



NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 9, 2019

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USDA Gathers Data about On-Farm Labor

Jackson, Mississippi – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct its biannual Agricultural Labor Survey during the second half of October. The survey will collect information about hired labor from more than 900 Mississippi farmers and ranchers.

“Labor data is critical to farming operations and data about the use of hired workers helps administer farm labor programs,” said Esmerelda Dickson, State Statistician of the Mississippi Field Office. “The data that farm operators provide through NASS’s Agricultural Labor Survey help leaders, associations and farmers themselves make decisions based on accurate information.”

USDA and the U.S. Department of Labor will 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, hours worked, base wage rate, and wages paid for the weeks of July 7-13 and October 6-12. For their convenience, survey participants have the option to respond online.

“By asking about two separate time periods each of the each time we collect data during the year, we are able to publish quarterly data and capture seasonal variation,” said Dickson. “This approach reduces the number of times we ask farm operations to respond to surveys while ensuring that accurate and timely data are available for anyone conducting research or analyses.”

NASS will compile, analyze, and publish survey results in the November 21 *Farm Labor* report. All previous *Farm Labor* publications are available online at www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Reports_by_Release_Day.

All data provided by farmers is confidential and protected by law. NASS further safeguards the privacy of all respondents by publishing only aggregate data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Delta Regional Field Office at (800) 327 – 2970.

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NASS is the federal statistical agency responsible for producing official data about U.S. agriculture and is committed to providing timely, accurate and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.

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