



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL FIELD OFFICE
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USDA to Conduct Survey about Hired 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 October. The survey will collect information about hired labor from approximately 4,000 farmers and ranchers across the 11-State Northeastern Region.

“Labor data are critical to farming operations and important information about the characteristics and activities of hired workers helps administer farm labor programs,” explained King Whetstone, director of the NASS, Northeastern Regional 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 uses the results of this survey to estimate the demand for, and availability of season agricultural workers, 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, and wages paid for the weeks of July 12-18 and October 11-17. For their convenience, survey participants have the option to respond by mail or online at <http://www.agcounts.usda.gov>. Survey response is protected by federal law (Title 5 Subtitle A, Public Law 107-347), which keeps respondent identity and answers confidential.

“By asking about two separate reference periods each time 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 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 25 *Farm Labor* report. All previous *Farm Labor* publications are available online at: www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Reports_by_Release_Day

For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Northeastern Regional Field Office at (800) 498-1518.

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