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Farm Labor

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FARM WORK ADVANCES RAPIDLY IN DRY AUGUST WORKER NUMBERS CONTINUE DECREASE

Farm work made good progress throughout the Nation during August, meeting the requirements of late summer and advancing fall harvests. The 8,060,000 persons who worked on the Nation's farms during the survey week of August 19-25 were generally well able to handle the needs of this period even though this total was a record low in worker numbers for this time of year. The total was 3 percent under the 8,307,000 estimated for August 1961 and 10 percent less than the August average for the 5 years 1956-60. Only the Mountain and East South Central regions had more people working on farms than a year earlier; all other regions showed decreases, mainly slight to moderate in extent.

The number of farm family members working on farms during the survey week totaled 5,409,000 or about 2 percent less than a year earlier. They represented slightly over two-thirds of the total number of persons in the farm working force, near the usual for late August. This group includes farm operators doing farm work in the survey week and also members of their families who work as much as 15 hours in the week without receiving cash wages. On a large part of the farms this family work force is responsible for an amazing per capita outturn, aided, of course, by continuing improvements in machines and farming methods.

The number of hired workers in the August 19-25 survey week is estimated at 2,651,000. This was 4 percent fewer than in the comparable week in 1961 and 7 percent less than average for August in the 5 years 1956-60. The West North Central region and the East South Central region had 4 percent more hired workers than a year earlier, and the Mountain region had 5 percent more. Largest decreases were estimated for the West South Central, Mid-Atlantic and East North Central regions. Monthly estimates of hired workers throughout the Nation in the 8-month period January through August average 3 percent under last year.

The effects of changed crop timing frequently affect the number of hired workers in a specific area during survey weeks more directly than the family work force. This year, cotton maturity was pushed ahead by dry August weather, with a 3-percent loss since August 1 in national production prospects, as announced in yesterday's Cotton Production Report. The Bureau of the Census report on cotton ginnings showed 1,500,627 running bales ginned to September 1 this year--far ahead of the 684,942 bales ginned to the same date last year.

The top-ranking States in estimated number of hired workers were California (272,000), Texas (267,000), North Carolina (207,000), Arkansas (122,000), and Kentucky (93,000). These States had well over a third of the national total of hired farm workers for the August survey week.

"Dry" is the word for August

Farm reports describing August crops and weather effects on their farms used the word "dry" repeatedly in relation to local situations. Continuing dry weather over extensive central, eastern, and southern areas hurried maturity stages for corn, cotton, peanuts, tobacco, and other crops. Lack of rain cut short forage growth and reduced the work of storing it on many farms where it was badly needed to augment short hay supplies. The large stretches of open weather, however, aided completion of small grain harvest, even in late areas, and generally facilitated an orderly attack on each principal task as it appeared. In contrast to some other sections, the Pacific Coast States had above normal rainfall, and crop timings there were on a somewhat later than usual basis.

August Farm Scenes Still Reward Travelers

August is a big month for family travel, with vacation trips crowded in before school begins. Improved transportation has extended the scope of these trips far beyond local areas and included for the benefit of travelers a wider choice of the ever-changing scenery of farms and farming. To some extent, however, the new expressways, and high flying jet planes speed travelers by or screen them from lively work scenes which formerly were almost inescapable while traveling through farm areas. But the work still goes on under more interesting arrangements than ever before. Some of the highlights in various sections which might be noticed by travelers on the less hurried farm roads in different States in late August might include the following:

In New England, tobacco harvest was about completed by the end of August, and harvests of fall potatoes, silage corn, and McIntosh apples were just starting. In New York the oat harvest was about over except in the Northeast, and potato digging had started in the upper State areas and also on Long Island. Snap beans and other vegetables were being harvested in central areas of the State. New Jersey vegetable crops were being marketed in large volume, despite the dry season. Dry conditions dominated Pennsylvania, but the peach season was active. Fredonia table grapes were being harvested in the Northwest. Many vineyards in Erie County were showing color. Tobacco cutting was in progress in Lancaster County.

