

Farm Labor

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OCTOBER FARM EMPLOYMENT AT NEW LOW COTTON HARVESTING RATES SHOW LITTLE CHANGE

The total farm working force in late October this year is estimated at 7,629,000 persons. This is a record low for the date and a decrease of 5 percent from the previous low mark set last year. Increased machine use in cotton harvest appeared important in the continued downtrend in October farm employment. Effects of a severe cold wave over much of the nation also may have curtailed work on many farms.

The number of farm family members working during the survey week of October 21-27 totaled 5,427,000, which was 5 percent below the previous record low for the month reached in October 1961. Good progress in fall harvests and other seasonal work allowed some let-down in work activities during the survey week in a period which brought some extremely cold weather for the date. Fewer farm family workers than a year earlier were reported in each geographic region in the nation except the Mountain region. In Oregon and Washington, however, more family workers were doing farm work than in 1961. Some of the required labor was caused by earlier rain and windstorms which caused damage to orchards and farmsteads and delayed work progress generally.

The number of hired farm workers during the October 21-27 survey week was about 7 percent under a year earlier, reaching a new low for October of 2,202,000 persons. Each geographic region except the West North Central had fewer hired workers than a year earlier. The differing progress in work in the two years owing to weather effects was a major factor in the variations by States. However, the increased mechanization of the cotton harvest continues to reduce needs for hired workers. Southern States had about 9 percent fewer hired workers than a year earlier with even larger decreases indicated in cotton harvest employment. For the United States, 63 percent of the cotton crop was ginned by November 1, equalling the 5-year average and slightly ahead of last year's progress. The Department's cotton report issued November 8 estimated the 1962 crop at 14,533,000 bales, about 2 percent above the 1961 crop.

Wage Rates for Cotton Hand Harvesting Increase 2 Percent

Wage rates for hand harvesting cotton reported about November 1 this year averaged \$2.70 per 100 pounds of seed cotton. This equals the 1960 average and is about 2 percent above the average of \$2.65 reported as of November 1 last year. The highest average rate was reported in 1952 at \$3.05 per 100 pounds, 11 percent more than the 1962 average. In this 10-year span, machine picking

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has gained increasing dominance, especially in recent years. Data on page 7 which give rates by States for hand harvesting cotton for nearly two decades show that the changes from last year have been slight in most states. The rates this year range from \$2.50 per 100 pounds in Texas, New Mexico, and Mississippi to \$3.40 in North Carolina. California and Arizona rates were reported at \$3.20 and \$3.30 respectively. The rates shown include hand snapping of boll cotton on the basis of equivalent seed cotton.

Cold Wave Hits From Plains Eastward During Survey Week
Work Progress Generally Good

October brought the usual drive to finish fall harvests, complete fall seedings and get ready for winter. Along with the fall rush came new scenes of changing colors for fields and trees, but even these scenes have changed with modern farming. When the Indiana poet, James Whitcomb Riley, wrote -

"A pictur' that no painter has the
Colorin' to mock--
When the frost is on the punkin
And the fodder's in the shock--"

this was a familiar scene. Now shock fodder is almost a decorator's item for store windows and Halloween parties. Forage harvesters, corn pickers, and picker-shellers now handle the bulk of the corn harvest, erasing back-bending work along with the fodder shocks. Near the end of October, harvest of corn for grain was active in most corn growing sections. In the Corn Belt, harvest completion varied from one-fifth finished in Minnesota to nearly two-thirds in Ohio. This important job was about half-completed in Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas, but only one-fourth in Iowa, having been delayed for drying of corn or fields.

Frosts held off late in most areas but during the farm labor survey week an air mass swept southward with enough cold to frost Halloween pumpkins as far south as central Alabama and southern Georgia. Average temperatures were much below normal from the Great Plains eastward and some new record lows were set for the end of October.

