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Farm Labor

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FARM WORK AHEAD OF NORMAL OVER EASTERN HALF OF NATION WORKING FORCE SMALLER BUT GENERALLY ADEQUATE

A total of 6,398,000 persons were working on the Nation's farms during the survey week of April 21-27. This was 13 percent more than a month earlier but 3 percent less than in April 1962. Family workers during the survey week totaled 4,860,000 persons, down 3 percent from a year earlier. Hired workers employed on farms totaled 1,538,000, also down 3 percent from April 1962. The Pacific Coast States had the largest decrease in workers from a year earlier, as wet fields accompanied by below normal temperatures reduced farm work. The East South Central and New England regions each had a slightly larger work force; weather and field conditions were extremely favorable. Compared with a month earlier, the East South Central States had the largest increase in farm workers; farmers in this area were extremely active, working ground and planting cotton and corn.

Farmers over most of the eastern half of the Nation made rapid progress in planting crops and doing other spring work during April. In nearly all these States farm work by the end of April was well ahead of normal. Although farmers were intensively engaged in field work, many fields in the eastern half of the country were becoming so dry by the last week of April that planting of some crops was being postponed until moisture was received. However, some relief was obtained from rains received during the last few days of the month.

In the Pacific Coast area, below normal temperatures accompanied by rainy weather reduced field work activity during late April, causing farm work to pile up.

Planting of Spring Crops Moved Ahead Rapidly

The proportion of many spring crops seeded by late April was well ahead of normal, particularly over the eastern half of the Nation. The following statements regarding the proportion of a crop seeded relate to the end of the survey week of April 21-27.

Small grain planting made rapid strides in the Central and South Atlantic regions. The oats crop was virtually all planted except in a few of the northern States. In Minnesota, nearly 65 percent of the spring wheat and 40 percent of the barley had been seeded. Hard spring wheat in North Dakota

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was over one-half seeded, durum wheat about two-fifths, and barley over one-fourth. Planting of spring small grains from South Dakota on through the Great Plains was nearing completion.

Corn and soybean seedbed preparation was well ahead of normal in the Midwest and neared the final stages of completion in the western portions of the Corn Belt. In the southern half of the country, corn planting was proceeding rapidly toward completion. In the lower Ohio Valley, it was nearing the one-third level and was well underway in the southern portion of the heavy-producing Corn Belt area. Plowing for corn and soybeans was 90 percent completed in Illinois and Iowa with planting just starting. Corn planting was getting underway in nearly all areas of Nebraska; Kansas had over one-third of the corn in the ground. North Carolina had over one-half of their corn seeded, Mississippi about three-fifths, and Georgia four-fifths. Soybean planting was gathering momentum in the southern States.

Cotton planting got off to a fast start with the proportion of the crop seeded by the end of April about average in most cotton States. Seeding in Texas reached the 45 percent level, with planting operations beginning on the Texas High Plains during this period. Oklahoma cotton farmers had about 15 percent of their crop in the ground. Planting operations moved ahead rapidly in the eastern half of the Cotton Belt. Seeding progress ranged from about one-fourth or more completed in the northern portion of the Eastern Belt to more than four-fifths in the Southeast. Progress in selected States in this area showed South Carolina and Georgia with about 80 percent of the cotton in the ground, Alabama with about one-half and Mississippi with about two-thirds. In the Southwest, planting was about 90 percent complete in Arizona and 65 percent complete in New Mexico, although little planting occurred during the last week of April because of bad weather. Some cotton was in the chopping stage in southern Alabama and Florida.

Other crops also shared significantly in the increase in farm labor requirements since March. In North Carolina, tobacco transplanting was active in the Border and Eastern Belts. The first cutting of alfalfa was being harvested in many of the southern States and ranged as far north as southern Kansas, western Kentucky, and Virginia. Sugar beets were being planted in the Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana area, and a considerable acreage was being replanted in Nebraska and Colorado. Harvesting of sugar beets and early barley was moving ahead in the Imperial Valley in California. Rice planting was active in Louisiana.

In Florida, vegetable harvesting operations were declining and the citrus harvest was nearing completion. Vegetable crops were being planted in several of the northern States. Strawberry picking was underway in Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, and Louisiana.

Farm Employment and Indexes, April 1963, with comparisons, United States

	: Annual : average : 1962	: Annual : average : 1961	: Annual : average : 1957-61 1/	: April : average : 1957-61 1/	: April : 22-28 : 1962	: April : 21-27 : 1963
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)						
Total	6,700	6,919	7,284	7,116	6,617	6,398
Family labor	4,873	5,029	5,353	5,494	5,029	4,860
Hired labor	1,827	1,890	1,931	1,622	1,588	1,538
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)						
Total	49	51	54	54	50	48
Family labor	48	49	53	53	48	46
Hired labor	54	56	57	57	56	54
(1957-59=100)						
Total	90	93	98	98	91	88
Family labor	88	91	98	97	89	86
Hired labor	93	96	98	98	96	93

1/ Employment during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

2/ Monthly indexes are revised indexes adjusted for seasonal variation.

