

Farm Labor

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JULY FARM EMPLOYMENT AT 1960 LEVEL HIRED LABOR FORCE INCREASES SLIGHTLY

The farm work force active during the July 1961 survey week reached a total of 8.4 million persons, about the same as a year earlier. The number of farm family workers, at 5.6 million was unchanged from last year. Hired workers were estimated at 2.9 millions or 1 percent more than in the comparable week for 1960. Crop timing appeared to be responsible for increasing worker demands in some important sections where slowness in small grain maturity, haying, and other crop jobs held over to the July 23-29 survey week while demands for other tasks gained.

Increases in the number of total workers as compared with July 1960 were limited to the Southern and Pacific regions. Totals were up 5 percent in the South Atlantic region, 3 percent in the East South Central, 2 percent in the West South Central, and 3 percent in the Pacific region. Decreases of 2 to 5 percent were indicated for other regions. The number of family workers edged below 1960 in all regions except in East South Central and South Atlantic regions which reported increases of 7 and 2 percent, respectively. The number of hired workers was 10 percent above July 1960 in the South Atlantic region, 7 percent above in Pacific, 5 percent in West South Central, and 3 percent in New England. Those increases more than offset reductions of 12 percent in the East North Central, and 9 percent in West North Central and Mountain regions.

The increase from June to July survey weeks in the total U.S. farm work force was slight, as usual, amounting to only about 1 percent. The South Atlantic and New England States showed the largest increases over the June level, averaging 17 percent and 11 percent, respectively. The hired work force was about 5 percent larger than the relatively large June total as compared with the 5-year average increase of 9 percent. The increase in the South Atlantic region, however, was 30 percent, nearly double the usual increase. This appeared to result from a combination of favorable weather during the survey week and the mounting demands of different crops. Tobacco harvest grading and marketing had first claim on labor on thousands of farms.

Decrease in Total Crop Acreage Not Matched in Work Force

The Department's July crop report presented estimates of the acreage of 1961 crops to be harvested which totaled 295 million acres, 6.5 percent under last year. The planted acreage of crops was down 17 million acres from 1960. In view of these changes the decreases in the estimated number of farm workers may appear slight. The average number of persons working on farms during the survey weeks of the first 7 months of 1961 of 6.7 million (see page 6) shows a decrease from 1960 of only 1 percent. Family workers decreased 2 percent but hired workers gained 1 percent.

It should be noted that the major reductions made this year were largely in the acreages of corn, sorghums, and some other crops which are highly mechanized and require a minimum of hired or hand labor. Cotton acreage for harvest of 15,652,000 acres is 2 percent larger than last year's. The early season was difficult for cotton in central and eastern cotton States and the abandonment after planting and replanting is estimated at 5.5 percent, largest since 1956. Acreage and production of tobacco slightly exceeds 1960. Non-citrus fruit tonnage is above last year, potato acreage is larger, and vegetable tonnage closely comparable. Sugar beet acreage is record high, up 15 percent, and sugarcane is up 7 percent from last year. Livestock and poultry numbers and production continue at high levels.

Work Force Adequate

Farmers and their families and forces of regular and migratory farm workers generally were fully able to meet the changing demands of farm jobs over the Nation with few instances of acute shortage. Following the finish of the main planting season, the many millions of acres of corn, soybeans, cotton, and other major field crops required less manpower and used more sunpower in their huge task of building the expected large tonnage for harvest. Wheat harvest was completed in the Central Plains northward through Nebraska and became active in the Dakotas. Harvest of small grains in Central and Northeastern States generally has lagged behind usual progress due to late planting or slow maturing weather. Iowa oat harvest, for example, was 65 percent complete as compared with the usual 80 percent as of July 31. Rains over much of the country generally aided prospects for harvests and gave Texas cattle unusually good summer grazing. Western fruit and vegetable specialty crops made fast progress toward early harvest under heavy irrigation during continued dry weather.

