

Farm Labor

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FARM WORK PROGRESS MATCHES CHANGING SEASONAL DEMANDS JULY WORKER NUMBERS 6 PERCENT UNDER LAST YEAR

The number of persons working on the Nation's farms in the July survey week totaled 7,964,000 - a record low for the date and about 6 percent under July 1961. This is the first time the estimate for July has been less than 8 million and is a decrease of over 2 million since July 1953.

Farm family workers totaling 5,245,000 represented nearly two-thirds of the working force. The number was about 6 percent smaller than in the July survey week last year. Family workers also made up slightly less than the average part of the July farm employment.

Hired workers employed on farms in the July survey week totaled 2,719,000. This was 6 percent under July 1961 and a record low for this period.

Worker Numbers Shift with the Season

Compared with the force working a month earlier, total farm workers showed a slight decrease instead of the usual slight advance. The above average decrease in the number of farm family workers was not offset by the moderate gain in hired workers. The 4 percent increase in the number of hired workers over June was about half the average change shown in the years 1956-60.

When the comparisons (by States) which are shown on pages 4 and 5 are related to reports of crop progress and weather influences in different areas, the quick-changing flexibility of farm affairs is apparent. Dry weather effects in many eastern and southern sections hastened completion or diminished the needs for some activities normal for the survey week. In many sections, especially in Central areas, the work of cultivating row crops and small grains was past and much of the haying done. This may have made late July this year a time when some farmers felt, even more than usual, the lure of a lake while others yielded to family pressure for a vacation. Hired worker numbers were sharply lower than in July of last year in the South Atlantic region where crop progress has been early. California hired worker numbers also were sharply lower than a year earlier because of cool weather and resulting lags in July peak demands for labor for a number of crops.

Farm Work Always Active - Some July State Highlights:

Only selected items can be mentioned in any brief summary of a farm work week on the Nation's farms. At the end of July, harvest of shade tobacco—high in per acre value—was in its second week in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and other tobacco harvest had started in these States. In New York State picking of snap beans was active. Picking of sour cherries was well along in Western parts of the State, and picking was starting on early apples and peaches. Some underemployment of farm workers was reported by placement agencies in a number of areas, including the Hudson Valley, and on Long Island, where potato harvest was expected to start in a few days.

Dry weather in New Jersey and Pennsylvania reduced hay tonnage but provided ample curing days. Hastened maturity and early harvest of crops was general and reduced the need for farm workers in Pennsylvania in comparison with a year earlier. New Jersey blueberry picking continued, and harvests of tomatoes, peaches, and apples were active.

Major activities in the North Central States included baling hay and straw, harvest of early varieties of apples and peaches, and completion or the furtherance of oat harvest. Ohio reporters characterize the 1962 season as, "Just about the best ever for getting work done," and are well caught up with work. Cool weather retarded ripening of Indiana tomatoes, shifting schedules for workers until after the first week in August. Harvest of Michigan blueberries was at peak near the end of July, and volume movements of early potatoes and other vegetables progressed concurrently with wheat and oat harvest, and harvest of cherries and cucumbers for pickles. Wisconsin field work has been greatly delayed for weeks by wet soils, and catch-up work resulted in a relatively high work level for the date. Second hay cuttings were being made, cherry picking was past the peak, and harvest of canning peas, sweet corn, potatoes, and mint was in progress.

Minnesota grain harvest had lagged much behind usual stages because of wet soil conditions, with about a tenth of the winter grains and a ninth of the oats harvested by the end of July and spring wheat turning ripe at a slower than usual pace. Sugar beet hoeing was nearing completion, and haying and corn detasseling for hybrid seed production were active. North Dakota has had one of the coldest and wettest growing seasons in many years, and small grain harvest is late, although some swathing of early seedings was starting. Hay growth was so lush and heavy this year that some Dakota ranchers are making their 1962 hay stacks real "hay banks," usable on call over the next two or three years.

Farm work in South Atlantic States included harvesting vegetables, fruit crops, and potatoes in Maryland and Delaware, and Virginia's Eastern shore. North Carolina's harvest of flue-cured tobacco claimed long days for many workers in priming, curing, and grading this part of the State's most valuable crop. Dry weather in South Carolina and Georgia speeded work in the peach harvest, which was nearly ended in Georgia. Florida harvests of citrus and vegetables decreased seasonally, but preparations for vegetable plantings continued.