Harvest of sorghum grain was about four-fifths completed in Texas and about two-thirds completed in Oklahoma and Kansas. Soybean harvest had made fast early progress and only a tenth or less of the crop remained in fields in Illinois and Ohio, a fifth in Indiana and Minnesota, and a fourth in Iowa. Harvests of several other crops made excellent progress during the month. Aroostook, Maine, potato harvest was completed without freeze loss, and it was back to school again as schools reopened for young potato pickers who had been part of the large seasonal working force harvesting Maine's famous crop. Apple harvest was virtually completed in many areas throughout the country with pickers not always plentiful. Most cranberries in Massachusetts and New Jersey were harvested, and some bogs were flooded to protect against freezing. Digging of the peanut crop neared completion in the Virginia-Carolina area and also in Georgia and Alabama. Stripping of tobacco made some progress but lagged in parts of Kentucky and Tennessee because of excessive dryness. Sugar cane harvest started in Louisiana, and mills were busy grinding cane. Harvest of sugarbeets was being pushed in all producing areas where conditions permitted; over four-fifths of the crop was dug in Colorado. Pulling of broomcorn in New Mexico passed its peak.

Apple harvest in central Washington was nearly completed. Many filbert and prune trees in western Washington were uprooted by the severe windstorm of October 12 which caused even more severe damage in some Oregon sections. Rains in California slowed harvest of tomatoes, sugarbeets, and rice in the Sacramento Valley, but many activities throughout the State's varied farming sections soon resumed normal pace.

Conditions in the Great Plains have favored new seedings of winter wheat and stockmen anticipate heavy movement of cattle to wheat pastures. Fall plowing in some North Central States could be seen in fields adjoining those showing fine new stands of fall-sown grain. The open fall aided late forage harvest and helped add to stores of winter forage on many farms.

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

	: Annual:	Annual:	Annual :	October	:October:	October
	: average:	average:	average :	average	: 22-28	: 21-27
	: 1961	: 1960	:1956-60 1/:	1956-60 1/:	1961	: 1962
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)	:	:	:	:	:	:
Total	6,990	7,118	7,485	7,766	8,072	7,629
Family labor	5,104	5,249	5,572	5,712	5,707	5,427
Hired labor	1,886	1,869	1,913	2,054	2,365	2,202
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)	:	:	:	:	:	:
Total	52	52	55	49	51	49
Family labor	50	52	55	49	49	47
Hired labor	55	55	56	49	57	53
(1957-59=100)	:	:	:	:	:	:
Total	94	95	99	89	92	87
Family labor	91	94	100	90	90	85
Hired labor	96	96	98	86	99	92

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, 1962, United States

	: Annual :	October :	Oct, 1, :	Oct. 1,
	: average :	average :	1961 :	1962
	: 1961 :	1956-60 :	:	:
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	\$ 0.834	\$ 0.783	\$ 0.843	\$ 0.868
Per month with house	\$195.00	\$174.00	\$189.00	\$198.00
Per month with board and room	151.00	138.00	148.00	155.00
Per week with board and room	35.75	34.00	35.75	37.25
Per week without board and room	46.50	41.75	44.00	46.00
Per day with house	5.30	5.00	5.50	5.70
Per day with board and room	6.50	5.90	6.30	6.50
Per day without board or room	6.60	6.50	7.00	7.20
Per hour with house90	.95	1.03	1.04
Per hour without board or room99	.87	.93	.95
INDEXES 2/				
(1910-14=100)	642	585	635	658
(1957-59=100)	110	101	109	113