Ohio farmers were plagued by continued dry weather and short pastures and spent more time than usual in August feeding hay, silage, or hauling green chopped feed to their cattle. In tobacco areas virtually all the tobacco had been topped and nearly one half of the tobacco acreage had been cut. In Indiana, volume picking of tomatoes was under way in major producing sections. In Illinois tomato fields picking was active and some shortage of workers was reported. Other current farm activities were silo filling, combining clover seed, and starting combining of soybeans. Michigan fruit and vegetable harvests were active. Wisconsin tobacco harvest was becoming general after starting about 10 days late, and some hay was being cut. Sweetcorn, snap beans, and other vegetable crops were being processed in large volume.

In West North Central States the grain harvest was virtually completed except for a few areas such as the Red River Valley in the North where late planted acreage was ripening. Considerable flax acreage remained to be harvested in Minnesota and North Dakota. Nebraska farmers were cutting a fourth crop of alfalfa on

(continued on page 7)

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

	: Annual : : average : : 1961 :	: Annual : : average : : 1960 :	: Annual : : average : : 1956-60 1/ :	: August : : average : : 1956-60 1/ :	: August : : 20-26 : : 1961 :	: August : : 19-25 : : 1962 :
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)	:	:	:	:	:	:
Total	: 6,990	: 7,118	: 7,485	: 3,939	: 8,307	: 8,060
Family labor	: 5,104	: 5,249	: 5,572	: 6,075	: 5,547	: 5,409
Hired labor	: 1,886	: 1,869	: 1,913	: 2,864	: 2,760	: 2,651
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)	:	:	:	:	:	:
Total	: 52	: 52	: 55	: 55	: 51	: 50
Family labor	: 50	: 52	: 55	: 55	: 50	: 49
Hired labor	: 55	: 55	: 56	: 55	: 53	: 51
(1957-59=100)	:	:	:	:	:	:
Total	: 94	: 95	: 99	: 99	: 92	: 89
Family labor	: 91	: 94	: 100	: 100	: 91	: 89
Hired labor	: 96	: 96	: 98	: 96	: 93	: 89

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 : : average : : 1961 :	: July : : average : : 1956-60 :	: July 1, : : 1961 :	: July 1, : : 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 house	: .90	: .88	: .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, August 1962

Region and State	(Thousands of persons)								
	August average 1956-60 1/			August 1961 Week of 20-26			August 1962 Week of 19-25		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	199	110	89	173	98	75	165	89	76
New York	232	123	109	206	117	89	188	106	82
New Jersey	64	34	30	61	32	29	54	29	25
Pennsylvania	264	203	61	232	182	50	208	167	41
Middle Atlantic	560	360	200	499	331	168	450	302	148
Ohio	283	220	63	261	205	56	246	197	49
Indiana	249	207	42	219	184	35	213	182	31
Illinois	262	200	62	241	186	55	233	180	53
Michigan	287	209	78	275	196	79	245	187	58
Wisconsin	357	309	48	320	275	45	310	270	40
East North Central	1,438	1,145	293	1,316	1,046	270	1,247	1,016	231
Minnesota	339	270	69	319	254	65	315	251	64
Iowa	336	272	64	325	265	60	320	260	60
Missouri	356	278	78	334	267	67	321	251	70
North Dakota	144	99	45	125	90	35	132	93	39
South Dakota	122	96	26	109	89	20	116	90	26
Nebraska	178	144	34	183	147	36	179	138	41
Kansas	200	153	47	188	140	48	184	139	45
West North Central	1,675	1,312	363	1,583	1,252	331	1,567	1,222	345
Delaware	17	9	8	18	8	10	18	9	9
Maryland	79	46	33	72	46	26	74	46	28
Virginia	251	165	86	236	157	79	234	152	82
West Virginia	90	75	15	81	65	16	76	62	14
North Carolina	696	481	215	623	414	209	629	422	207
South Carolina	276	185	91	242	151	91	228	145	83
Georgia	229	165	64	185	135	50	189	132	57
Florida	91	51	40	81	42	39	86	43	43
South Atlantic	1,729	1,177	552	1,538	1,018	520	1,534	1,011	523
Kentucky	292	213	79	259	199	60	284	191	93
Tennessee	264	195	69	243	177	66	236	172	64
Alabama	150	117	33	142	104	38	131	98	33
Mississippi	333	259	74	271	192	79	277	214	63
East South Central	1,039	784	255	915	672	243	928	675	253
Arkansas	260	131	129	240	114	126	228	106	122
Louisiana	179	93	86	198	100	98	173	88	85
Oklahoma	182	124	58	175	113	62	163	103	60
Texas	530	281	249	592	268	324	527	260	267
West South Central	1,151	629	522	1,205	595	610	1,091	557	534
Montana	60	42	18	51	39	12	61	41	20
Idaho	93	57	36	87	59	28	91	58	33
Colorado	91	62	29	84	54	30	92	64	28
N.Mex.-Ariz.	115	36	79	87	32	55	83	32	51
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	77	50	27	70	48	22	70	47	23
Mountain	436	247	189	379	232	147	397	242	155
Washington	155	88	67	151	86	65	153	89	64
Oregon	114	66	48	111	64	47	118	68	50
California	443	157	286	437	153	284	410	138	272
Pacific	712	311	401	699	303	396	681	295	386
UNITED STATES	8,939	6,075	2,864	8,307	5,547	2,760	8,060	5,409	2,651

