

Farm Labor

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June 9, 1961
3:00 P.M. (E.D.T.)

WORK PACE QUICKENS AT END OF COLD MONTH MAY WORK FORCE 2 PERCENT UNDER 1960

About 2 percent fewer farm workers were busy on the Nation's farms during the May survey week than a year earlier. The estimated total of 7.6 million persons, nevertheless, was a high thus far for the year and an increase of 10 percent over the April survey week. Farm family workers reached a total of 5.6 million - 2 percent under May 1960, but a gain of 6 percent over April. Hired workers were estimated at nearly 2.0 million or 1 percent under last year. The increase in the hired worker total of 23 percent over the generally slow April survey week compares with a 5-year average increase of about 30 percent, denoting the moderate to slow development of many phases of farm work. Reports from most States emphasize the restraining influence of cold May weather on crop emergence and growth. The survey week of May 21-27 brought improved conditions for field work over extensive areas, with planting and other needed field work pushing ahead to the highest level of the month. Sharp gains over the April survey week were reported in North Central States:

Farm Workday Length Shows Little Change

About June 1 the reported average length of farm work-day for farm operators was 10.5 hours - virtually the same as the 10.6 hours reported for this date in both 1960 and 1959. The average work-day for hired workers was reported at 9.2 hours as compared with 9.3 hours about June 1, 1960 and 1959. Compared with 10 years ago, the average for farm operators has dropped 1.2 hours from the 11.7 hour average of June 1951. The hired worker average has dropped only .4 hours from 9.6 hours in 1951. Time included as work for farm operators involves essential time for marketing and management as well as work with crops and livestock. The long June 1 work-day average well attests to the interest and drive given to the absorbing business of farming.

Farm Work Spurts to Overcome Delay

As the month of May ended farm work was pushing ahead with a springtime surge which differed characteristically from one area to another. The feed-grain heartland, the Cornbelt, after considerable delay, was making rapid progress in planting corn. Iowa farmers were nearly finished and Illinois corn plantings were four-fifths completed. Slower progress had been made in Indiana, Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas - as much as 60 percent remained to be planted in Missouri and Kansas. Progress in Minnesota and Wisconsin, although behind average, was well ahead of this time last year. The heavy sign-up in the 1961 feed grain program indicates a sizeable although still undetermined reduction in

this year's acreage of both corn and grain sorghum. Less cultivation and harvest work are indicated by the prospective acreage reduction even though machines have greatly lessened the labor per acre for feed-grain crops.

The soybean crop was being planted at an increasing rate at the end of May as corn planting was finished. Iowa acreage was about three-fourths completed and Illinois nearly half. Time remained for generally successful planting in other sections, which in many instances are being made later than average. Lateness of planting for row crops this year reduced the acreage that was vulnerable to a late frost that hit in some North Central areas during the May survey week.

In important Eastern tobacco sections, setting of plants from plant beds to fields was active. Only about 6 percent of the Kentucky crop had been set by the end of the farm survey labor week as compared with the usual 50 percent. Tobacco harvest was becoming active in the Florida-Georgia area. Potato harvest continued in the Baldwin County Alabama area. Harvest of early peaches started in the Southeast - in Chilton County Alabama, central and southern Georgia, and in South Carolina.

Cotton came in for much work during late May. The Mississippi crop was 80 percent up to a stand and cultivation well up with the rather slow growth progress of the crop. Texas cotton was over three-fourths planted - about even with last year's progress. Planting in parts of Arkansas and southeast Missouri were badly delayed by continued wet weather. The Arizona crop was over 90 percent up to stand. California stands were good but growth slow. Chopping and other work were well up with the crop.

By the end of May the harvest of small grains was well started in the southern Great Plains and was slowly gaining momentum. Most flax in south Texas had been combined. Wheat combining was progressing in the Southern Low Plains and moving north on early fields. Nearly half of the wheat crop in some Oklahoma southwestern counties had been combined by the end of May.

Mountain and Pacific Coast States shared in the cool May weather, but such damage as occurred from late frosts was not extensive enough to change prospective labor needs sharply. Sugar beet thinning was being handled with adequate labor in main producing sections. California's large variety of specialty fruit, vegetable, and field crops made slow but substantial development with growing labor requirements looming as harvests moved ahead.

