

Farm Labor

Release:
December 11, 1961
3:00 P.M.(E.S.T.)

FARM EMPLOYMENT IN LATE NOVEMBER 4 PERCENT UNDER YEAR EARLIER RAINS SLOW COTTON AND CORN HARVEST

The number of persons working on farms during the week of November 19-25, totaled 6.3 millions --4 percent less than a year earlier. Farm operators and unpaid family members counted in the active family work force totaled 4.9 million, a 4-percent decrease from the same period last year. Hired farm employment during the week was estimated at a total of 1.4 million workers --about 5 percent under last year.

Total farm employment was slightly to moderately lower than a year earlier in all geographic regions of the Nation except the Pacific region, which showed an increase of 2 percent. The indicated percentage decreases by regions were: New England, 10; Middle Atlantic, 5; East North Central, 4; West North Central, 6; South Atlantic, 5; East South Central, 1; West South Central, 7; and Mountain, 5.

Hired farm employment was about 4 percent above a year earlier in the Pacific region and 3 percent larger in East South Central region. Decreases by regions, in percent, were: New England, 15; Middle Atlantic, 5; East North Central, 4; West North Central, 16; South Atlantic, 5; West South Central, 6; and Mountain 11. Family worker totals were lower than a year earlier in each region. Decreases amounted to 7 percent in New England and West South Central, 5 percent in Middle Atlantic and South Atlantic, 4 percent in East North Central, 2 percent in East South Central, and 1 percent in Pacific and Mountain regions.

Cumulative comparisons, January through November, page 6, show that the estimated total farm employment for the first 11 survey periods of the year averaged 7,164,000 in 1961 compared with 7,291,000 in 1960, a decrease of 2 percent. The family worker average of 5,192,000 decreased 3 percent. Hired farm employment has averaged 1,972,000 workers or 1 percent over 1960. The increase in hired employment has been in Southern and Pacific regions. Each year's labor needs are different because of complex effects of changes in crop acreage, farm organization and machine use, crop prices, and the over-riding dominance of weather on crop timing and field working conditions. In 1961, reports have indicated general adequacy of labor supply with avoidance of serious losses owing to labor shortage. Continuing strong demand is reported, however, for regular hired workers with desired skills.

Farm Workday Averages 8 Hours plus about December 1

Farmers' reports of average length of workday about December 1 this year show a National average of 8.4 hours for farm operators and 8.3 hours for hired workers. This indicates little change from the reports of recent years on the same date. The average for farm operators matches the low reached for the first time in 1959 and is a half-hour shorter than the 9.1 hours in December 1955, the lowest average to that date. The shortest December 1 average for hired workers (8.2 hours) was reported in 1956 and 1958. The average length of workday reported by States for both operators and hired workers vary considerably, as shown in the table on page 7. They reflect differences in dominant types of farming as well as differing effects of weather and the changing composition of the farm work force. Wisconsin, with dairy industry, had the longest workday for farm operators of 10.6 hours while Montana reported the low of 7.2 hours.

November Rains Slowed Cotton and Corn Harvests

During November, showery weather and some heavy rains which poured down on Central cotton States kept fields muddy and limited machine picking, with some field losses reported, especially in Mississippi. However, despite the unfavorable weather, nearly 90 percent of the crop for these States was ginned to December 1. Harvest was slowed in the Texas High Plains and in Oklahoma. About two-thirds of the crop in these States had been ginned by December 1. In the Carolinas and Georgia, cotton harvest was nearly completed in November during dry weather. Rains which came near Thanksgiving were most welcome. For the Nation, about 82 percent of the cotton crop was ginned to December 1, compared with 88.2 percent in 1960 and the 1955-59 average of 87.8 percent.

Corn harvest was slow in many North Central areas in November because of wet fields but was well along as a result of earlier progress. Near the end of the month, Ohio and Indiana farmers had about a fourth of the crop to harvest. In Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska about one-fifth of the crop was still in the field. Progress was even slower in Missouri, and Kansas where about half of the crop was harvested.