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

Workers on Farms, October 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	October average 1956-60 1/			October 1961 Week of 22-28			October 1962 Week of 21-27		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
New England	185	103	82	157	88	69	131	82	49
New York	188	120	68	170	110	60	159	107	52
New Jersey	55	31	24	47	27	20	43	27	16
Pennsylvania	216	173	43	194	157	37	177	145	32
Middle Atlantic	459	324	135	411	294	117	379	279	100
Ohio	290	246	44	257	217	40	243	207	36
Indiana	235	198	37	208	176	32	206	174	32
Illinois	282	229	53	264	215	49	264	208	56
Michigan	224	177	47	213	165	48	198	156	42
Wisconsin	287	252	35	251	220	31	249	216	33
East North Central	1,318	1,102	216	1,193	993	200	1,160	961	199
Minnesota	265	232	33	241	213	28	243	216	27
Iowa	307	269	38	312	274	38	298	259	39
Missouri	331	266	65	307	250	57	302	245	57
North Dakota	96	74	22	84	68	16	86	67	19
South Dakota	100	88	12	91	80	11	91	80	11
Nebraska	162	141	21	160	136	24	162	139	23
Kansas	173	155	18	163	144	19	166	144	22
West North Central	1,434	1,225	209	1,358	1,165	193	1,348	1,150	198
Delaware	13	8	5	12	8	4	12	7	5
Maryland	62	42	20	57	39	18	57	40	17
Virginia	220	166	54	213	163	50	197	153	44
West Virginia	78	67	11	73	62	11	67	57	10
North Carolina	462	386	76	425	343	82	397	322	75
South Carolina	227	169	58	211	147	64	205	153	52
Georgia	262	195	67	233	168	65	204	150	54
Florida	101	52	49	104	47	57	109	48	61
South Atlantic	1,425	1,085	340	1,328	977	351	1,248	930	318
Kentucky	324	268	56	299	248	51	279	226	53
Tennessee	413	330	83	396	307	89	343	275	68
Alabama	297	226	71	265	195	70	233	171	62
Mississippi	418	306	112	377	249	128	350	228	122
East South Central	1,452	1,130	322	1,337	999	338	1,205	900	305
Arkansas	307	180	127	295	155	140	259	133	126
Louisiana	226	128	98	201	106	95	193	98	95
Oklahoma	206	148	58	194	137	57	176	126	50
Texas	527	282	245	574	272	302	528	253	275
West South Central	1,266	738	528	1,264	670	594	1,156	610	546
Montana	54	42	12	47	38	9	48	39	9
Idaho	76	54	22	74	53	21	73	53	20
Colorado	83	56	27	86	53	33	81	53	28
N. Mex.-Ariz.	131	42	89	121	39	82	118	39	79
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	73	47	26	62	43	19	61	42	19
Mountain	417	241	176	390	226	164	381	226	155
Washington	108	74	34	93	65	28	97	69	28
Oregon	86	66	20	86	68	18	95	71	24
California	464	164	300	455	162	293	429	149	280
Pacific	658	304	354	634	295	339	621	289	332
UNITED STATES	8,614	6,252	2,362	8,072	5,707	2,365	7,629	5,427	2,202

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,
August and September 1962

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average 1961			August 1962 Week of 19-25			September 1962 Week of 23-29		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
New England	143	88	55	165	89	76	169	92	77
New York	160	105	55	188	106	82	184	117	67
New Jersey	44	27	17	54	29	25	48	30	18
Pennsylvania	185	152	33	208	167	41	193	152	41
Middle Atlantic	389	284	105	450	302	148	425	299	126
Ohio	242	206	36	246	197	49	251	197	54
Indiana	213	187	26	213	182	31	204	163	41
Illinois	246	197	49	233	180	53	257	203	54
Michigan	217	175	42	245	187	58	211	162	49
Wisconsin	273	244	29	310	270	40	281	237	44
East North Central	1,191	1,009	182	1,247	1,016	231	1,204	962	242
Minnesota	262	225	37	315	251	64	278	229	49
Iowa	289	252	37	320	260	60	310	260	50
Missouri	269	232	37	321	251	70	343	267	76
North Dakota	87	70	17	132	93	39	119	84	35
South Dakota	89	78	11	116	90	26	101	85	16
Nebraska	157	132	25	179	138	41	167	139	28
Kansas	154	130	24	184	139	45	166	141	25
West North Central	1,307	1,119	188	1,567	1,222	345	1,484	1,205	279
Delaware	12	7	5	18	9	9	15	8	7
Maryland	56	38	18	74	46	28	67	46	21
Virginia	203	149	54	234	152	82	207	151	56
West Virginia	69	56	13	76	62	14	74	65	9
North Carolina	413	309	104	629	422	207	493	398	95
South Carolina	190	124	66	228	145	83	263	189	74
Georgia	175	127	48	189	132	57	230	164	66
Florida	104	46	58	86	43	43	100	50	50
South Atlantic	1,222	856	366	1,534	1,011	523	1,449	1,071	378
Kentucky	236	190	46	284	191	93	266	204	62
Tennessee	236	188	48	236	172	64	325	242	83
Alabama	142	109	33	131	98	33	234	157	77
Mississippi	246	182	64	277	214	63	452	287	165
East South Central	860	669	191	928	675	253	1,277	890	387
Arkansas	203	118	85	228	106	122	297	146	151
Louisiana	156	92	64	173	88	85	248	137	111
Oklahoma	165	129	36	163	103	60	181	126	55
Texas	444	250	194	527	260	267	637	294	343
West South Central	968	589	379	1,091	557	534	1,363	703	660
Montana	48	37	11	61	41	20	60	45	15
Idaho	68	48	20	91	58	33	84	58	26
Colorado	68	49	19	92	64	28	86	56	30
N.Mex.-Ariz.	85	31	54	83	32	51	95	36	59
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	57	40	17	70	47	23	76	51	25
Mountain	326	205	121	397	242	155	401	246	155
Washington	111	74	37	153	89	64	113	77	36
Oregon	95	68	27	118	68	50	103	66	37
California	378	143	235	410	138	272	483	171	312
Pacific	584	285	299	681	295	386	699	314	385
UNITED STATES	6,990	5,104	1,886	8,060	5,409	2,651	8,471	5,782	2,689