The Northeastern corner of the Nation has been having a very backward spring season. Planting of Aroostook County Maine potatoes was only about one-fourth completed in May. Heavy frost on May 31st reportedly damaged fruit crops and tender vegetables in New England and reduced expectations for the cranberry crop.

Farm Employment and Indexes, May 1961, with comparisons, United States

	: Annual : average : 1960	: Annual : average : 1959	: Annual : average : 1955-59	: May : average : 1/1955-59	: May : average : 1/1955-59	: May : 22-28, : 1960	: May : 21-27, : 1961
FARM EMPLOYMENT							
(Thousands)							
Total	7,118	7,384	7,734	8,545	7,725	7,571	7,571
Family labor ..	5,249	5,459	5,791	6,452	5,758	5,621	5,621
Hired labor ...	1,869	1,925	1,943	2,093	1,967	1,950	1,950
INDEXES ^{2/}							
(1910-14=100)							
Total	52	54	57	57	52	51	51
Family labor ..	52	54	57	57	51	49	49
Hired labor ...	55	57	57	58	54	54	54

1/ Employment during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

2/ Monthly indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

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Farm Wage Rates and Indexes, April 1, 1961, United States

	: Annual : average : 1960	: April : average : 1955-59	: April 1, : 1960	: April 1, : 1961
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour ^{1/}	\$ 0.818	\$ 0.645	\$ 0.751	\$ 0.757
Per month with house	\$192.00	\$160.00	\$186.00	\$188.00
Per month with board and room ...	149.00	128.00	145.00	148.00
Per week with board and room	35.50	31.50	34.75	35.00
Per week without board or room...	45.75	40.75	45.75	46.25
Per day with house	5.30	4.50	5.20	5.20
Per day with board and room	6.50	5.20	5.90	6.00
Per day without board or room ...	6.60	5.60	6.40	6.50
Per hour with house88	.67	.77	.80
Per hour without board or room ..	.97	.92	1.03	1.04
INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Farm wage rates	629	561	649	647
(Adjusted for seasonal variation)				
Prices received by farmers ^{2/}	238	239	240	243

^{1/} Weighted average of all rates on a per hour basis.

^{2/} Index for 15th of previous month.

Workers on Farms, May 1961

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	May average 1955-59 1/			May 22-28, 1960			May 21-27, 1961		
	Total	Family:	Hired	Total	Family:	Hired	Total	Family:	Hired
New England	189	116	73	159	94	65	150	92	58
New York	179	117	62	161	108	53	156	100	56
New Jersey	55	31	24	53	29	24	51	28	23
Pennsylvania	224	182	42	199	165	34	190	157	33
Middle Atlantic	458	330	128	413	302	111	397	285	112
Ohio	294	250	44	277	238	39	266	224	42
Indiana	279	248	31	251	221	30	254	221	33
Illinois	310	253	57	286	231	55	295	237	58
Michigan	264	227	37	246	206	40	243	202	41
Wisconsin	334	303	31	301	276	25	296	270	26
East North Central...	1,481	1,281	200	1,361	1,172	189	1,354	1,154	200
Minnesota	329	288	41	304	262	42	305	265	40
Iowa	334	298	36	322	288	34	327	291	36
Missouri	301	257	44	275	243	32	271	235	36
North Dakota	109	88	21	101	81	20	103	82	21
South Dakota	106	96	10	96	87	9	91	83	8
Nebraska	182	157	25	182	151	31	169	143	26
Kansas	185	159	26	178	148	30	159	137	22
West North Central...	1,546	1,343	203	1,458	1,260	198	1,425	1,236	189
Delaware-Maryland...	87	53	34	77	49	28	77	49	28
Virginia	259	195	64	249	182	67	249	186	63
West Virginia	93	73	20	80	63	17	78	59	19
North Carolina	479	389	90	421	339	82	434	348	86
South Carolina	235	161	74	199	132	67	212	135	77
Georgia	246	184	62	211	151	60	204	149	55
Florida	109	62	47	105	50	55	109	52	57
South Atlantic	1,508	1,117	391	1,342	966	376	1,363	978	385
Kentucky	248	200	48	203	164	39	214	172	42
Tennessee	269	219	50	227	183	44	217	176	41
Alabama	187	150	37	156	127	29	145	113	32
Mississippi	390	324	66	315	256	59	298	237	61
East South Central...	1,094	893	201	901	730	171	874	698	176
Arkansas	291	168	123	252	145	107	238	131	107
Louisiana	168	97	71	159	92	67	146	81	65
Oklahoma	216	174	42	178	142	36	185	146	39
Texas	576	350	226	529	312	217	483	282	201
West South Central...	1,251	789	462	1,118	691	427	1,052	640	412
Montana	58	41	17	54	38	16	52	38	14
Idaho	76	52	24	71	50	21	72	50	22
Colorado	79	64	15	75	57	18	75	60	15
N.Mex.-Ariz.	89	37	52	82	33	49	81	30	51
Wyo.-Utah-Nev. ...	72	50	22	66	44	22	68	44	24
Mountain	374	244	130	348	222	126	348	222	126
Washington	148	98	50	135	89	46	131	87	44
Oregon	121	84	37	105	76	29	113	80	33
California	375	157	218	385	156	229	364	149	215
Pacific	644	339	305	625	321	304	608	316	292
UNITED STATES	8,545	6,452	2,093	7,725	5,758	1,967	7,571	5,621	1,950

