



# New England Agricultural Statistics Service

a field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service  
United States Department of Agriculture

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## USDA MEASURES AGRICULTURAL LABOR COSTS

During 2001, there was an average of 19,800 hired workers on New England farms, compared to 19,700 hired workers in 2000. These hired workers averaged 37.6 hours per week during 2001, slightly higher than 37.3 hours per week the previous year. The average hourly wages paid to hired farm workers, including supervisory workers, increased to \$9.34 from \$9.25 in 2000. Average hourly wages for field workers increased five cents in 2001 to \$8.69, but decreased slightly for field and livestock workers combined to \$8.40 from last year's \$8.44.

These and other statistics were summarized from the quarterly Agricultural Labor Survey. The cost and availability of farm labor are major components of operators' productivity and return on investment. Therefore, information about the agricultural labor force is very important to farmers, grower associations, lenders, lawmakers, and local and national agencies.

Beginning the second full week of January, the New England Agricultural Statistics Service will contact approximately 360 agricultural producers to ask for their help in a quarterly nationwide effort to measure the agricultural labor force. The producers selected to participate are mailed sample questions and a letter requesting their help in this project. Interviewers will conduct the survey through personal or telephone interviews between January 14-25, 2002.

"The cooperation of New England farmers is essential in order to ensure that agriculture in New England is clearly represented," said Aubrey Davis, Director of the New England Agricultural Statistics Service. Response to the survey is voluntary, however cooperation from all growers is essential to provide an accurate picture of the agricultural labor in this region. All information about individual farms is held in strict confidence. Data is used in combination with reports from other producers to generate regional and national statistics.

The national survey results will be available in the **Farm Labor Report** from Washington, D.C. on February 15, 2002, at 3:00 p.m. All reports are available on the Internet within a few minutes of the scheduled release time. Northeast and U.S. statistics are reprinted in the February issue of the **Ag Review** (a monthly newsletter from the Concord field office). The **Ag Review** is available on the Internet monthly, but complimentary copies are also mailed to survey participants upon request.

[The New England Agricultural Statistics Service is a field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Located in Concord, New Hampshire, it is responsible for agricultural statistics in all six states in the region. The office can be reached at 1-800-642-9571 or through e-mail at [nass-nh@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass-nh@nass.usda.gov). All national statistics and state level newsletters are available free from E-mail subscriptions and on the Internet at <http://www.usda.gov/nass/>]

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