



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture  
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE  
In Cooperation with Virginia Department of Agriculture and  
Consumer Services

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## NASS looks into on-farm labor

**RICHMOND, Va.** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will continue its biannual Agricultural Labor Survey during the second half of April. The survey will collect information about hired labor from more than 300 Virginia farmers.

“Labor data are critical to farming operations and data about the use of hired workers helps administer farm labor programs,” said Herman Ellison, Virginia state statistician. “The data that farm operators provide through NASS’s Agricultural Labor Survey helps 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, the average hours worked, and wage rates paid for the weeks of January 7-13 and April 8-14. For their convenience, survey participants have the option to respond online.

“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,” Ellison said. “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 17, *Farm Labor* report. All previous *Farm Labor* publications are available online at <http://bit.ly/FarmLabor>.

For more information about Virginia surveys and reports, call the NASS Virginia Field Office at (800) 772-0670, or visit [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Virginia/](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Virginia/).

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