1/ Persons employed during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

Workers on farms: Comparative estimates, annual average 1960,
March and April 1961

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average			March 1961			April 1961		
	1960			Week of 19-25			Week of 23-29		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	150	91	59	130	86	44	141	89	52
New York	163	107	56	139	99	40	147	96	51
New Jersey	47	28	19	36	27	9	42	27	15
Pennsylvania	194	159	35	170	146	24	178	151	27
Middle Atlantic	404	294	110	345	272	73	367	274	93
Ohio	250	214	36	233	208	25	251	221	30
Indiana	219	192	27	197	183	14	211	190	21
Illinois	249	201	48	221	180	41	256	211	45
Michigan	220	178	42	190	165	25	210	179	31
Wisconsin	282	253	29	264	239	25	278	253	25
East North Central....	1,220	1,038	182	1,105	975	130	1,206	1,054	152
Minnesota	266	228	38	227	207	20	275	248	27
Iowa	289	252	37	249	230	19	293	270	23
Missouri	276	237	39	230	209	21	256	231	25
North Dakota	92	71	21	78	69	9	90	76	14
South Dakota	92	81	11	87	81	6	94	86	8
Nebraska	160	135	25	139	121	18	157	132	25
Kansas	159	134	25	135	123	12	153	136	17
West North Central....	1,334	1,138	196	1,145	1,040	105	1,318	1,179	139
Delaware-Maryland..	70	45	25	58	42	16	69	48	21
Virginia	203	149	54	175	144	31	205	164	41
West Virginia	73	60	13	59	49	10	71	56	15
North Carolina	416	317	99	261	224	37	358	299	59
South Carolina	195	133	62	143	95	48	173	112	61
Georgia	185	135	50	156	114	42	180	138	42
Florida	98	46	52	137	50	87	127	58	69
South Atlantic	1,240	885	355	989	718	271	1,183	875	308
Kentucky	235	188	47	198	168	30	203	168	35
Tennessee	246	195	51	181	150	31	207	175	32
Alabama	149	116	33	109	86	23	139	107	32
Mississippi	252	195	57	198	150	48	255	177	78
East South Central....	882	694	188	686	554	132	804	627	172
Arkansas	212	126	86	170	111	59	211	125	86
Louisiana	153	95	58	139	84	55	170	100	70
Oklahoma	165	131	34	169	150	19	178	150	28
Texas	442	261	181	342	236	106	456	304	152
West South Central....	972	613	359	820	581	239	1,015	679	336
Montana	49	37	12	45	37	8	53	42	11
Idaho	67	47	20	52	43	9	71	53	18
Colorado	69	51	18	60	51	9	71	62	9
N.Mex.-Ariz.	90	32	58	66	28	38	68	31	37
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	59	41	18	46	34	12	59	43	16
Mountain	334	208	126	269	193	76	322	231	91
Washington	113	76	37	92	68	24	106	73	33
Oregon	92	66	26	84	69	15	95	71	24
California	377	146	231	305	139	166	324	145	179
Pacific	582	288	294	481	276	205	525	289	236
UNITED STATES	7,118	5,249	1,869	5,970	4,695	1,275	6,881	5,297	1,584