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
June and July 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average			June 1962			July 1962		
	1961			Week of 17-23			Week of 22-28		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	143	88	55	157	91	66	171	98	73
New York	160	105	55	179	106	73	172	107	65
New Jersey	44	27	17	55	32	23	52	26	26
Pennsylvania	185	152	33	209	164	45	197	163	34
Middle Atlantic	389	284	105	443	302	141	421	296	125
Ohio	242	206	36	275	215	60	262	212	50
Indiana	213	187	26	252	212	40	226	192	34
Illinois	246	197	49	303	221	82	275	212	63
Michigan	217	175	42	259	188	71	257	187	70
Wisconsin	273	244	29	295	258	37	303	270	33
East North Central	1,191	1,009	182	1,384	1,094	290	1,323	1,073	250
Minnesota	262	225	37	366	272	94	368	271	97
Iowa	289	252	37	368	273	95	361	271	90
Missouri	269	232	37	293	238	55	303	248	55
North Dakota	87	70	17	104	78	26	127	84	43
South Dakota	89	78	11	101	83	18	107	85	22
Nebraska	157	132	25	189	148	41	194	153	41
Kansas	154	130	24	187	139	48	189	141	48
West North Central	1,307	1,119	188	1,608	1,231	377	1,649	1,253	396
Delaware	12	7	5	15	9	6	16	8	8
Maryland	56	38	18	65	41	24	74	44	30
Virginia	203	149	54	234	139	95	243	136	107
West Virginia	69	56	13	77	58	19	74	61	13
North Carolina	413	309	104	506	332	174	693	379	314
South Carolina	190	124	66	248	134	114	235	132	103
Georgia	175	127	48	177	123	54	165	115	50
Florida	104	46	58	79	41	38	73	39	34
South Atlantic	1,222	856	366	1,401	877	524	1,573	914	659
Kentucky	236	190	46	266	185	81	254	173	81
Tennessee	236	188	48	245	186	59	205	152	53
Alabama	142	109	33	135	103	32	114	90	24
Mississippi	246	182	64	255	205	50	208	165	43
East South Central	860	669	191	901	679	222	781	580	201
Arkansas	203	118	85	228	127	101	195	89	106
Louisiana	156	92	64	155	83	72	134	71	63
Oklahoma	165	129	36	176	134	42	155	104	51
Texas	444	250	194	512	261	251	492	242	250
West South Central	968	589	379	1,071	605	466	976	506	470
Montana	48	37	11	60	37	23	61	37	24
Idaho	68	48	20	93	54	39	94	57	37
Colorado	68	49	19	89	54	35	86	52	34
N.Mex.-Ariz.	85	31	54	79	32	47	84	32	52
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	57	40	17	75	46	29	71	45	26
Mountain	326	205	121	396	223	173	396	223	173
Washington	111	74	37	167	102	65	170	96	74
Oregon	95	68	27	134	75	59	132	70	62
California	378	143	235	381	137	244	370	134	236
Pacific	584	285	299	682	314	368	672	300	372
UNITED STATES	6,990	5,104	1,886	8,043	5,416	2,627	7,962	5,243	2,719

