

Farm Labor

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DRY WEATHER SPEEDS MAY FARM WORK

A total of 7,482,000 persons worked on the Nation's farms in the survey week of May 20-26, about 1 percent fewer than a year earlier. Farm work over large areas was well ahead of usual progress since continued dry weather in May and April generally aided spring planting and early cultivation. The number of farm family members counted in the working force was 2 percent smaller than a year earlier but at 5,490,000 formed the usual major part of the total.

Season's Earliness Increases Need for Hired Workers

The number of hired workers in the May 20-26 survey week totaled 1,992,000 persons - 2 percent more than a year earlier. Inspection of the State estimates on page 4 shows that increases over last year at the same period occurred mainly in South Central areas where plantings and cultivation of cotton and other crops were pushed ahead. May last year averaged colder than usual in much of the central cotton country with some resulting lag in the work schedule. This year, about 85 percent of Mississippi cotton had been planted by the end of May, with 40 percent of the plantings made during the month. Arkansas planting was nearly 85 percent complete. Nine-tenths of Oklahoma cotton was in. Texas cotton was about 80 percent planted by May 25, only slightly ahead of a year earlier. Dry weather slowed plantings in the plains areas of the state, losing some of the earlier planting lead over last year. Planting in New Mexico was nearly done and cultivation well along. The dry weather in some central cotton areas reportedly reduced the effectiveness of chemical weed controls, requiring more hand chopping than might have been needed with more plentiful soil moisture.

Fast Progress for Corn and Soybean Planting

By the end of May the big part of corn and soybean acreage in North Central States was planted and growing at stages well ahead of last year's rather slow start. Only a tenth or less of corn acreage was still to be planted in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Kansas, and Southern Wisconsin.

Minnesota had wet weather, which has slowed progress to 65 percent completion. Soybean planting trailed after corn with about 80 percent finished in Illinois and Indiana, 70 percent in Iowa, and two-thirds finished in Michigan. Over half the soybeans and grain sorghums had been planted in Nebraska and Kansas but dry soils here and also in much of Missouri had held up completion until needed rains came late in May.

Great Plains Small Grains Harvest Starts

The Kansas wheat harvest started the last week of May, about 10 days earlier than usual, hastened by hot, dry weather. In Oklahoma, a fourth of the wheat, nearly a third of the barley, and one-third of the oats had been combined in May. Texas grains matured rapidly in May; harvest of wheat had reached 30 percent completion in the Southern high plains. Small grain harvest made considerable progress in Southern States to the east. Wheat and oats harvest was nearly finished in Southern Louisiana and was generally active in Southern and Central Alabama, and was beginning in Georgia and southern counties of South Carolina. Drought shortened the crop in many southern sections.

Area Work Shows Much Variety

In addition to the phases of planting and harvesting already mentioned, this season was developing with important differing characteristics in each part of the Nation. Progress cited for selected work relates to the end of May unless otherwise noted.

Florida vegetable shipments declined except for seasonal increases in some items, chiefly sweet corn and watermelons, but citrus harvests continued at heavy volume.

The peach crop in the south east was slowed in development by the dry weather, but harvest was started the last week in May in parts of Georgia and South Carolina.

Tobacco transplanting made rapid progress in Kentucky and nearly two-thirds of the acreage was reported "off and growing". The Tennessee crop was 60 percent set after prolonged dry weather. North Carolina tobacco was 80 percent set, under dry conditions that have been relieved by recent rains. Virginia flue-cured tobacco was 80 percent set. Planting of the Virginia peanut crop was 85 percent complete--about normal stage.

Field work and irrigation continued active in New Jersey vegetable areas and prospects were looking good for an early start for the harvest of blueberries. Pennsylvania fall potatoes were about three-fourths planted, and asparagus and strawberry harvests were at a peak in late May. Planting progress in New York was oats, 80-90 percent; corn, 75 percent, and potatoes, (upstate) 90 percent. Maine potato fields dried out well and planting in southern Aroostook County was two-thirds finished, with slower progress in the North.

