

Farm Labor

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FARM WORK PROGRESSED RAPIDLY IN APRIL WORKING FORCE SLIGHTLY SMALLER BUT ADEQUATE

Across the Nation, farmers made rapid progress in planting crops and doing other spring work in April. Sustained drying weather permitted long days of intense field work which in many sections overcame a slow start and placed farm work on a favorable schedule near average in timing.

A total of 6,774,000 persons were working on farms the survey week of April 22-28. This was nearly 12 percent more than a month earlier but about $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent less than during the same period in 1961. The increase during the month was somewhat more than the usual as farmers took advantage of favorable weather to regain time lost by unseasonably cold weather and snow in early April. Plowing, seedbed preparation, and spring grain seedings were main activities during the survey week.

Family workers during the survey week totaled 5,181,000 persons, about 2 percent less than a year earlier. They thus contributed about 76 percent of the total number working, which is slightly less than the usual proportion for the period when the main objective on many farms is to keep tractors moving.

The number of hired workers reached 1,593,000--about the same as a year earlier. This represents an increase of 29 percent over a month earlier which is not far from the usual seasonal change.

Drying April Pushed Spring Grain Plantings

Farm labor activities during the survey week were important for some of the Nation's leading crops. The comments which follow, unless otherwise noted, relate to work during the week of April 22-28 or to the approximate stage of work completion at the end of April.

Small grain seedings were rushed in North Central States. The oats crop in Iowa was about 90 percent seeded and in Illinois was virtually complete except in the northern part. Ohio oats were 95 percent seeded. In Michigan 68 percent of the oats acreage was seeded (40 percent in the last week of the month) and 60 percent of the spring barley crop was planted. In the southern third of Wisconsin oats seeding was 90 percent completed. Minnesota oats and spring wheat seedings reached one-fourth completion, which is considerably

behind average stage. In North Dakota, seeding of hard wheat reached 56 percent completion, oats 12 percent, and barley 24 percent, but flax seeding was just starting. South Dakota farmers had two-thirds of their oats and barley seeded, and 85 percent of their spring wheat. Small grain seedings were nearly completed in western Nebraska. In Washington State, spring wheat and barley seeding was completed. In Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming the half-way stage was passed in most sections. In Pennsylvania, oats planting was about half completed, and in New York progress varied from three-fourths seeded in the Hudson Valley to just starting in the north. In the Southern rice area, seeding reached the half-way mark or more in Arkansas and Louisiana and was about two-thirds finished in Texas. California rice seeding reached 60 percent completion.

Cotton Makes a Good Start

The cotton crop still ranks high in farm labor demands in the South and Southwest despite increased dependence on machines and new labor saving methods and its progress and outcome has a large influence on farm employment. The California crop was almost all planted and thinning and cultivation was in progress. Arizona planting passed 95 percent completion, with over 80 percent up to stand and thinning and weeding active. Planting in New Mexico passed three-fourths completion. By the end of April over one-third of the large Texas acreage had been planted, while in Mississippi and Louisiana plantings were about 35 percent completed. About 25 percent of the Arkansas and Tennessee crop was in the ground while in the Missouri "Bootheel" planting was just starting. In the Southeast, cotton planting was at the half-way mark in Alabama and Georgia and 60 percent completed in South Carolina where progress was ahead of last year.

Plowing and seedbed preparation for corn and soybeans also was active in the main areas for these widely grown crops. Spring plowing was about 70 percent finished in Iowa and 65 percent finished in Indiana, but much remained to be done in parts of Minnesota and Wisconsin. About 20 percent of corn was planted in Kansas, 10 percent in Missouri, and a small start made in the southern parts of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. In contrast, corn planting was about 90 percent completed in Texas, over two-thirds completed in Georgia, and about half completed in Alabama.

Other crops shared liberally in the April work advance. Tobacco transplanting reached three-fourths completion in South Carolina while in Kentucky and Tennessee farmers were preparing land for transplanting tobacco. Sugar beets were being cultivated and irrigated in California, Idaho, Colorado, and Wyoming. Planting continued in Montana.