In Kentucky, tobacco work—topping, suckering and spraying—were main farm activities. Most Tennessee cotton and corn had been laid by. The continuing battle with cotton insects was on in Alabama and elsewhere in the South, as scattered pickings were beginning in the earliest fields. A few fields of Louisiana rice were harvested. The Texas cotton harvest was active in the Lower Valley and was starting in Southern and South central counties. Harvest of sorghum grain was nearly completed in the Coastal Bend area, and combining of early fields had moved as far north as Dallas and Fort Worth. Early varieties of Texas rice were being harvested at an unusually early date.

In Montana the harvest of a good crop of wild hay was about 60 percent finished but delayed maturity held back the start of small grain harvest. The Northern Idaho harvest of green peas was nearly complete and harvest of dry peas was about to start. In Colorado harvest of winter wheat and barley on non-irrigated land in eastern sections was nearly over, and a start was being made on spring seedings. It was a rainy week in New Mexico at a slack season with cotton beyond cultivation stage. Arizona labor supply and demand was in balance as reported by farm placement services, with vegetable work moving at a moderate pace.

Farm work in the Pacific States included the usual long variety of specialties. In eastern Washington farmers were haying, combining small grains, harvesting potatoes and dry peas, and in fruit areas peaches and apricots were being harvested. Growers in western areas of the State had demands for blueberry pickers and bean pickers and were harvesting hay and irrigating crops. Oregon grain harvest and hay making were general throughout the State at lower elevations. Picking of snap beans was starting, while

(continued on page 8)

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

	: Annual:	: Annual:	: Annual :	: July :	: July :	: July
	: average:	: average:	: average :	: average:	: 23-29:	: 22-28
	: 1961 :	: 1960 :	:1956-60 1/:	:1956-60 1/:	: 1961 :	: 1962
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)						
Total	6,990	7,118	7,435	8,760	8,435	7,962
Family labor	5,104	5,249	5,572	5,830	5,559	5,243
Hired labor	1,886	1,869	1,913	2,930	2,876	2,719
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)						
Total	52	52	55	56	54	51
Family labor	50	52	55	56	53	50
Hired labor	55	55	56	56	56	53
(1957-59=100)						
Total	94	95	99	101	97	92
Family labor	91	94	100	102	97	91
Hired labor	96	96	98	98	98	93

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, 1962, United States

	: Annual :	: July :	:	:
	: average :	: average :	: July 1,	: July 1,
	: 1961 :	: 1956-60 :	: 1961 :	: 1962
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	\$ 0.834	\$ 0.750	\$ 0.825	\$ 0.848
Per month with house	\$195.00	\$185.00	\$203.00	\$208.00
Per month with board and room ..	151.00	138.00	151.00	156.00
Per week with board and room ..	35.75	34.75	36.75	39.00
Per week without board and room	46.50	44.00	48.25	50.00
Per day with house	5.30	4.80	5.30	5.50
Per day with board and room	6.50	6.50	7.00	7.20
Per day without board or room ..	6.60	6.00	6.50	6.90
Per hour with house90	.38	.94	.95
Per hour without board or room	.99	.96	1.04	1.06
INDEXES 2/				
(1910-14=100)	642	530	648	662
(1957-59=100)	110	100	111	114