The Red River Valley of the north and surrounding areas in Minnesota and

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

	: Annual:	: Annual:	: Annual :	: May :	: May :	: May
	: average:	: average:	: average :	: average :	: 21-27 :	: 20-26
	: 1961 :	: 1960 :	:1956-60 1/:	:1956-60 1/:	: 1961 :	: 1962
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)						
Total	6,990	7,118	7,435	3,249	7,571	7,432
Family labor	5,104	5,249	5,572	6,191	5,621	5,490
Hired labor	1,886	1,869	1,913	2,053	1,950	1,992
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)						
Total	52	52	55	55	51	50
Family labor	50	52	55	54	49	48
Hired labor	55	55	56	57	54	55
(1957-59=100)						
Total	94	95	99	99	91	90
Family labor	91	94	100	93	39	87
Hired labor	96	96	93	100	94	96

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, 1962, United States

	: Annual :	: April :	:	:
	: average :	: average :	: April 1, :	: April 1,
	: 1961 :	: 1956-60 :	: 1961 :	: 1962
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	\$ 0.834	\$ 0.677	\$ 0.757	\$ 0.779
Per month with house	\$195.00	\$168.00	\$138.00	\$192.00
Per month with board and room ...	151.00	134.00	143.00	150.00
Per week with board and room	35.75	32.75	35.00	35.75
Per week without board and room :	46.50	42.25	46.25	47.50
Per day with house	5.30	4.70	5.20	5.50
Per day with board and room	6.50	5.50	6.00	6.20
Per day without board or room ... :	6.60	5.90	6.50	6.70
Per hour with house90	.70	.80	.81
Per hour without board or room .. :	.99	.95	1.04	1.07
INDEXES 2/				
(1910-14=100)	642	537	647	666
(1957-59=100)	110	101	111	115

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

2/ Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Workers on Farms, May 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	May average 1956-60			May 1961 Week of 21-27			May 1962 Week of 20-26		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
New England	179	109	70:	150	92	58 :	146	89	57
New York	171	112	59:	156	100	56 :	149	98	51
New Jersey	53	30	23:	51	28	23 :	48	27	21
Pennsylvania	214	174	40:	190	157	33 :	179	137	32
Middle Atlantic	438	316	122:	397	285	112 :	376	272	104
Ohio	286	243	43:	266	224	42 :	253	218	35
Indiana	267	236	31:	254	221	33 :	242	215	27
Illinois	297	242	55:	295	237	58 :	299	235	64
Michigan	260	222	38:	243	202	41 :	235	194	41
Wisconsin	323	295	28:	296	270	26 :	287	261	26
East North Central	1,433	1,238	195:	1,354	1,154	200 :	1,316	1,123	193
Minnesota	318	277	41:	305	265	40 :	286	249	37
Iowa	327	293	34:	327	291	36 :	318	279	39
Missouri	289	250	39:	271	235	36 :	275	233	42
North Dakota	107	86	21:	103	82	21 :	92	74	18
South Dakota	103	93	10:	91	83	8 :	88	81	7
Nebraska	179	153	26:	169	143	26 :	174	145	29
Kansas	180	153	27:	159	137	22 :	166	138	28
West North Central	1,503	1,305	198:	1,425	1,236	189 :	1,399	1,199	200
Delaware	13	8	5:	14	8	6 :	15	9	6
Maryland	71	44	27:	63	41	22 :	63	42	21
Virginia	254	190	64:	249	186	63 :	240	178	62
West Virginia	88	68	20:	78	59	19 :	74	57	17
North Carolina	460	370	90:	434	348	86 :	410	326	84
South Carolina	224	150	74:	212	135	77 :	194	120	74
Georgia	236	173	63:	204	149	55 :	188	135	53
Florida	109	59	50:	109	52	57 :	114	49	65
South Atlantic	1,455	1,062	393:	1,363	978	385 :	1,298	916	382
Kentucky	233	188	45:	214	172	42 :	237	182	55
Tennessee	258	208	50:	217	176	41 :	221	178	43
Alabama	177	142	35:	145	113	32 :	139	108	31
Mississippi	367	303	64:	298	237	61 :	307	248	59
East South Central	1,035	841	194:	874	698	176 :	904	716	188
Arkansas	275	157	118:	238	131	107 :	254	134	120
Louisiana	163	94	69:	146	81	65 :	152	83	69
Oklahoma	203	163	40:	185	146	39 :	175	138	37
Texas	557	335	222:	483	282	201 :	530	293	237
West South Central	1,198	749	449:	1,052	640	412 :	1,111	648	463
Montana	57	40	17:	52	38	14 :	51	37	14
Idaho	74	51	23:	72	50	22 :	70	50	20
Colorado	77	62	15:	75	60	15 :	75	58	17
N.Mex.-Ariz.	89	36	53:	81	30	51 :	74	30	44
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	70	48	22:	68	44	24 :	64	44	20
Mountain	367	237	130:	348	222	126 :	334	219	115
Washington	143	95	48:	131	87	44 :	123	86	37
Oregon	117	81	36:	113	80	33 :	109	77	32
California	381	158	223:	364	149	215 :	366	145	221
Pacific	641	334	307:	608	316	292 :	598	308	290
UNITED STATES	8,249	6,191	2,058:	7,571	5,621	1,950 :	7,482	5,490	1,992