Other harvest and marketing activities were notably important in different parts of the country. In the important burly tobacco sections in Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia stripping tobacco and readying it for markets which opened in late November was a big job. Harvest of the large crop of pecans was active throughout the South while the tung nut harvest, heavily concentrated in Mississippi and Louisiana made slow progress. In parts of the South, cutting firewood and butchering hogs for home-cured meat was in season. After the Thanksgiving period rains, seeding of winter grains and cover crops again became active in the Southeast. Florida citrus harvesting and vegetable shipments increased and are heavier than a year ago. Harvest of cotton and digging of sugar beets in California were among the jobs halted by the heavy rains which aided growing winter crops and decreased fire hazards. Planting of flax started in the State's Imperial Valley. As grape harvest neared completion the navel orange harvest increased slowly. Pruning fruit trees was generally active in Pacific Coast fruit areas. In western Washington, the Christmas tree harvest approached the peak of the season and cutting and shipping of holly served as

Continued on page 8 ----

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

	: Annual : average : 1960	: Annual : average : 1959	: Annual : average : 1955-59 1/	: November : average : 1955-59 1/	: November : 20-26, : 1960	: November : 19-25, : 1961
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands)						
Total	7,118	7,384	7,734	6,896	6,593	6,310
Family labor ...	5,249	5,459	5,791	5,407	5,075	4,861
Hired labor	1,869	1,925	1,943	1,489	1,518	1,449
INDEXES 2/ (1910-14=100)						
Total	52	54	57	57	54	52
Family labor ...	52	54	57	57	53	51
Hired labor	55	57	57	57	58	55

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, October 1, 1961, United States

	: Annual : average : 1960	: October : average : 1955-59	: October : 1, 1960	: October 1, : 1961
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	\$ 0.818	\$ 0.759	\$ 0.820	\$ 0.843
Per month with house	\$192.00	\$168.00	\$186.00	\$189.00
Per month with board and room ...	149.00	133.00	147.00	148.00
Per week with board and room	35.50	33.00	35.50	35.75
Per week without board or room...	45.75	40.50	43.75	44.00
Per day with house	5.30	4.80	5.30	5.50
Per day with board and room	6.50	5.70	6.20	6.30
Per day without board or room ...	6.60	6.30	6.90	7.00
Per hour with house88	.93	1.00	1.03
Per hour without board or room...	.97	.84	.90	.93
INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Farm wage rates	629	566	613	635
(Adjusted for seasonal variation)				
Prices received by farmers 2/ ...	238	239	237	242

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

2/ Index for 15th of previous month.

Workers on Farms November 1961

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	November average 1955-59 1/			November 1960 Week of 20-26			November 1961 Week of 19-25		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	147	95	52	129	83	46	116	77	39
New York	162	117	45	144	104	40	143	104	39
New Jersey	43	29	14	40	27	13	36	24	12
Pennsylvania	184	152	32	168	141	27	156	131	25
Middle Atlantic	389	298	91	352	272	80	335	259	76
Ohio	260	229	31	249	220	29	237	208	29
Indiana	219	198	21	213	189	24	203	180	23
Illinois	273	233	40	273	226	47	257	213	44
Michigan	202	171	31	186	156	30	187	156	31
Wisconsin	283	259	24	259	236	23	247	227	20
East North Central.....	1,237	1,090	147	1,180	1,027	153	1,131	984	147
Minnesota	231	213	18	213	194	19	205	188	17
Iowa	277	248	29	288	254	34	270	242	28
Missouri	265	241	24	254	229	25	241	220	21
North Dakota	77	65	12	67	57	10	66	56	10
South Dakota	84	75	9	80	72	8	75	68	7
Nebraska	137	122	15	146	127	19	132	119	13
Kansas	142	131	11	135	122	13	125	114	11
West North Central ...	1,213	1,095	118	1,183	1,055	128	1,114	1,007	107
Delaware-Maryland...	66	46	20	64	43	21	60	42	18
Virginia	192	160	32	184	151	33	173	144	29
West Virginia	76	65	11	71	60	11	63	53	10
North Carolina	377	332	45	332	287	45	305	268	37
South Carolina	171	129	42	154	114	40	150	109	41
Georgia	199	137	62	179	125	54	177	123	54
Florida	96	48	48	97	44	53	97	42	55
South Atlantic	1,177	917	260	1,081	824	257	1,025	781	244
Kentucky	247	218	29	243	210	33	251	216	35
Tennessee	287	243	44	306	256	50	281	239	42
Alabama	181	143	38	164	127	37	168	129	39
Mississippi	257	211	46	244	197	47	245	189	56
East South Central ...	972	815	157	957	790	167	945	773	172
Arkansas	214	144	70	212	132	80	184	114	70
Louisiana	138	102	36	127	92	35	134	97	37
Oklahoma	150	128	22	149	124	25	130	109	21
Texas	405	254	151	394	229	165	375	217	158
West South Central ...	907	628	279	882	577	305	823	537	286
Montana	44	35	9	40	33	7	40	32	8
Idaho	50	39	11	50	38	12	53	40	13
Colorado	58	45	13	57	44	13	55	42	13
N.Mex.-Ariz.	121	35	86	117	31	86	102	31	71
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	48	36	12	47	35	12	45	34	11
Mountain	321	190	131	311	181	130	295	179	116
Washington	85	70	15	77	63	14	73	60	13
Oregon	78	67	11	68	60	8	76	66	10
California	370	142	228	373	143	230	377	138	239
Pacific	533	279	254	518	266	252	526	264	262
UNITED STATES	6,896	5,407	1,489	6,593	5,075	1,518	6,310	4,861	1,449