Vegetable harvesting diminished moderately in Florida but the harvest of the Valencia orange crop increased. Strawberry harvest in Louisiana picked up sharply and was nearing a peak at the end of April.

Farm employment and indexes, April 1962 with comparisons, United States

	: Annual:	Annual :	Annual :	April :	April :	April
	: average:	average :	average :	average :	23-29 :	22-28
	: 1961 :	1960 :	1956-60 1/2:	1956-60 1/2:	1961 :	1962
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)						
Total	6,990	7,118	7,485	7,437	6,881	6,774
Family labor	5,104	5,249	5,572	5,820	5,297	5,181
Hired labor	1,836	1,869	1,913	1,617	1,584	1,593
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)						
Total	52	52	55	56	51	51
Family labor	50	52	55	55	50	49
Hired labor	55	55	56	59	53	58
(1957-59=100)						
Total	94	3/95	99	101	93	92
Family labor	91	3/94	100	100	91	89
Hired labor	96	96	98	103	101	101

- 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.
- 3/ January through April issues of Farm Labor should be corrected to show Total Index 95 and Family Labor Index 94.

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Farm Wage Rates and Indexes, April 1, 1962, United States

	: Annual	April :	April :	April 1, :	April 1,
	: Average	average :	average :	April 1, :	1962
	: 1961 :	1956-60 :	1956-60 :	1961 :	1962
FARM WAGE RATES					
Composite rate per hour 1/.....	\$ 0.834	\$ 0.677	\$ 0.757	\$ 0.779	\$ 0.779
Per month with house	\$195.00	\$168.00	\$188.00	\$188.00	\$192.00
Per month with board and room	151.00	134.00	148.00	148.00	150.00
Per week with board and room	35.75	32.75	35.00	35.00	35.75
Per week without board and room	46.50	42.25	46.25	46.25	47.50
Per day with house	5.30	4.70	5.20	5.20	5.50
Per day with board and room	6.50	5.50	6.00	6.00	6.20
Per day without board or room	6.60	5.90	6.50	6.50	6.70
Per hour with house90	.70	.80	.80	.81
Per hour without board or room99	.95	1.04	1.04	1.07
INDEXES 2/					
(1910-14=100)	642	587	647	647	666
(1957-59=100)	110	101	111	111	115

- 1/ Weighted average of all rates on a per hour basis.
- 2/ Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Workers on Farms, April 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	April average			April 1961			April 1962		
	1956-60			Week of 23-29			Week of 22-28		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	164	108	56	141	89	52	134	88	46
New York	162	109	53	147	96	51	140	95	45
New Jersey	47	29	18	42	27	15	40	26	14
Pennsylvania	207	173	34	178	151	27	169	143	26
Middle Atlantic	416	311	105	367	274	93	349	264	85
Ohio	280	245	35	251	221	30	251	220	31
Indiana	247	220	27	211	190	21	226	200	26
Illinois	287	234	53	256	211	45	283	225	58
Michigan	225	195	30	210	179	31	205	172	33
Wisconsin	313	286	27	278	253	25	269	245	24
East North Central	1,352	1,180	172	1,206	1,054	152	1,234	1,062	172
Minnesota	295	266	29	275	248	27	264	239	25
Iowa	298	274	24	293	270	23	297	270	27
Missouri	273	244	29	256	231	25	259	231	28
North Dakota	100	84	16	90	76	14	89	76	13
South Dakota	103	94	9	94	86	8	90	83	7
Nebraska	161	138	23	157	132	25	160	133	27
Kansas	166	149	17	153	136	17	153	135	18
West North Central	1,396	1,249	147	1,318	1,179	139	1,312	1,167	145
Delaware-Maryland ..	74	50	24	69	48	21	71	49	22
Virginia	209	166	43	205	164	41	189	150	39
West Virginia	79	63	16	71	56	15	66	52	14
North Carolina	372	310	62	358	299	59	339	278	61
South Carolina	190	128	62	173	112	61	161	99	62
Georgia	211	163	48	180	138	42	174	127	47
Florida	125	62	63	127	58	69	119	52	67
South Atlantic	1,260	942	318	1,183	875	308	1,119	807	312
Kentucky	225	186	39	203	168	35	215	176	39
Tennessee	222	186	36	207	175	32	202	170	32
Alabama	152	123	29	139	107	32	128	99	29
Mississippi	291	232	59	255	177	78	256	187	69
East South Central	890	727	163	804	627	177	801	632	169
Arkansas	239	146	93	211	125	86	214	122	92
Louisiana	163	102	61	170	100	70	159	92	67
Oklahoma	198	171	27	178	150	28	176	149	27
Texas	469	339	130	456	304	152	444	293	151
West South Central	1,069	758	311	1,015	679	336	993	656	337
Montana	60	46	14	53	42	11	54	42	12
Idaho	69	52	17	71	53	18	70	53	17
Colorado	75	65	10	71	62	9	71	60	11
N.Mex.-Ariz.	72	34	38	68	31	37	63	29	34
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	61	45	16	59	43	16	56	41	15
Mountain	337	242	95	322	231	91	314	225	89
Washington	117	81	36	106	73	33	108	74	34
Oregon	100	73	27	95	71	24	100	72	28
California	336	149	187	324	145	179	310	134	176
Pacific	553	303	250	525	289	236	518	280	238
UNITED STATES	7,437	5,820	1,617	6,881	5,297	1,584	6,774	5,181	1,593

