



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL FIELD OFFICE
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USDA Looks Into On-Farm Labor

Harrisburg, PA –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 1,400 Northeastern farmers and ranchers.

“The beginning of the year is the time when agricultural producers plan out the rest of their growing seasons and is a great time to assess on-farm labor needs,” said King Whetstone, Director of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Northeastern Regional Field Office. “The data that farm operators provide through NASS’s Agricultural Labor Survey helps federal policymakers base labor policies 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, the average hours worked, and wage rates paid for the weeks of January 8-14 and April 9-15. For their convenience, survey participants have the option to respond online.

“By asking about two separate time periods each of the two times we collect data during the year, we are able to publish quarterly data and capture seasonal variation,” said Whetstone. “This approach reduces the number of times we ask farm businesses 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 May 18 *Farm Labor* report. All previous *Farm Labor* publications are available online at <http://bit.ly/FarmLabor>. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Northeastern Regional Field Office at 1-800-498-1518.

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