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,
September and October, 1961

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average 1960			September 1961 Week of 17-23			October 1961 Week of 22-28		
	Total	Family:	Hired	Total	Family:	Hired	Total	Family:	Hired
New England	150	91	59	179	94	85	157	88	69
New York	163	107	56	195	123	72	170	110	60
New Jersey	47	28	19	53	31	22	47	27	20
Pennsylvania	194	159	35	211	165	46	194	157	37
Middle Atlantic	404	294	110	459	319	140	411	294	117
Ohio	250	214	36	266	200	66	257	217	40
Indiana	219	192	27	226	175	51	208	176	32
Illinois	249	201	48	257	204	53	264	215	49
Michigan	220	178	42	230	177	53	213	165	48
Wisconsin	282	253	29	291	242	49	251	220	31
East North Central ...	1,220	1,038	182	1,270	998	272	1,193	993	200
Minnesota	266	228	38	279	236	43	241	213	28
Iowa	289	252	37	314	272	42	312	274	38
Missouri	276	237	39	346	281	65	307	250	57
North Dakota	92	71	21	107	84	23	84	68	16
South Dakota	92	81	11	104	88	16	91	80	11
Nebraska	160	135	25	174	144	30	160	136	24
Kansas	159	134	25	173	149	24	163	144	19
West North Central ...	1,334	1,138	196	1,497	1,254	243	1,358	1,165	193
Delaware-Maryland...	70	45	25	78	52	26	69	47	22
Virginia	203	149	54	245	172	73	213	163	50
West Virginia	73	60	13	82	69	13	73	62	11
North Carolina	416	317	99	538	422	116	425	343	82
South Carolina	195	133	62	249	178	71	211	147	64
Georgia	185	135	50	262	181	81	233	168	65
Florida	98	46	52	105	55	50	104	47	57
South Atlantic	1,240	885	355	1,559	1,129	430	1,328	977	351
Kentucky	235	188	47	321	237	84	299	248	51
Tennessee	246	195	51	318	233	85	396	307	89
Alabama	149	116	33	220	159	61	265	195	70
Mississippi	252	195	57	453	278	175	377	249	128
East South Central ...	882	694	188	1,312	907	405	1,337	999	338
Arkansas	212	126	86	304	146	158	295	155	140
Louisiana	153	95	58	276	142	134	201	106	95
Oklahoma	165	131	34	190	134	56	194	137	57
Texas	442	261	181	643	305	338	574	272	302
West South Central ...	972	613	359	1,413	727	686	1,264	670	594
Montana	49	37	12	53	42	11	47	38	9
Idaho	67	47	20	88	57	31	74	53	21
Colorado	69	51	18	91	51	40	86	53	33
N.Mex.-Ariz.	90	32	58	96	37	59	121	39	82
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	59	41	18	76	52	24	62	43	19
Mountain	334	208	126	404	239	165	390	226	164
Washington	113	76	37	115	77	38	93	65	28
Oregon	92	66	26	97	67	30	86	68	18
California	377	146	231	491	158	333	455	162	293
Pacific	582	288	294	703	302	401	634	295	339
UNITED STATES	7,118	5,249	1,869	8,796	5,969	2,827	8,072	5,707	2,365