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 1961
February and March 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average			February 1962			March 1962		
	1961			Week of 18-24			Week of 18-24		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	143	88	55	110	76	34	122	82	40
New York	160	105	55	126	93	33	139	99	40
New Jersey	44	27	17	31	24	7	33	24	9
Pennsylvania	185	152	33	146	127	19	160	138	22
Middle Atlantic	389	284	105	303	244	59	332	261	71
Ohio	242	206	36	202	188	14	231	207	24
Indiana	213	187	26	177	165	12	194	179	15
Illinois	246	197	49	185	153	32	217	177	40
Michigan	217	175	42	185	163	22	180	158	22
Wisconsin	273	244	29	242	223	19	255	233	22
East North Central	1,191	1,009	182	991	892	99	1,077	954	123
Minnesota	262	225	37	203	187	16	219	196	23
Iowa	289	252	37	230	214	16	247	227	20
Missouri	269	232	37	217	202	15	221	200	21
North Dakota	87	70	17	57	50	7	72	65	7
South Dakota	89	78	11	69	64	5	82	77	5
Nebraska	157	132	25	122	114	8	129	115	14
Kansas	154	130	24	116	106	10	134	122	12
West North Central	1,307	1,119	188	1,014	937	77	1,104	1,002	102
Delaware-Maryland....	68	45	23	46	33	13	58	42	16
Virginia	203	149	54	145	121	24	168	138	30
West Virginia	69	56	13	50	42	8	55	46	9
North Carolina	413	309	104	238	202	36	257	216	41
South Carolina	190	124	66	108	77	31	131	87	44
Georgia	175	127	48	121	87	34	145	108	37
Florida	104	46	58	116	44	72	130	50	80
South Atlantic	1,222	856	366	824	606	218	944	687	257
Kentucky	236	190	46	173	153	20	191	159	32
Tennessee	236	188	48	149	126	23	175	145	30
Alabama	142	109	33	81	67	14	100	79	21
Mississippi	246	182	64	127	103	24	190	146	44
East South Central	860	669	191	530	449	81	656	529	127
Arkansas	203	118	85	137	96	41	166	103	63
Louisiana	156	92	64	116	82	34	138	91	47
Oklahoma	165	129	36	145	133	12	163	144	19
Texas	444	250	194	308	215	93	366	253	113
West South Central.....	968	589	379	706	526	180	833	591	242
Montana	48	37	11	35	31	4	43	37	6
Idaho	68	48	20	43	37	6	52	44	8
Colorado	68	49	19	43	39	4	57	49	8
N.Mex.-Ariz.	85	31	54	59	25	34	62	27	35
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	57	40	17	38	30	8	44	34	10
Mountain	326	205	121	218	162	56	258	191	67
Washington	111	74	37	75	59	16	90	67	23
Oregon	95	68	27	73	63	10	86	67	19
California	378	143	235	291	126	165	298	136	162
Pacific	584	285	299	439	248	191	474	270	204
UNITED STATES	6,990	5,104	1,886	5,135	4,140	995	5,800	4,567	1,233