Average number of persons working on farms January through May 1961, by regions and States, with comparisons 1/

Region and State	(Thousands of persons)								
	January through May			January through May			January through May		
	average 1955-59			1960			1961		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	156	105	51	132	87	45	126	84	42
New York	160	113	47	144	100	44	140	97	43
New Jersey	45	30	15	40	27	13	39	26	13
Pennsylvania	202	169	33	177	151	26	169	144	25
Middle Atlantic	407	312	95	361	278	83	348	267	81
Ohio	258	229	29	238	212	26	229	203	26
Indiana	232	212	20	209	190	19	202	184	18
Illinois	254	209	45	228	189	39	228	187	41
Michigan	218	192	26	203	175	28	199	171	28
Wisconsin	298	273	25	271	249	22	265	243	22
East North Central....	1,260	1,115	145	1,149	1,015	134	1,123	988	135
Minnesota	269	243	26	243	219	24	241	218	23
Iowa	274	251	23	264	242	22	263	241	22
Missouri	260	234	26	238	217	21	236	214	22
North Dakota	89	76	13	77	66	11	78	66	12
South Dakota	93	85	8	83	77	6	81	75	6
Nebraska	149	133	16	146	128	18	143	125	18
Kansas	156	141	15	144	128	16	137	123	14
West North Central....	1,290	1,163	127	1,195	1,077	118	1,179	1,062	117
Delaware-Maryland...	65	44	21	60	41	19	60	42	18
Virginia	200	160	40	184	146	38	184	147	37
West Virginia	73	60	13	65	53	12	62	50	12
North Carolina	350	298	52	301	254	47	300	253	47
South Carolina	172	122	50	150	103	47	152	103	49
Georgia	187	145	42	163	123	40	155	117	38
Florida	121	58	63	110	48	62	121	49	72
South Atlantic	1,168	887	281	1,033	768	265	1,034	761	273
Kentucky	215	184	31	194	166	28	191	164	27
Tennessee	209	177	32	190	160	30	184	155	29
Alabama	137	114	23	115	95	20	111	88	23
Mississippi	250	206	44	206	166	40	202	156	46
East South Central....	811	681	130	705	587	118	688	563	125
Arkansas	212	145	67	184	120	64	174	111	63
Louisiana	146	98	48	136	87	49	129	82	47
Oklahoma	188	166	22	157	139	18	162	141	21
Texas	415	298	117	390	263	127	366	245	121
West South Central....	961	707	254	867	609	258	831	579	252
Montana	50	40	10	45	36	9	44	36	8
Idaho	56	44	12	54	43	11	56	44	12
Colorado	61	53	8	59	50	9	58	49	9
N.Mex.-Ariz.	74	33	41	72	30	42	71	28	43
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	53	40	13	49	36	13	50	37	13
Mountain	294	210	84	279	195	84	279	194	85
Washington	105	80	25	103	74	29	98	71	27
Oregon	89	68	21	82	65	17	84	66	18
California	328	143	185	331	143	188	321	139	182
Pacific	522	291	231	516	282	234	503	276	227
UNITED STATES	6,869	5,471	1,398	6,237	4,898	1,339	6,111	4,774	1,337

1/ Average of number during survey week of each month.