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
March and April 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average 1961			March 1962			April 1962		
	1961			Week of 18-24			Week of 22-28		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	143	88	55	122	82	40	134	88	46
New York	160	105	55	139	99	40	140	95	45
New Jersey	44	27	17	33	24	9	40	26	14
Pennsylvania	185	152	33	160	138	22	169	143	26
Middle Atlantic	389	284	105	332	261	71	349	264	85
Ohio	242	206	36	231	207	24	251	220	31
Indiana	213	187	26	194	179	15	226	200	26
Illinois	246	197	49	217	177	40	283	225	58
Michigan	217	175	42	180	158	22	205	172	33
Wisconsin	273	244	29	255	233	22	269	245	24
East North Central	1,191	1,009	182	1,077	954	123	1,234	1,062	172
Minnesota	262	225	37	219	196	23	264	239	25
Iowa	289	252	37	247	227	20	297	270	27
Missouri	269	232	37	221	200	21	259	231	28
North Dakota	87	70	17	72	65	7	89	76	13
South Dakota	89	78	11	82	77	5	90	83	7
Nebraska	157	132	25	129	115	14	160	133	27
Kansas	154	130	24	134	122	12	153	135	18
West North Central	1,307	1,119	188	1,104	1,002	102	1,312	1,167	145
Delaware	12	7	5	10	7	3	13	8	5
Maryland	56	38	18	48	35	13	58	41	17
Virginia	203	149	54	168	138	30	189	150	39
West Virginia	69	56	13	55	46	9	66	52	14
North Carolina	413	309	104	257	216	41	339	278	61
South Carolina	190	124	66	131	87	44	161	99	62
Georgia	175	127	48	145	108	37	174	127	47
Florida	104	46	58	130	50	80	119	52	67
South Atlantic	1,222	856	366	944	687	257	1,119	807	312
Kentucky	236	190	46	191	159	32	215	176	39
Tennessee	236	188	48	175	145	30	202	170	32
Alabama	142	109	33	100	79	21	128	99	29
Mississippi	246	182	64	190	146	44	256	187	69
East South Central	860	669	191	656	529	127	801	632	169
Arkansas	203	118	85	166	103	63	214	122	92
Louisiana	156	92	64	138	91	47	159	92	67
Oklahoma	165	129	36	163	144	19	176	149	27
Texas	444	250	194	366	253	113	444	293	151
West South Central	968	589	379	833	591	242	993	656	337
Montana	48	37	11	43	37	6	54	42	12
Idaho	68	48	20	52	44	8	70	53	17
Colorado	68	49	19	57	49	8	71	60	11
N. Mex.-Ariz.	85	31	54	62	27	35	63	29	34
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	57	40	17	44	34	10	56	41	15
Mountain	326	205	121	258	191	67	314	225	89
Washington	111	74	37	90	67	23	108	74	34
Oregon	95	68	27	86	67	19	100	72	28
California	378	243	135	298	216	82	310	214	96
Pacific	584	285	299	474	270	204	518	280	238
UNITED STATES	6,990	5,104	1,886	5,800	4,567	1,233	6,774	5,181	1,593

Average number of workers on farms January through May 1962,
by regions and States, with comparisons 1/