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

2/ Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Workers on Farms, July 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	July average			July 1961			July 1962		
	1956-60 1/			Week of 23-29			Week of 22-28		
	Total:	Family:	Hired:	Total:	Family:	Hired:	Total:	Family:	Hired:
New England	205	120	85	179	103	76	171	98	73
New York	213	123	90	195	113	82	172	107	65
New Jersey	64	33	31	58	31	27	52	26	26
Pennsylvania	252	199	53	220	176	44	197	163	34
Middle Atlantic	529	355	174	473	320	153	421	296	125
Ohio	291	236	55	271	221	50	262	212	50
Indiana	266	226	40	242	209	33	226	192	34
Illinois	304	231	73	279	213	66	275	212	63
Michigan	293	218	75	269	204	65	257	187	70
Wisconsin	352	313	39	309	275	34	303	270	33
East North Central	1,506	1,224	282	1,370	1,122	248	1,323	1,073	250
Minnesota	389	297	92	357	278	79	368	271	97
Iowa	361	279	82	348	274	74	361	271	90
Missouri	333	273	60	299	254	45	303	248	55
North Dakota	142	95	47	125	89	36	127	84	43
South Dakota	116	93	23	108	85	23	107	85	22
Nebraska	199	155	44	204	157	47	194	153	41
Kansas	214	158	56	191	143	48	189	141	48
West North Central	1,754	1,350	404	1,632	1,280	352	1,649	1,253	396
Delaware	15	8	7	15	7	8	16	8	8
Maryland	80	49	31	74	42	32	74	44	30
Virginia	248	149	99	275	156	119	243	136	107
West Virginia	87	71	16	79	64	15	74	61	13
North Carolina	739	417	322	767	414	353	693	379	314
South Carolina	290	167	123	276	155	121	235	132	103
Georgia	179	122	57	177	117	60	165	115	50
Florida	81	48	33	79	41	38	73	39	34
South Atlantic	1,719	1,031	688	1,742	996	746	1,573	914	659
Kentucky	269	189	80	270	189	81	254	173	81
Tennessee	246	179	67	241	175	66	205	152	53
Alabama	109	88	21	115	93	22	114	90	24
Mississippi	243	206	37	223	191	32	208	165	43
East South Central	867	662	205	849	648	201	781	580	201
Arkansas	229	116	113	209	105	104	195	89	106
Louisiana	147	76	71	147	81	66	134	71	63
Oklahoma	184	125	59	172	110	62	155	104	51
Texas	483	268	215	538	259	279	492	242	250
West South Central	1,043	585	458	1,066	555	511	976	506	470
Montana	67	40	27	61	39	22	61	37	24
Idaho	93	56	37	98	59	39	94	57	37
Colorado	86	57	29	86	53	33	86	52	34
N.Mex.-Ariz.	110	35	75	85	33	52	84	32	52
Wyo.-Utah-Nev. ..	82	52	30	73	47	26	71	45	26
Mountain	438	240	198	403	231	172	396	223	173
Washington	176	96	80	177	93	84	170	96	74
Oregon	130	72	58	138	74	64	132	70	62
California	393	145	248	406	137	269	370	134	236
Pacific	699	313	386	721	304	417	672	300	372
UNITED STATES	8,760	5,880	2,880	8,435	5,559	2,876	7,962	5,243	2,719

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
May and June 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average			May 1962			June 1962		
	1961			Week of 20-26			Week of 17-23		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	143	88	55	146	89	57	157	91	66
New York	160	105	55	149	98	51	179	106	73
New Jersey	44	27	17	48	27	21	55	32	23
Pennsylvania	185	152	33	179	137	32	209	164	45
Middle Atlantic	389	284	105	376	272	104	443	302	141
Ohio	242	206	36	253	218	35	275	215	60
Indiana	213	187	26	242	215	27	252	212	40
Illinois	246	197	49	299	235	64	303	221	82
Michigan	217	175	42	235	194	41	259	188	71
Wisconsin	273	244	29	287	261	26	295	258	37
East North Central	1,191	1,009	182	1,316	1,123	193	1,384	1,094	290
Minnesota	262	225	37	286	249	37	366	272	94
Iowa	289	252	37	318	279	39	368	273	95
Missouri	269	232	37	275	233	42	293	238	55
North Dakota	87	70	17	92	74	18	104	78	26
South Dakota	89	78	11	88	81	7	101	83	18
Nebraska	157	132	25	174	145	29	189	148	41
Kansas	154	130	24	166	138	28	187	139	48
West North Central	1,307	1,119	188	1,399	1,199	200	1,608	1,231	377
Delaware	12	7	5	15	9	6	15	9	6
Maryland	56	38	18	63	42	21	65	41	24
Virginia	203	149	54	240	178	62	234	139	95
West Virginia	69	56	13	74	57	17	77	58	19
North Carolina	413	309	104	410	326	84	506	332	174
South Carolina	190	124	66	194	120	74	248	134	114
Georgia	175	127	48	188	135	53	177	123	54
Florida	104	46	58	114	49	65	79	41	38
South Atlantic	1,222	856	366	1,298	916	382	1,401	877	524
Kentucky	236	190	46	237	182	55	266	185	81
Tennessee	236	188	48	221	178	43	245	186	59
Alabama	142	109	33	139	108	31	135	103	32
Mississippi	246	182	64	307	248	59	255	205	50
East South Central	860	669	191	904	716	188	901	679	222
Arkansas	203	118	85	254	134	120	228	127	101
Louisiana	156	92	64	152	83	69	155	83	72
Oklahoma	165	129	36	175	138	37	176	134	42
Texas	444	250	194	530	293	237	512	261	251
West South Central	968	589	379	1,111	648	463	1,071	605	466
Montana	48	37	11	51	37	14	60	37	23
Idaho	68	48	20	70	50	20	93	54	39
Colorado	68	49	19	75	58	17	89	54	35
N.Mex.-Ariz.	85	31	54	74	30	44	79	32	47
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	57	40	17	64	44	20	75	46	29
Mountain	326	205	121	334	219	115	396	223	173
Washington	111	74	37	123	86	37	167	102	65
Oregon	95	68	27	109	77	32	134	75	59
California	378	143	235	366	145	221	381	137	244
Pacific	584	285	299	598	308	290	682	314	368
UNITED STATES	6,990	5,104	1,886	7,482	5,490	1,992	8,043	5,416	2,627