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

	: Annual	: Annual	: Annual	: July	: July	: July
	: average	: average	: average	: average	: 24-30,	: 23-29,
	: 1960	: 1959	: 1955-59	: 1/1955-59	: 1/1960	: 1961
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)						
Total	7,118	7,384	7,734	9,025	8,416	8,435
Family labor...	5,249	5,459	5,791	6,099	5,569	5,559
Hired labor ...	1,869	1,925	1,943	2,926	2,847	2,876
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)						
Total	52	54	57	58	54	54
Family labor...	52	54	57	58	53	53
Hired labor ...	55	57	57	57	55	56

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, July 1, 1961, United States

	: Annual	: July	: July 1,	: July 1,
	: average	: average	: 1960	: 1961
	: 1960	: 1955-59		
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	\$ 0.818	\$ 0.721	\$ 0.812	\$ 0.825
Per month with house	\$192.00	\$177.00	\$200.00	\$203.00
Per month with board and room ...	149.00	133.00	149.00	151.00
Per week with board and room ...	35.50	33.50	36.75	36.75
Per week without board or room...	45.75	42.50	47.50	48.25
Per day with house	5.30	4.55	5.30	5.30
Per day with board and room	6.50	6.30	6.90	7.00
Per day without board or room....	6.60	5.70	6.50	6.50
Per hour with house88	.85	.92	.94
Per hour without board or room...	.97	.93	1.02	1.04
INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Farm wage rates	629	556	631	648
(Adjusted for seasonal variation)				
Prices received by farmers 2/....	238	239	236	234

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

2/ Index for 15th of previous month.

Workers on Farms, July 1961

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	July average 1955-59 1/			July 1960 Week of 24-30			July 1961 Week of 23-29		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	214	126	88	182	108	74	179	103	76
New York	221	128	93	193	117	76	195	113	82
New Jersey	68	34	34	57	31	26	58	31	27
Pennsylvania	264	207	57	233	184	49	220	176	44
Middle Atlantic	553	369	184	483	332	151	473	320	153
Ohio	300	242	58	280	223	57	271	221	50
Indiana	277	237	40	255	212	43	242	209	33
Illinois	316	240	76	293	218	75	279	213	66
Michigan	304	227	77	275	206	69	269	204	65
Wisconsin	365	324	41	321	284	37	309	275	34
East North Central..	1,562	1,270	292	1,424	1,143	281	1,370	1,122	248
Minnesota	405	308	97	360	276	84	357	278	79
Iowa	369	286	83	353	271	82	348	274	74
Missouri	351	284	67	306	257	49	299	254	45
North Dakota	145	98	47	136	92	44	125	89	36
South Dakota	119	95	24	114	91	23	108	85	23
Nebraska	200	156	44	210	162	48	204	157	47
Kansas	220	163	57	204	148	56	191	143	48
West North Central..	1,809	1,390	419	1,683	1,297	386	1,632	1,280	352
Del.-Md.	97	59	38	90	51	39	89	49	40
Virginia	255	154	101	242	143	99	275	156	119
West Virginia	91	75	16	88	69	19	79	64	15
North Carolina ...	754	437	317	732	409	323	767	414	353
South Carolina ...	298	177	121	261	148	113	276	155	121
Georgia	188	128	60	165	114	51	177	117	60
Florida	85	50	35	76	41	35	79	41	38
South Atlantic	1,768	1,080	688	1,654	975	679	1,742	996	746
Kentucky	276	195	81	274	186	88	270	189	81
Tennessee	252	184	68	237	170	67	241	175	66
Alabama	115	93	22	100	82	18	115	93	22
Mississippi	257	219	38	210	170	40	223	191	32
East South Central..	900	691	209	821	608	213	849	648	201
Arkansas	241	125	116	216	101	115	209	105	104
Louisiana	152	80	72	142	77	65	147	81	66
Oklahoma	194	131	63	165	114	51	172	110	62
Texas	483	276	207	522	267	255	538	259	279
West South Central..	1,070	612	458	1,045	559	486	1,066	555	511
Montana	69	40	29	64	38	26	61	39	22
Idaho	95	57	38	90	55	35	98	59	39
Colorado	85	58	27	90	57	33	86	53	33
N.Mex.-Ariz.	113	36	77	99	35	64	85	33	52
Wyo.-Utah-Nev. ...	83	54	29	79	49	30	73	47	26
Mountain	445	245	200	422	234	188	403	231	172
Washington	180	98	82	172	95	77	177	93	84
Oregon	131	73	58	136	76	60	138	74	64
California	393	145	248	394	142	252	406	137	269
Pacific	704	316	388	702	313	389	721	304	417
UNITED STATES	9,025	6,099	2,926	8,416	5,569	2,847	8,435	5,559	2,876