Region and State	January through May average 1956-60			January through May 1961			January through May 1962		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	148	98	50	126	84	42	122	81	41
New York	154	108	46	140	97	43	136	96	40
New Jersey	42	28	14	39	26	13	37	25	12
Pennsylvania	193	162	31	169	144	25	158	134	24
Middle Atlantic	389	298	91	348	267	81	331	255	76
Ohio	250	222	28	229	203	26	220	197	23
Indiana	223	204	19	202	184	18	201	183	18
Illinois	245	201	44	228	187	41	232	187	45
Michigan	213	186	27	199	171	28	193	165	28
Wisconsin	290	266	24	265	243	22	257	235	22
East North Central	1,221	1,079	142	1,123	988	135	1,103	967	136
Minnesota	258	233	25	241	218	23	233	210	23
Iowa	268	246	22	263	241	22	261	237	24
Missouri	251	226	25	236	214	22	234	210	24
North Dakota	85	72	13	78	66	12	73	63	10
South Dakota	90	82	8	81	75	6	79	73	6
Nebraska	146	130	16	143	125	18	141	124	17
Kansas	151	136	15	137	123	14	136	121	15
West North Central	1,249	1,125	124	1,179	1,062	117	1,157	1,038	119
Delaware	10	7	3	11	7	4	11	7	4
Maryland	53	36	17	49	35	14	48	34	14
Virginia	194	155	39	184	147	37	177	142	35
West Virginia	69	57	12	62	50	12	58	48	10
North Carolina	331	280	51	300	253	47	293	243	50
South Carolina	164	115	49	152	103	49	139	93	46
Georgia	179	137	42	155	117	38	144	106	38
Florida	117	55	62	121	49	72	115	47	68
South Atlantic	1,118	843	275	1,034	761	273	985	720	265
Kentucky	206	177	29	191	164	27	196	164	32
Tennessee	203	171	32	184	155	29	177	148	29
Alabama	129	106	23	111	88	23	104	83	21
Mississippi	234	192	42	202	156	46	198	156	42
East South Central	772	646	126	688	563	125	675	551	124
Arkansas	200	134	66	174	111	63	175	108	67
Louisiana	140	92	48	129	82	47	130	83	47
Oklahoma	177	156	21	162	141	21	158	137	21
Texas	404	285	119	366	245	121	380	248	132
West South Central	921	667	254	831	579	252	843	576	267
Montana	49	39	10	44	36	8	43	35	8
Idaho	56	44	12	56	44	12	55	44	11
Colorado	61	53	8	58	49	9	57	48	9
N. Mex.-Ariz.	74	32	42	71	28	43	64	27	37
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	52	39	13	50	37	13	48	36	12
Mountain	292	207	85	279	194	85	267	190	77
Washington	103	77	26	98	71	27	92	68	24
Oregon	87	67	20	84	66	18	86	67	19
California	328	143	185	321	139	182	310	132	178
Pacific	518	287	231	503	276	227	488	267	221
UNITED STATES	6,628	5,250	1,378	6,111	4,774	1,337	5,971	4,645	1,326

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

North Dakota got too much rain and many farmers have scarcely "turned a wheel". Crops here which have been delayed in planting are mainly potatoes, sugar beets, soybeans, some flax, and corn. Over much of the Dakotas the May rains greatly aided crop prospects.

In Mountain States work during the May survey week was slowed by rains and cool weather and much sugar beet thinning and other field work remained to be done. Montana ranchers had moved 80 percent of their cattle and sheep to summer ranges, and 85 percent of the sheep had been shorn. Colorado potato planting was about finished. First cutting of alfalfa was near completion in the Southeast Colorado and alfalfa dehydrators were in operation in all areas.

In Pacific Coast States many crops were requiring machine or hand labor. In Washington, rhubarb harvest, asparagus cutting, thinning of apples and peas, potato planting and beet thinning were active. Oregon strawberries are a few days late this year but fruits were being thinned and row crops weeded. Rains were delaying plantings of several field crops and snap beans for processing. California barley harvest was well along in southern sections and moving northward through the Central Valley. Harvesting of cherries, peaches, and apricots, and spraying and thinning of large acreages of fruits was general. Vegetable harvests progressed in step with cool weather while planting of summer crops continued.

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