Average number of persons working on farms, January through July 1962,
by regions and States, with comparisons 1/

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	January through July : average 1956-60			January through July : 1 9 6 1			January through July 1 9 6 2		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	163	104	59	140	89	51	134	85	49
New York	168	112	56	154	101	53	147	99	48
New Jersey	49	30	19	44	28	16	41	26	15
Pennsylvania	209	172	37	184	153	31	171	143	28
Middle Atlantic ...	426	314	112	382	282	100	359	268	91
Ohio	262	226	36	241	208	33	234	202	32
Indiana	238	213	25	217	194	23	212	189	23
Illinois	264	212	52	248	197	51	248	195	53
Michigan	233	194	39	219	180	39	212	172	40
Wisconsin	304	276	28	276	250	26	270	244	26
East North Central	1,301	1,121	180	1,201	1,029	172	1,176	1,002	174
Minnesota	293	250	43	273	234	39	264	220	44
Iowa	294	255	39	289	251	38	290	247	43
Missouri	271	237	34	256	224	32	252	219	33
North Dakota	97	77	20	88	71	17	85	68	17
South Dakota	96	85	11	89	78	11	85	76	9
Nebraska	161	137	24	159	133	26	155	131	24
Kansas	168	142	26	154	129	25	151	126	25
West North Central	1,380	1,183	197	1,308	1,120	188	1,282	1,087	195
Delaware	11	7	4	12	7	5	12	7	5
Maryland	61	40	21	55	37	18	55	37	18
Virginia	210	154	56	205	148	57	194	140	54
West Virginia ...	75	61	14	68	54	14	63	51	12
North Carolina ..	419	311	108	402	291	111	380	275	105
South Carolina ..	201	129	72	186	115	71	168	104	64
Georgia	185	137	48	164	119	45	152	110	42
Florida	108	54	54	109	47	62	104	45	59
South Atlantic	1,270	893	377	1,201	818	383	1,128	769	359
Kentucky	225	181	44	215	171	44	214	168	46
Tennessee	219	177	42	204	164	40	190	154	36
Alabama	130	106	24	115	91	24	110	87	23
Mississippi	247	204	43	211	167	44	207	164	43
East South Central	821	668	153	745	593	152	721	573	148
Arkansas	211	134	77	186	113	73	185	108	77
Louisiana	144	90	54	137	83	54	135	82	53
Oklahoma	181	151	30	168	136	32	160	132	28
Texas	427	283	144	408	249	159	415	249	166
West South Central	963	658	305	899	581	318	895	571	324
Montana	53	39	14	49	37	12	48	36	12
Idaho	66	47	19	67	47	20	66	47	19
Colorado	68	54	14	65	50	15	65	49	16
N.Mex.-Ariz.	83	33	50	75	30	45	69	29	40
Wyo.-Utah-Nev. ..	61	42	19	57	39	18	54	38	16
Mountain	331	215	116	313	203	110	302	199	103
Washington	125	84	41	121	78	43	114	77	37
Oregon	102	70	32	100	70	30	99	68	31
California	348	143	205	349	139	210	329	133	195
Pacific	575	297	278	570	287	283	541	278	263
UNITED STATES	7,230	5,453	1,777	6,759	5,002	1,757	6,538	4,832	1,706

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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picking of sour cherries was well along. Oregon crop maturity was ten days to two weeks late, which helped swell the labor demand in late July. California weather delivered less than the usual number of July heat units in central valleys, retarding growth of Alfalfa and maturity of other field crops. However, many crops were moving toward peak requirements in early August.