

News Release

September 23, 2015

Specialty Crop Labor - 2014

Specialty crop farms in Michigan hired 44,000 workers in 2014, based on surveys of fruit, vegetable, greenhouse, and nursery operations. These surveys were funded by USDA specialty crop grants administered by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Resource Development. There were 1,945 fruit, 1,140 nursery/greenhouse, and 580 vegetable operations included. (Vegetable farms with less than 15 acres were excluded.) An operation could be

counted in more than one sector—fruit, vegetable, nursery/greenhouse. Employees, however, were attributed to only one sector. There were 9,150 permanent employees and 31,850 seasonal employees. The actual number of people in the seasonal category would be lower, as seasonal workers can be employed on more than one farm in a year. Migrant employment was 17,400.

Vegetable Farm Workers By Category 2014

Category	Permanent	Seasonal
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	1,150	3,350
Part-time	200	2,450
NON-AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	60	210
Part-time	(¹)	150
CONTRACT		
Full-time	15	180
Part-time	(¹)	60
TOTAL	1,450	6,400

¹ Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations or due to insufficient data.

Vegetable Farm Worker Shortage By Category 2014

Category	Permanent	Seasonal
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	(¹)	640
Part-time	(¹)	250
NON-AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	(¹)	(¹)
Part-time	(¹)	(¹)
CONTRACT		
Full-time	(¹)	(¹)
Part-time	(¹)	(¹)
TOTAL	20	910

¹ Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations or due to insufficient data.

Fruit Farm Workers By Category 2014

Category	Permanent	Seasonal
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	1,750	10,300
Part-time	270	5,050
NON-AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	220	450
Part-time	140	600
CONTRACT		
Full-time	(¹)	290
Part-time	(¹)	760
TOTAL	2,450	17,450

¹ Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations or due to insufficient data.

Fruit Farm Worker Shortage By Category 2014

Category	Permanent	Seasonal
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	50	1,810
Part-time	10	830
NON-AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	(¹)	(¹)
Part-time	(¹)	(¹)
CONTRACT		
Full-time	(¹)	(¹)
Part-time	(¹)	90
TOTAL	80	2,770

¹ Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations or due to insufficient data.

Greenhouse/Nursery Workers By Category 2014

Category	Permanent	Seasonal
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	3,350	3,900
Part-time	790	2,050
NON-AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	850	600
Part-time	120	430
CONTRACT		
Full-time	130	290
Part-time	10	730
TOTAL	5,250	8,000

¹ Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations or due to insufficient data.

Greenhouse/Nursery Worker Shortage By Category 2014

Category	Permanent	Seasonal
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	190	540
Part-time	(¹)	230
NON-AGRICULTURAL		
Full-time	(¹)	(¹)
Part-time	(¹)	(¹)
CONTRACT		
Full-time	(¹)	(¹)
Part-time	(¹)	35
TOTAL	240	850

¹ Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations or due to insufficient data.

Migrant Workers By Sector 2014

	Vegetable	Fruit	Nursery/Greenhouse
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
Farms hiring	200	460	60
Migrant workers	4,000	12,000	1,400
Previously employed	2,550	8,100	1,150
Housing provided	2,800	7,700	500

Recruiting Sources By Sector 2014 ¹

Sources	Vegetable	Fruit	Nursery/Greenhouse
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Local labor force/want ads	16	17	28
Michigan Works! Ag employment	14	16	11
H-2A temporary Ag worker	3	2	2
Employment agency	2	1	3
Temporary service company	1	1	7
Other	49	61	39

¹ For farms with hired labor.

Farms With Paid Workers By Sector 2014

Number of Workers	Vegetable	Fruit	Nursery/Greenhouse
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
None	145	840	520
1 - 9	260	710	350
10 or more	175	395	270
TOTAL	580	1,945	1,140

Quantiles and Means of Wages Paid by Farms to Seasonal Workers by Year and Sector

Type of Wages	Vegetable		Fruit		Nursery/Greenhouse	
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014
	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>
Minimum-25%	7.75	8.10	8.00	8.40	7.75	8.00
Minimum-50%	8.15	8.50	9.00	9.00	8.00	8.50
Minimum-75%	9.00	9.00	10.00	10.00	9.00	9.50
Minimum-mean	8.50	8.85	9.20	9.60	8.50	9.00
Average-25%	8.50	9.00	9.00	9.50	8.25	8.85
Average-50%	9.50	10.00	10.00	10.00	9.00	9.75
Average-75%	10.50	11.00	12.00	12.00	10.00	10.90
Average-mean	9.90	10.40	10.70	11.10	9.60	10.00

Estimated Lost Sales From Worker Shortage By Sector 2014

Sector	Dollars
Fruit	9,900,000
Vegetable	6,600,000
Nursery/Greenhouse	3,200,000

Farms Needing Additional Workers By Month And Sector

Month	Vegetable	Fruit	Nursery/Greenhouse
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
January	0	8	2
February	0	11	10
March	0	11	46
April	5	21	105
May	27	34	117
June	30	46	64
July	51	107	43
August	74	125	36
September	88	162	31
October	61	136	22
November	8	27	15
December	0	8	2

Definitions of Key Terms:

Full-time Worker: Employees who perform 30 hours or more per week.

Part-time Worker: Employees who perform 29 hours or less per week

Permanent Worker: Employees who worked 121 days or more in calendar year 2014.

Seasonal Worker: Employees who worked 120 days or less in calendar year 2014.

Migrant Worker: Employees who travel to work and are unable to return to permanent residence the same day.

Contract Worker: Workers whose services are negotiated through a third party and from whom no W-2 (IRS Wage and Tax Statement) is provided by the farm operator. Contract workers are paid by a crew leader, contractor, buyer, processor, cooperative, or other person who has an oral or written agreement with a farmer.

Agricultural Worker: Employees engaged in planting, tending and harvesting crops including operation of farm machinery on crop farms. Workers are classified as agricultural or non-agricultural based on the majority of time spent.

Non-agricultural Worker: Employees engaged in ancillary tasks such as packing, office, retail, sales, or transportation. Workers are classified as agricultural or non-agricultural based on the majority of time spent.

Shortage: The additional workers that would have been hired if available.