Average number of workers on farms January through April 1962,
by regions and States, with comparisons ^{1/}

Region and State	January through April average 1956-60			January through April 1961			January through April 1962		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	141	96	45	121	82	39	116	79	37
New York	149	107	42	137	97	40	132	95	37
New Jersey	40	28	12	36	26	10	34	25	9
Pennsylvania	188	159	29	163	140	23	153	131	22
Middle Atlantic	377	294	83	336	263	73	319	251	68
Ohio	241	216	25	220	198	22	212	192	20
Indiana	212	196	16	188	174	14	192	176	16
Illinois	232	191	41	211	175	36	211	175	40
Michigan	201	177	24	189	164	25	182	158	24
Wisconsin	282	259	23	257	236	21	250	229	21
East North Central	1,168	1,039	129	1,065	947	118	1,051	930	121
Minnesota	244	222	22	225	206	19	220	200	20
Iowa	253	234	19	246	228	18	247	227	20
Missouri	241	220	21	228	209	19	224	204	20
North Dakota	80	69	11	71	62	9	68	60	8
South Dakota	86	79	7	79	73	6	77	72	5
Nebraska	138	124	14	137	121	16	132	118	14
Kansas	143	131	12	131	119	12	128	116	12
West North Central	1,185	1,079	106	1,117	1,018	99	1,096	997	99
Delaware-Maryland	59	42	17	56	41	15	55	39	16
Virginia	179	146	33	167	137	30	161	133	28
West Virginia	65	54	11	58	48	10	54	45	9
North Carolina	299	258	41	268	230	38	264	222	42
South Carolina	150	107	43	136	94	42	125	86	39
Georgia	164	128	36	143	109	34	133	99	34
Florida	119	55	64	124	48	76	116	47	69
South Atlantic	1,035	790	245	952	707	245	908	671	237
Kentucky	200	174	26	185	161	24	186	160	26
Tennessee	188	161	27	176	150	26	166	141	25
Alabama	116	97	19	102	82	20	95	76	19
Mississippi	202	165	37	179	136	43	171	133	38
East South Central	706	597	109	642	529	113	618	510	108
Arkansas	181	128	53	158	107	51	155	101	54
Louisiana	135	92	43	125	82	43	126	84	42
Oklahoma	170	154	16	156	139	17	153	137	16
Texas	366	273	93	336	235	101	342	237	105
West South Central	852	647	205	775	563	212	776	559	217
Montana	46	39	7	43	36	7	41	35	6
Idaho	51	42	9	52	42	10	51	42	9
Colorado	56	50	6	53	46	7	52	45	7
N.Mex.-Ariz.	70	30	40	69	28	41	61	26	35
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	48	36	12	45	35	10	44	34	10
Mountain	271	197	74	262	187	75	249	182	67
Washington	93	73	20	89	67	22	85	64	21
Oregon	79	63	16	77	63	14	80	64	16
California	315	139	176	310	136	174	296	129	167
Pacific	487	275	212	476	266	210	461	257	204
UNITED STATES	6,222	5,014	1,208	5,746	4,562	1,184	5,594	4,436	1,158

^{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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IN THIS ISSUE

	<u>Page</u>
Comments	1 - 2
Farm Employment and Indexes, April 1962, with comparisons, United States	3
Farm Wage Rates and Indexes, April 1, 1962, United States	3
Workers on Farms, April 1962	4
Workers on farms: Comparative estimates, annual average 1961, February and March 1962	5
Average number of workers on farms January through April 1962, by regions and States, with comparisons	6
Basis for Estimates	7