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

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	: January through Aug.:		: January through Aug.:		: January through Aug.:				
	: average 1956-60		: 1 9 6 1		: 1 9 6 2				
	Total:	Family:	Hired:	Total:	Family:	Hired			
New England	168	105	63	145	91	54	138	86	52
New York	176	113	63	161	104	57	153	100	53
New Jersey	50	30	20	46	28	18	42	26	16
Pennsylvania	216	176	40	189	156	33	176	146	30
Middle Atlantic	442	319	123	396	288	108	371	272	99
Ohio	265	226	39	244	208	36	236	201	35
Indiana	239	212	27	216	192	24	212	188	24
Illinois	264	210	54	248	196	52	247	194	53
Michigan	240	196	44	226	182	44	215	173	42
Wisconsin	310	280	30	281	253	28	274	247	27
East North Central	1,318	1,124	194	1,215	1,031	184	1,184	1,003	181
Minnesota	298	252	46	279	236	43	270	224	46
Iowa	299	257	42	293	253	40	294	249	45
Missouri	282	242	40	266	230	36	261	223	38
North Dakota	103	80	23	92	73	19	91	71	20
South Dakota	100	87	13	92	80	12	90	78	12
Nebraska	163	138	25	162	134	28	158	132	26
Kansas	171	143	28	159	131	28	155	128	27
West North Central	1,416	1,199	217	1,343	1,137	206	1,319	1,105	214
Delaware	13	8	5	12	7	5	13	8	5
Maryland	63	41	22	57	38	19	57	38	19
Virginia	215	155	60	209	149	60	199	142	57
West Virginia	77	63	14	70	56	14	65	52	13
North Carolina	454	333	121	430	306	124	411	293	118
South Carolina	210	136	74	194	120	74	176	110	66
Georgia	190	140	50	166	121	45	157	113	44
Florida	106	53	53	105	46	59	101	44	57
South Atlantic	1,328	929	399	1,243	843	400	1,179	800	379
Kentucky	233	185	48	221	175	46	223	171	52
Tennessee	225	179	46	209	166	43	196	156	40
Alabama	132	107	25	118	92	26	112	88	24
Mississippi	258	211	47	219	170	49	217	171	46
East South Central	848	682	166	767	603	164	748	586	162
Arkansas	217	134	83	192	113	79	191	108	83
Louisiana	148	90	58	145	85	60	139	82	57
Oklahoma	182	148	34	169	133	36	160	128	32
Texas	440	283	157	431	251	180	429	251	178
West South Central	987	655	332	937	582	355	919	569	350
Montana	55	40	15	49	37	12	49	36	13
Idaho	69	48	21	70	49	21	69	49	20
Colorado	71	55	16	68	51	17	69	51	18
N.Mex.-Ariz.	86	33	53	76	30	46	71	29	42
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	63	43	20	59	40	19	57	40	17
Mountain	344	219	125	322	207	115	315	205	110
Washington	128	84	44	125	79	46	120	79	41
Oregon	103	69	34	101	69	32	101	68	33
California	360	145	215	360	141	219	339	134	205
Pacific	591	298	293	586	289	297	560	281	279
UNITED STATES	7,442	5,530	1,912	6,954	5,071	1,883	6,733	4,907	1,826

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

irrigated land. In the Sand hills area harvest of wild hay was nearly completed. In Kansas, harvest of grain sorghum was in progress, and a few fields of corn were being harvested. Seeding of alfalfa and rye was in progress in many areas.