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,
May and June 1961

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average			May 1961			June 1961		
	1960			Week of 21-27			Week of 18-24		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	150	91	59	150	92	58	161	95	66
New York	163	107	56	156	100	56	183	111	72
New Jersey	47	28	19	51	28	23	57	34	23
Pennsylvania	194	159	35	190	157	33	220	175	45
Middle Atlantic	404	294	110	397	285	112	460	320	140
Ohio	250	214	36	266	224	42	275	223	52
Indiana	219	192	27	254	221	33	267	229	38
Illinois	249	201	48	295	237	58	317	228	89
Michigan	220	178	42	243	202	41	265	199	66
Wisconsin	282	253	29	296	270	26	300	263	37
East North Central...	1,220	1,038	182	1,354	1,154	200	1,424	1,142	282
Minnesota	266	228	38	305	265	40	352	270	82
Iowa	289	252	37	327	291	36	361	280	81
Missouri	276	237	39	271	235	36	310	245	65
North Dakota	92	71	21	103	82	21	101	79	22
South Dakota	92	81	11	91	83	8	108	87	21
Nebraska	160	135	25	169	143	26	194	146	48
Kansas	159	134	25	159	137	22	204	146	58
West North Central...	1,334	1,138	196	1,425	1,236	189	1,630	1,253	377
Del.-Md.	70	45	25	77	49	28	78	48	30
Virginia	203	149	54	249	186	63	241	143	98
West Virginia	73	60	13	78	59	19	84	62	22
North Carolina.....	416	317	99	434	348	86	543	354	189
South Carolina	195	133	62	212	135	77	275	140	135
Georgia	185	135	50	204	149	55	196	134	62
Florida	98	46	52	109	52	57	77	41	36
South Atlantic	1,240	885	355	1,363	978	385	1,494	922	572
Kentucky	235	188	47	214	172	42	287	196	91
Tennessee	246	195	51	217	176	41	265	196	69
Alabama	149	116	33	145	113	32	135	102	33
Mississippi	252	195	57	298	237	61	244	198	46
East South Central...	882	694	188	874	698	176	931	692	239
Arkansas	212	126	86	238	131	107	222	130	92
Louisiana	153	95	58	146	81	65	160	86	74
Oklahoma	165	131	34	185	146	39	196	141	55
Texas	442	261	181	483	282	201	494	259	235
West South Central...	972	613	359	1,052	640	412	1,072	616	456
Montana	49	37	12	52	38	14	61	38	23
Idaho	67	47	20	72	50	22	95	54	41
Colorado	69	51	18	75	60	15	84	53	31
N.Mex.-Ariz.	90	32	58	81	30	51	82	31	51
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	59	41	18	68	44	24	77	46	31
Mountain	334	208	126	348	222	126	399	222	177
Washington	113	76	37	131	87	44	182	100	82
Oregon	92	66	26	113	80	33	138	81	57
California	377	146	231	364	149	215	433	142	291
Pacific	582	288	294	608	316	292	753	323	430
UNITED STATES	7,118	5,249	1,869	7,571	5,621	1,950	8,324	5,585	2,739

