



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
ILLINOIS FIELD OFFICE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Priya Dua
(800) 551-1014

USDA Gathers Data about On-Farm Labor

Springfield, Illinois, March 2019 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct its biannual Agricultural Labor Survey during the second half of April. The survey will collect information about hired labor from more than 1,300 Illinois farmers and ranchers.

"The beginning of the year is the time when agricultural producers plan out the rest of their growing seasons and it is a great time to assess on-farm labor needs," said Illinois State Statistician Mark Schleusener. "The data that farm operators provide through NASS's Agricultural Labor Survey allow federal policymakers to base farm labor policies on accurate information."

USDA and the U.S. Department of Labor use statistics gathered in the Agricultural Labor Survey to establish minimum wage rates for agricultural workers, administer farm labor recruitment and placement service programs, and assist legislators in determining labor policies.

In the survey, NASS asks participants to answer a variety of questions about hired farm labor on their operations, including total number of hired farm workers, the total hours worked, base wage rate, and total gross wages paid for the weeks of January 6-12 and April 7-13. For their convenience, survey participants have the option to respond online.

"By asking about two separate time periods each time we collect data during the year, we are able to publish quarterly data and capture seasonal variation," said Schleusener. "This approach reduces the number of times we survey farm businesses while ensuring that accurate and timely data are available."

NASS will compile, analyze, and publish survey results in the May 30 *Farm Labor* report. All previous *Farm Labor* publications are available online at https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Calendar/reports_by_date.php. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Heartland Regional Field Office at (800) 551-1014.

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