Workers on Farms: Average January through November 1961 ^{1/}

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	January thru November			January thru November			January thru November		
	Average 1955-59			1 9 6 0			1 9 6 1		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	178	109	69	154	93	61	147	90	57
New York	187	121	66	166	108	58	163	106	57
New Jersey	54	32	22	48	29	19	46	28	18
Pennsylvania	225	181	44	198	162	36	189	155	34
Middle Atlantic	466	334	132	412	299	113	398	289	109
Ohio	275	233	42	256	217	39	246	208	38
Indiana	246	216	30	223	194	29	215	188	27
Illinois	276	222	54	253	203	50	251	200	51
Michigan	242	198	44	223	180	43	222	178	44
Wisconsin	316	282	34	285	256	29	277	247	30
East North Central ...	1,355	1,151	204	1,240	1,050	190	1,211	1,021	190
Minnesota	300	256	44	272	232	40	269	230	39
Iowa	306	264	42	296	256	40	294	255	39
Missouri	304	257	47	279	239	40	275	235	40
North Dakota	105	82	23	95	73	22	90	72	18
South Dakota	102	89	13	95	83	12	92	80	12
Nebraska	163	140	23	164	138	26	160	134	26
Kansas	176	150	26	162	136	26	157	132	25
West North Central ...	1,456	1,238	218	1,363	1,157	206	1,337	1,138	199
Delaware-Maryland...	78	50	28	72	46	26	69	45	24
Virginia	222	163	59	209	151	58	209	152	57
West Virginia	82	68	14	74	61	13	70	57	13
North Carolina	477	368	109	431	325	106	427	316	111
South Carolina	224	154	70	201	135	66	197	127	70
Georgia	217	160	57	190	138	52	182	131	51
Florida	107	55	52	99	47	52	105	47	58
South Atlantic	1,407	1,018	389	1,276	903	373	1,259	875	384
Kentucky	256	207	49	239	189	50	240	191	49
Tennessee	266	212	54	252	198	54	242	191	51
Alabama	176	139	37	153	118	35	145	111	34
Mississippi	314	250	64	262	201	61	257	189	68
East South Central ...	1,012	808	204	906	706	200	884	682	202
Arkansas	249	155	94	221	129	92	211	120	91
Louisiana	171	105	66	159	97	62	160	93	67
Oklahoma	191	153	38	169	133	36	170	132	38
Texas	472	296	176	456	265	191	459	255	204
West South Central ...	1,083	709	374	1,005	624	381	1,000	600	400
Montana	55	40	15	51	38	13	49	37	12
Idaho	70	49	21	69	48	21	70	49	21
Colorado	74	56	18	71	52	19	70	50	20
N.Mex.-Ariz.	100	36	64	90	33	57	85	32	53
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	66	46	20	60	41	19	59	41	18
Mountain	365	227	138	341	212	129	333	209	124
Washington	125	84	41	118	78	40	116	76	40
Oregon	101	70	31	95	67	28	97	68	29
California	382	149	233	381	147	234	382	144	238
Pacific	608	303	305	594	292	302	595	288	307
UNITED STATES	7,930	5,897	2,033	7,291	5,336	1,955	7,164	5,192	1,972

^{1/} Average of number during survey week of each month.

Length of farm workday for operators and hired workers
December 1, 1959, 1960 and 1961