Workers on farms: Average January through October 1962 ^{1/}

Region and State	(Thousands of persons)								
	January through October average 1956-60			January through October 1961			January through October 1962		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	173	105	68	149	91	58	140	86	54
New York	182	116	66	165	106	59	156	102	54
New Jersey	53	31	22	47	29	18	44	27	17
Pennsylvania	218	176	42	192	157	35	177	146	31
Middle Atlantic	453	323	130	404	292	112	377	275	102
Ohio	269	227	42	247	208	39	237	201	36
Indiana	239	209	30	217	189	28	211	184	27
Illinois	267	213	54	250	198	52	249	196	53
Michigan	239	194	45	225	180	45	214	171	43
Wisconsin	309	276	33	280	249	31	273	243	30
East North Central	1,324	1,120	204	1,219	1,024	195	1,184	995	189
Minnesota	295	250	45	275	234	41	269	224	45
Iowa	302	260	42	297	257	40	296	251	45
Missouri	298	251	47	278	237	41	274	230	44
North Dakota	105	81	24	93	74	19	93	72	21
South Dakota	101	88	13	92	80	12	91	79	12
Nebraska	164	139	25	164	136	28	159	133	26
Kansas	173	146	27	161	134	27	157	131	26
West North Central	1,438	1,215	223	1,360	1,152	208	1,339	1,120	219
Delaware	13	8	5	12	7	5	13	8	5
Maryland	63	41	22	58	39	19	58	39	19
Virginia	219	158	61	213	153	60	200	144	56
West Virginia	78	64	14	71	57	14	66	54	12
North Carolina	467	352	115	440	322	118	418	307	111
South Carolina	220	148	72	201	128	73	188	122	66
Georgia	209	154	55	183	132	51	168	121	47
Florida	106	54	52	105	47	58	102	45	57
South Atlantic	1,375	979	396	1,283	885	398	1,213	840	373
Kentucky	248	197	51	239	189	50	233	180	53
Tennessee	257	203	54	238	186	52	224	177	47
Alabama	164	129	35	143	109	34	137	103	34
Mississippi	301	236	65	258	189	69	253	188	65
East South Central	970	765	205	878	673	205	847	648	199
Arkansas	239	144	95	214	121	93	208	114	94
Louisiana	168	100	68	163	92	71	155	89	66
Oklahoma	187	148	39	174	134	40	164	128	36
Texas	467	287	180	467	259	208	460	255	205
West South Central	1,060	679	381	1,018	606	412	987	586	401
Montana	55	41	14	50	38	12	50	37	13
Idaho	71	49	22	72	50	22	71	50	21
Colorado	74	55	19	72	51	21	72	52	20
N.Mex.-Ariz.	96	35	61	82	31	51	78	31	47
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	66	45	21	61	42	19	59	41	18
Mountain	362	225	137	337	212	125	330	211	119
Washington	126	83	43	121	78	43	117	78	39
Oregon	102	69	33	99	68	31	101	68	33
California	382	149	233	382	144	238	362	139	223
Pacific	610	301	309	602	290	312	580	285	295
UNITED STATES	7,766	5,712	2,054	7,250	5,225	2,025	6,997	5,046	1,951