Length of farm workday for operators and hired workers,
June 1, 1961, with comparisons

State and region	O p e r a t o r s			H i r e d W o r k e r s		
	June 1, 1959	June 1, 1960	June 1, 1961	June 1, 1959	June 1, 1960	June 1, 1961
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours
Maine	10.7	10.8	11.0	9.2	8.7	8.6
New Hampshire	10.7	10.8	10.7	8.8	9.1	9.3
Vermont	11.6	11.5	11.4	9.2	8.9	8.7
Massachusetts	11.0	10.5	11.1	9.0	8.9	9.2
Rhode Island	10.3	10.4	10.4	8.7	9.2	8.5
Connecticut	11.2	10.4	10.7	9.7	9.7	8.8
New England	11.0	10.8	11.0	9.2	8.9	8.8
New York	11.3	11.3	11.2	9.4	9.4	9.1
New Jersey	10.4	10.5	10.7	8.7	8.7	8.9
Pennsylvania	11.4	11.2	11.2	9.1	8.8	8.7
Middle Atlantic	11.3	11.2	11.2	9.2	9.1	8.9
Ohio	10.9	11.1	11.0	8.7	8.3	8.7
Indiana	11.0	11.0	11.0	9.1	9.2	9.4
Illinois	11.2	11.5	11.3	9.7	9.7	9.5
Michigan	11.0	11.2	10.9	8.9	8.9	8.8
Wisconsin	12.2	12.2	12.1	10.0	10.1	10.0
East North Central	11.3	11.4	11.3	9.3	9.2	9.2
Minnesota	11.7	11.9	11.8	9.8	9.8	9.7
Iowa	11.6	11.9	11.4	9.7	9.8	9.4
Missouri	10.6	10.6	10.5	9.1	9.6	9.4
North Dakota	11.5	11.8	11.7	10.3	10.6	10.4
South Dakota	11.3	11.5	11.5	10.1	9.9	9.9
Nebraska	11.5	11.8	11.2	9.8	9.7	9.5
Kansas	10.9	10.9	10.6	9.4	9.3	9.4
West North Central	11.3	11.4	11.2	9.7	9.8	9.6
Delaware	10.1	10.6	10.3	9.1	8.8	9.3
Maryland	10.3	10.3	10.1	9.0	9.3	9.1
Virginia	10.5	10.4	10.7	9.2	9.1	9.0
West Virginia	9.5	9.4	9.4	7.9	7.9	8.2
North Carolina	10.3	10.1	9.9	9.1	9.1	8.8
South Carolina	10.3	10.0	10.2	9.3	9.4	9.1
Georgia	10.4	10.0	10.0	9.5	9.5	9.4
Florida	8.4	9.1	8.5	8.7	8.4	8.4
South Atlantic	10.2	10.0	10.0	9.1	9.1	8.9
Kentucky	10.0	9.8	10.0	9.0	8.9	8.9
Tennessee	10.6	10.7	10.6	9.3	9.3	9.4
Alabama	9.9	9.5	9.6	9.0	9.1	8.9
Mississippi	9.8	10.2	10.0	9.0	9.4	9.0
East South Central	10.1	10.1	10.1	9.1	9.2	9.1
Arkansas	10.1	9.8	9.9	9.4	9.4	9.8
Louisiana	9.1	9.3	9.5	9.4	8.9	9.0
Oklahoma	10.3	10.2	10.3	9.4	9.2	9.5
Texas	10.1	10.1	10.2	9.7	9.7	9.9
West South Central	10.0	9.9	10.0	9.5	9.5	9.7
Montana	10.7	10.6	10.5	9.8	9.6	9.7
Idaho	11.0	10.8	11.2	9.2	9.2	9.0
Wyoming	11.0	11.5	10.8	9.8	10.0	9.4
Colorado	11.1	11.2	11.0	9.5	9.9	9.7
New Mexico	10.9	10.7	10.0	9.3	9.5	9.3
Arizona	10.6	10.5	10.5	9.4	9.6	9.3
Utah	10.7	10.5	10.6	8.5	8.5	8.4
Nevada	9.2	9.1	9.5	9.3	8.7	9.3
Mountain	10.9	10.8	10.7	9.4	9.5	9.2
Washington	9.9	9.7	9.8	8.7	8.8	8.5
Oregon	9.8	9.2	9.6	8.3	8.4	9.1
California	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.2	9.2	9.2
Pacific	9.8	9.6	9.7	9.0	9.1	9.1
UNITED STATES	10.6	10.6	10.5	9.3	9.3	9.2

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