Tobacco harvest was a heavy user of labor in the South Atlantic States during the August survey week. Harvest of Maryland tobacco was about two-thirds finished, and the Virginia flue-cured crop was past 60 percent harvested. In North Carolina, burning of the flue-cured crop was nearing completion and cutting of burley tobacco was well underway. Harvest had been completed in South Carolina and Georgia and marketing was well advanced. Other crop work in this area included rapid progress in the harvest of peanuts and an important advance in picking of cotton, especially in southern counties. Georgia cotton harvest was very active with much use of day-haul labor from urban areas. The harvest of corn, peanuts, and cotton in Florida progressed rapidly after mid-August. Citrus work was largely restricted to grove maintenance and care while plantings of vegetables were active in all principal areas of the State.

In Kentucky, most farmers were either cutting their burley tobacco or handling it in the curing process. Nearly one-third of the crop had been cut, which is one to three weeks ahead of any recent year. This advanced stage in tobacco work required a large increase in the number of workers in August. Tennessee tobacco work was active also. In Alabama hot, dry weather pushed cotton picking to a peak in extreme southern counties. Good progress was made in harvesting peanuts in commercial counties in southeastern Alabama. Picking of late variety peaches was completed in northern counties. The Mississippi cotton harvest forged ahead at a rapid rate to a situation well ahead of usual for this time.

Farm work in Arkansas included hay baling, harvest of corn and sorghum silage, picking cotton, and harvest of rice. Louisiana rice harvest was near the peak with about one-half of the crop harvested. Harvest of early corn was active. Land was in preparation for planting next year's sugar crop. In Oklahoma, corn harvest started earlier than usual this year and about one-seventh of the crop had been harvested by the end of August. Fourth and fifth cuttings of alfalfa were being made. The large variety of Texas conditions resulted in a long list of active farm jobs. Cotton harvest was near the one-fourth completion mark for the State and ranged from near completion in the Lower Valley to "first bales" being reported in the northern low Plains. Sorghum grain harvest in Central and South Texas was nearly completed. The long dry spell dried Texas corn and promoted early harvest. In the "blacklands" well over one-half of the crop is reported harvested.

In the Mountain States, harvest made excellent headway in August. Harvest of Montana spring seeded small grain passed the half-way mark. Ranchers also were busy with haying; 60 percent of the second cutting of alfalfa and 90 percent of the wild hay harvest was completed by the end of August. With abundant grazing favoring livestock, ranchers are in no hurry to push fall sales of cattle and sheep. Idaho labor supplies generally have been adequate. Late August activities included harvest of small grains, dried peas, alfalfa, early potatoes, canning crops, and fruit. In Colorado and Wyoming seeding of winter wheat made excellent progress with the encouragement of good moisture supplies. Harvest of late summer potatoes in northern irrigated areas passed the half-way point. Cutting of broomcorn was started in Baca County. Ginning the first bale of New Mexico's cotton was reported on August 28. Onion harvest was completed in the Mesilla Valley of that State. In Arizona, cotton picking was still on a small scale. Safflower harvest was completed. Picking of lemons started in the Yuma area. Large acreages of lettuce and other vegetables were planted in the Salt River Valley during August. Utah's bountiful harvests which resulted, in part, from excellent moisture supplies this year are increasing labor needs in that State as compared with recent drought years.

Western Washington areas had more than twice the normal rainfall in August. Harvest of green peas was about over. Bean harvest, although behind schedule, was active, adding to work on other vegetables, blackberries, and blueberries. In eastern Washington small grain harvest was almost completed. Fruit harvest began in volume the last week in August. Peaches and pears were the principal crops being harvested, but hops, potatoes, mint, and other vegetable crops were competing for harvesting labor. In Oregon, the rains during the last week in August slowed harvesting and delayed farm work even more in a year that already was running late. Some grain harvest will continue into mid-September in the high areas. Bartlett pear harvest started in late August in the Hood River and Rogue River Valleys. Among other crops being harvested were grass seeds, peppermint, hops, sugarbeet seed, peaches, and early apples. In California, farm employment was approaching the seasonal peak. Sugarbeet harvesting was underway and canning of tomatoes, increasing. Grape and peach harvests were also heavy labor users. Cotton harvest had started in desert areas with excellent early progress.

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