15, 2011.....	41	29	31	45	185	828
July 10-16, 2011.....	40	31	25	51	177	834
April 10-16,2011.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
January 9-15, 2011.....	45	25	24	50	133	603
Expected to work						
150 days or more						
April 8-14, 2012.....	41	26	18	40	137	580
January 8-14, 2012.....	41	20	14	37	112	489
October 9-15, 2011.....	34	19	22	37	150	590
July 10-16, 2011.....	37	22	18	40	142	603
April 10-16,2011.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
January 9-15, 2011.....	38	18	19	42	112	506
149 days or less						
April 8-14, 2012.....	14	10	5	18	19	168
January 8-14, 2012.....	9	6	2	10	23	86
October 9-15, 2011.....	7	10	9	8	35	238
July 10-16, 2011.....	3	9	7	11	35	231
April 10-16,2011.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
January 9-15, 2011.....	7	7	5	8	21	97
Hours worked by all hired workers						
	(hours per week)					
April 8-14, 2012.....	36.5	36.4	39.4	40.9	39.8	39.2
January 8-14, 2012.....	38.5	36.1	36.0	37.8	42.8	39.6
October 9-15, 2011.....	37.3	33.8	44.7	41.0	43.6	41.6
July 10-16, 2011.....	40.3	39.4	39.5	40.0	44.7	41.2
April 10-16, 2011.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
January 9-15, 2011.....	36.9	37.5	35.1	40.5	42.4	39.0
Wages by type of worker ¹						
	(dollars per hour)					
Field						
April 8-14, 2012.....	10.60	9.61	9.41	9.40	10.55	10.50
January 8-14, 2012.....	10.35	9.64	9.33	9.75	10.08	10.39
October 9-15, 2011.....	9.25	9.87	9.12	9.53	10.15	10.54
July 10-16, 2011.....	9.90	9.18	9.24	10.14	10.10	10.27
April 10-16, 2011.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
January 9-15, 2011.....	9.45	9.26	9.71	9.34	9.98	10.26
Livestock						
April 8-14, 2012.....	10.35	9.91	10.38	10.00	11.85	10.95
January 8-14, 2012.....	10.65	10.49	10.48	10.36	11.75	10.96
October 9-15, 2011.....	10.20	9.09	9.68	11.03	11.20	10.67
July 10-16, 2011.....	10.20	8.72	10.27	10.25	10.90	10.29
April 10-16, 2011.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
January 9-15, 2011.....	10.05	11.16	9.27	9.91	10.75	10.52
Field and livestock combined						
April 8-14, 2012.....	10.58	9.67	9.62	9.55	10.83	10.62
January 8-14, 2012.....	10.37	9.81	9.74	9.95	10.42	10.58
October 9-15, 2011.....	9.35	9.65	9.20	10.10	10.30	10.57
July 10-16, 2011.....	9.95	9.05	9.50	10.20	10.20	10.28
April 10-16, 2011.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
January 9-15, 2011.....	9.55	9.75	9.50	9.70	10.14	10.37
All hired worker wage rate						
April 8-14, 2012.....	11.56	10.13	10.27	10.05	11.81	11.41
January 8-14, 2012.....	11.43	10.53	10.67	10.75	11.38	11.52
October 9-15, 2011.....	10.56	10.10	9.64	10.78	10.96	11.15
July 10-16, 2011.....	12.15	9.70	9.85	10.60	10.90	10.93
April 10-16, 2011.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
January 9-15, 2011.....	10.70	10.50	10.20	10.30	11.12	11.30

¹ Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided to some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

² The April 2011 Farm Labor Survey was not conducted.