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

Average rates for hand harvesting 100 pounds of seed cotton, 1944-62 ^{1/}

State	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.
Missouri	2.40	2.05	2.80	3.10	3.75	2.95	3.00	3.10	3.85	3.25	3.45	3.40	3.30	3.00	3.15	3.35	3.10	3.00	3.10
Virginia	1.95	2.20	2.70	2.75	2.85	2.55	2.90	3.05	3.20	3.00	2.90	2.90	2.95	2.95	2.85	2.95	3.00	3.00	3.00
North Carolina	2.10	2.30	2.85	2.95	3.10	2.70	2.85	3.35	3.50	3.35	3.15	3.25	3.40	3.15	3.20	3.40	3.35	3.40	3.40
South Carolina	1.45	1.75	2.25	2.25	2.50	2.25	2.35	2.85	3.00	2.75	2.45	2.50	2.60	2.45	2.45	2.70	2.70	2.75	2.75
Georgia	1.50	1.70	2.30	2.35	2.45	2.20	2.45	3.00	3.05	2.90	2.65	2.75	2.80	2.65	2.65	2.85	2.95	2.80	2.80
Florida	1.75	1.75	2.30	2.30	2.45	2.20	2.45	3.30	3.15	3.05	3.05	3.25	3.15	2.90	2.95	3.05	3.20	3.10	3.00
Tennessee	1.95	1.95	2.50	2.60	2.95	2.75	2.70	2.80	3.15	2.75	2.75	2.95	2.75	2.80	2.75	3.15	2.95	2.90	2.90
Alabama	1.60	1.70	2.40	2.25	2.50	2.10	2.30	2.65	2.70	2.65	2.40	2.60	2.60	2.55	2.50	2.75	2.70	2.60	2.65
Mississippi	2.10	1.95	2.30	2.60	3.25	2.15	2.75	2.80	2.95	2.80	2.55	2.70	2.55	2.50	2.50	2.75	2.60	2.55	2.50
Arkansas	2.05	2.00	2.60	2.80	3.25	2.60	2.85	2.90	3.20	2.90	2.95	3.00	2.85	2.80	2.85	3.10	2.85	2.80	2.90
Louisiana	1.80	1.80	2.10	2.40	2.80	2.50	2.60	3.05	2.95	2.75	2.50	2.65	2.65	2.60	2.50	2.65	2.60	2.60	2.60
Oklahoma	1.95	1.90	2.60	2.60	2.65	2.35	2.65	2.90	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.80	2.55	2.50	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.70	2.80
Texas	1.95	1.95	2.50	2.75	2.65	2.65	2.45	3.00	2.90	2.65	2.55	2.55	2.35	2.35	2.45	2.45	2.40	2.35	2.50
New Mexico	2.10	1.95	2.60	2.60	2.50	2.10	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.35	2.35	2.30	2.30	2.35	2.25	2.35	2.35	2.50
Arizona	2.25	2.30	2.60	2.60	3.00	2.85	3.10	3.10	3.35	3.00	3.10	3.25	3.10	3.15	3.25	3.25	3.30	3.30	3.30
California	2.25	2.25	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.45	3.70	3.60	3.00	3.00	3.15	3.20	3.20	3.25	3.20	3.15	3.20	3.20
UNITED STATES	1.92	1.93	2.50	2.65	2.90	2.55	2.65	3.00	3.05	2.80	2.70	2.75	2.65	2.60	2.65	2.80	2.70	2.65	2.70

^{1/} Reported as of November 1. Includes boll snappin', on basis of equivalent seed cotton.

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IN THIS ISSUE

	<u>Page</u>
Comments	1 - 2
Farm employment and indexes October 21-27 1962, United States...	3
Farm wage rates and indexes October 1, 1962, United States	3
Workers on farms October 1962	4
Workers on farms: Comparative estimates, annual averages 1961, August and September 1962	5
Workers on farms: Average January through October 1962	6
Average rates for hand harvesting 100 pounds seed cotton, 1944-62	7