State and region	O p e r a t o r s			H i r e d W o r k e r s		
	Dec. 1, 1959	Dec. 1, 1960	Dec. 1, 1961	Dec. 1, 1959	Dec. 1, 1960	Dec. 1, 1961
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours
Maine	9.0	9.7	10.0	7.8	8.3	8.2
New Hampshire	10.1	10.1	10.1	8.5	8.7	8.2
Vermont	10.8	10.9	10.5	9.2	9.1	9.0
Massachusetts	10.2	10.3	9.9	8.6	8.6	8.7
Rhode Island	9.2	10.3	10.0	7.9	8.6	8.6
Connecticut	10.2	10.2	9.8	9.0	8.9	9.0
<u>New England</u>	<u>10.0</u>	<u>10.2</u>	<u>10.1</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>8.6</u>	<u>8.6</u>
New York	10.0	10.0	9.9	9.4	9.1	9.0
New Jersey	9.3	9.3	9.2	7.9	8.5	8.4
Pennsylvania	9.3	9.6	9.6	8.4	8.3	8.2
<u>Middle Atlantic</u>	<u>9.6</u>	<u>9.7</u>	<u>9.7</u>	<u>8.9</u>	<u>8.7</u>	<u>8.6</u>
Ohio	8.5	8.9	8.6	7.6	7.9	8.0
Indiana	8.0	8.5	8.3	7.9	7.9	8.0
Illinois	8.2	8.9	8.7	8.2	8.6	8.4
Michigan	8.7	9.0	9.1	8.2	7.8	7.9
Wisconsin	10.6	10.8	10.6	9.1	9.2	9.1
<u>East North Central</u>	<u>8.8</u>	<u>9.2</u>	<u>9.0</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.3</u>	<u>8.2</u>
Minnesota	9.3	9.5	9.2	8.7	8.1	8.2
Iowa	9.4	9.6	9.1	8.4	8.5	8.4
Missouri	8.3	8.4	8.2	7.9	8.2	7.8
North Dakota	7.2	7.5	7.4	7.5	8.1	7.7
South Dakota	7.8	8.3	8.2	7.9	7.8	7.9
Nebraska	8.9	8.7	8.6	8.3	8.2	8.2
Kansas	8.1	8.5	8.0	7.8	7.9	7.7
<u>West North Central</u>	<u>8.6</u>	<u>8.8</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.1</u>
Delaware	7.8	8.5	7.9	7.5	8.3	8.4
Maryland	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.1	8.7	8.1
Virginia	8.6	8.8	8.6	8.1	8.1	8.2
West Virginia	7.7	8.1	7.8	7.5	7.7	7.4
North Carolina	8.0	8.0	8.1	7.6	8.1	7.8
South Carolina	8.1	8.5	8.2	7.8	7.9	7.8
Georgia	8.0	8.4	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.0
Florida	7.4	7.9	7.4	7.6	7.8	8.1
<u>South Atlantic</u>	<u>8.1</u>	<u>8.3</u>	<u>8.1</u>	<u>7.8</u>	<u>8.0</u>	<u>8.0</u>
Kentucky	8.2	8.5	8.5	8.3	8.1	8.0
Tennessee	8.7	8.6	8.5	8.1	8.1	8.0
Alabama	7.9	7.8	7.7	7.9	7.9	7.9
Mississippi	7.7	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.4	8.1
<u>East South Central</u>	<u>8.1</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.0</u>	<u>7.9</u>	<u>8.0</u>
Arkansas	7.8	8.1	7.7	7.9	7.8	7.9
Louisiana	7.7	7.9	8.0	7.7	8.3	8.1
Oklahoma	7.7	7.9	7.6	7.8	8.0	7.9
Texas	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.4	8.4	8.5
<u>West South Central</u>	<u>7.9</u>	<u>8.0</u>	<u>7.9</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.3</u>
Montana	7.4	7.5	7.2	7.5	7.9	7.3
Idaho	7.8	7.6	7.6	7.5	8.0	7.8
Wyoming	8.5	8.2	7.8	8.4	8.0	8.0
Colorado	8.4	8.3	7.9	8.2	8.2	8.1
New Mexico	8.8	8.5	8.4	8.5	8.2	9.3
Arizona	9.5	9.3	8.9	9.1	9.4	8.9
Utah	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.0	7.0	7.0
Nevada	8.3	7.5	8.4	8.0	8.0	8.4
<u>Mountain</u>	<u>8.1</u>	<u>8.0</u>	<u>7.7</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>8.7</u>	<u>8.5</u>
Washington	7.4	7.7	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.4
Oregon	7.8	7.7	7.5	8.0	7.7	7.7
California	8.7	8.6	8.6	8.7	8.6	8.6
<u>Pacific</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>8.1</u>	<u>8.6</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>8.5</u>
UNITED STATES	8.4	8.6	8.4	8.2	8.3	8.3

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a reminder of the narrowing gap between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Some snows in the Northwest stepped up livestock feeding and care but blanketed the mountains with heavy early accumulations valuable for next year's needs.