



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL FIELD OFFICE
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USDA Gathers Data About Farm Labor

HARRISBURG, PA – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct its biannual Agricultural Labor Survey starting the second half of April. The survey will collect information about hired labor from more than 4,000 farmers and ranchers across the 11-state Northeastern region.

“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 King Whetstone, director of the NASS, Northeastern Regional Field Office. “The data that farm operators provide through NASS’s Agricultural Labor Survey allow federal policymakers to base farm labor policies on accurate information,” added Whetstone.

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, and total base and gross wages paid for the weeks of January 10-16 and April 11-17. Survey participants can respond online at agcounts@usda.gov or by mail.

“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 Whetstone. “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 26 *Farm Labor* report. All previous *Farm Labor* publications are available online at <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/x920fw89s>. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Northeastern Regional Field Office at (800) 498-1518.

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