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

(Thousands of persons)									
Region and State	January through July average 1955-59			January through July 1 9 6 0			January through July 1 9 6 1		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	171	110	61	146	92	54	140	89	51
New York	175	117	58	157	105	52	154	101	53
New Jersey	51	31	20	45	28	17	44	28	16
Pennsylvania	219	179	40	193	160	33	184	153	31
Middle Atlantic	445	327	118	395	293	102	382	282	100
Ohio	270	233	37	251	217	34	241	208	33
Indiana	247	222	25	223	198	25	217	194	23
Illinois	274	220	54	248	199	49	248	197	51
Michigan	240	201	39	221	183	38	219	180	39
Wisconsin	314	284	30	284	257	27	276	250	26
East North Central...	1,345	1,160	185	1,227	1,054	173	1,201	1,029	172
Minnesota	305	261	44	275	234	41	273	234	39
Iowa	301	261	40	290	251	39	289	251	38
Missouri	282	245	37	257	227	30	256	224	32
North Dakota	100	80	20	90	71	19	88	71	17
South Dakota	99	87	12	91	81	10	89	78	11
Nebraska	163	140	23	162	136	26	159	133	26
Kansas	173	147	26	160	134	26	154	129	25
West North Central...	1,423	1,221	202	1,325	1,134	191	1,308	1,120	188
Del.-Md.	73	48	25	68	44	24	67	44	23
Virginia	216	159	57	202	146	56	205	148	57
West Virginia	79	64	15	71	57	14	68	54	14
North Carolina	438	330	108	388	285	103	402	291	111
South Carolina	209	137	72	183	116	67	186	115	71
Georgia	194	145	49	169	124	45	164	119	45
Florida	111	55	56	101	46	55	109	47	62
South Atlantic	1,320	938	382	1,182	818	364	1,201	818	383
Kentucky	234	189	45	217	172	45	215	171	44
Tennessee	226	183	43	205	165	40	204	164	40
Alabama	138	113	25	118	96	22	115	91	24
Mississippi	262	218	44	214	173	41	211	167	44
East South Central...	860	703	157	754	606	148	745	593	152
Arkansas	224	146	78	197	120	77	186	113	73
Louisiana	149	95	54	138	85	53	137	83	54
Oklahoma	192	160	32	164	136	28	168	136	32
Texas	436	296	140	422	264	158	408	249	159
West South Central...	1,001	697	304	921	605	316	899	581	318
Montana	55	40	15	51	37	14	49	37	12
Idaho	67	47	20	64	46	18	67	47	20
Colorado	69	55	14	67	51	16	65	50	15
N.Mex.-Ariz.	83	34	49	78	31	47	75	30	45
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	62	44	18	58	40	18	57	39	18
Mountain	336	220	116	318	205	113	313	203	110
Washington	126	86	40	123	80	43	121	78	43
Oregon	103	71	32	99	69	30	100	70	30
California	348	144	204	348	142	206	349	139	210
Pacific	577	301	276	570	291	279	570	287	283
UNITED STATES	7,478	5,677	1,801	6,838	5,098	1,740	6,759	5,002	1,757

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

B A S I S O F E S T I M A T E SFarm Employment

Farm employment estimates of the Statistical Reporting Service include all persons considered working on farms during specified periods, as follows:

(1) Farm family workers

- (a) Farm operators who do any farm work or chores on or for their farms during the designated survey week.
- (b) Other members of the farm operator's family or household who worked 15 hours or more on the farm during the survey week without receiving cash wages, not counting housework. In sharecropper areas, croppers and members of their families are considered family workers when working their own crops, but as hired workers if earning cash wages during the survey week.

(2) Hired farm workers

Persons doing farm work for pay during the survey week. Members of the operator's family receiving cash wages for work on their farms are classed as hired workers.

Farm Wage Rates

Farm wage rates, published quarterly by the Statistical Reporting Service, are based on farmers' reports of average farm wage rates paid in their localities. Rates for different wage arrangements are reported. Composite rates per hour are derived by computing a weighted average of all rates. Piece rates for farm work are not reported because of the great diversity of kinds of rates involved. In conversion to composite hourly rates, however, weights for rates per hour without board or room, are increased to allow for piece rate work. This assumes that piece rates and hourly rates are approximately equivalent. Wage rates relate to cash wages only, exclusive of value of any perquisites furnished such as house, room, or meals.

Source of Data

A Nationwide sample of from 20,000 to 25,000 reports from farm operators representing many localities in each State provides monthly reports on farm employment on these farms and quarterly reports on farm wages. Data from Censuses of Agriculture and Population and enumerative sample surveys are important in determining the overall levels of employment estimates. Annual and seasonal changes involve estimates of changes in the number of farms and other factors determining farm work requirements.

The SRS farm employment estimates differ from those in the Monthly Report on the Labor Force (MRLF), published by the Department of Labor, owing to differences in definition, method, and survey timing. The MRLF data come from interviews in about 35,000 households, both nonfarm and farm, in a sampling pattern designed for National estimates of the labor force. All persons 14 years old or over in the civilian non-institutional population are considered. This report excludes from farm totals all children below 14 years of age and persons who do some farm work but mostly nonfarm. Included as farm workers by MRLF but not by SRS are some persons on farms such as typists, bookkeepers, and certain agricultural processors, and also farm operators doing no work during the survey period but who have no other job.

The SRS basic data come from the farm operator on the monthly general farm report for his farm and locality (a mailed questionnaire). He reports the number of persons working on his farm during the survey week regardless of age or other employment. Census of Agriculture and other bench mark data used by SRS involve duplication of workers who are counted on more than one farm. The MRLF report covers the week ending nearest the 15th; the SRS report, the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month. Both surveys are subject to sampling variation.

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