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Farm Wage Rates and Indexes, April 1, 1963 United States

	: Annual : average : 1962	: April : average : 1957-61	: April : 1, : 1962	: April : 1, : 1963
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	\$ 0.856	\$ 0.705	\$ 0.779	\$ 0.799
Per month with house	200	175	192	199
Per month with board and room	155	139	150	154
Per week with board and room	37.00	34.00	35.75	36.50
Per week without board and room ...	47.75	43.75	47.50	47.25
Per day with house	5.60	4.90	5.50	5.60
Per day with board and room	6.70	5.70	6.20	6.30
Per day without board or room	6.90	6.10	6.70	6.80
Per hour with house92	.73	.81	.84
Per hour without board or room	1.01	.98	1.07	1.11
INDEXES 2/				
(1910-14=100)	658	609	666	683
(1957-59=100)	112	105	115	117

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

2/ Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Workers on Farms, April 1963

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	April Average			April 1962			April 1963		
	1957-61 1/			Week of 22-28			Week of 21-27		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	32	21	11	25	17	8	28	19	9
New Hampshire	14	11	3	11	8	3	10	7	3
Vermont	31	23	8	27	22	5	28	22	6
Massachusetts	41	26	15	33	24	9	33	23	10
Rhode Island	6	3	3	4	3	1	3	2	1
Connecticut	26	19	7	21	15	6	22	16	6
N. England	150	103	47	121	89	32	124	89	35
New York	158	105	53	140	95	45	133	90	43
New Jersey	41	26	15	35	23	12	36	19	17
Pennsylvania	199	167	32	169	143	26	157	133	24
M. Atlantic	398	298	100	344	261	83	326	242	84
Ohio	261	227	34	242	211	31	228	196	32
Indiana	237	211	26	226	200	26	215	191	24
Illinois	264	214	50	266	208	58	249	198	51
Michigan	221	191	30	205	172	33	206	175	31
Wisconsin	303	276	27	269	245	24	268	242	26
E. N. Central	1286	1119	167	1208	1036	172	1166	1002	164
Minnesota	289	260	29	264	239	25	275	249	26
Iowa	297	273	24	297	270	27	278	256	22
Missouri	265	238	27	259	231	28	240	216	24
North Dakota	97	81	16	89	76	13	87	74	13
South Dakota	100	91	9	90	83	7	89	82	7
Nebraska	158	135	23	160	133	27	147	127	20
Kansas	162	145	17	153	135	18	146	130	16
W. N. Central	1368	1223	145	1312	1167	145	1262	1134	128
Delaware	12	8	4	13	8	5	12	7	5
Maryland	61	42	19	58	41	17	56	42	14
Virginia	196	153	43	174	135	39	169	132	37
West Virginia	76	60	16	66	52	14	59	47	12
North Carolina	367	304	63	339	278	61	342	273	69
South Carolina	181	122	59	161	99	62	153	102	51
Georgia	202	155	47	174	127	47	141	101	40
Florida	154	60	94	152	52	100	147	52	95
S. Atlantic	1249	904	345	1137	792	345	1079	756	323
Kentucky	221	182	39	215	176	39	220	179	41
Tennessee	226	184	42	209	170	39	208	162	46
Alabama	152	117	35	132	99	33	136	98	38
Mississippi	248	186	62	230	161	69	233	162	71
E. S. Central	847	669	178	786	606	180	797	601	196
Arkansas	219	129	90	210	118	92	192	104	88
Louisiana	157	101	56	144	92	52	134	82	52
Oklahoma	159	139	20	150	130	20	141	121	20
Texas	409	290	119	375	245	130	388	248	140
W. S. Central	944	659	285	879	585	294	855	555	300
Montana	58	45	13	54	42	12	54	42	12
Idaho	70	52	18	70	53	17	65	50	15
Wyoming	21	15	6	19	14	5	20	14	6
Colorado	60	50	10	59	48	11	58	48	10
New Mexico	33	21	12	29	19	10	29	20	9
Arizona	45	11	34	40	10	30	41	10	31
Utah	33	25	8	32	24	8	26	20	6
Nevada	6	4	2	5	3	2	6	3	3
Mountain	326	223	103	308	213	95	299	207	92
Washington	119	78	41	112	74	38	111	77	34
Oregon	97	71	26	100	72	28	89	66	23
California	332	147	185	310	134	176	290	131	159
Pacific	548	296	252	522	280	242	490	274	216
United States	7116	5494	1622	6617	5029	1588	6398	4860	1538

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 1962
February and March 1963

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual Average			February 1963			March 1963		
	1962			Week of 17-23			Week of 24-30		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	31	19	12	24	18	6	26	18	8
N. H.	10	7	3	9	7	2	9	7	2
Vt.	24	19	5	23	18	5	25	19	6
Mass.	32	20	12	22	16	6	28	19	9
R. I.	4	3	1	3	2	1	3	2	1
Conn.	25	16	9	18	13	5	22	16	6
N. Eng.	126	84	42	99	74	25	113	81	32
N. Y.	153	101	52	117	87	30	122	88	34
N. J.	41	23	18	28	20	8	29	20	9
Pa.	171	141	30	143	126	17	150	131	19
M. Atl.	365	265	100	288	233	55	301	239	62
Ohio	226	192	34	188	174	14	205	181	24
Ind.	206	181	25	167	156	11	183	171	12
Ill.	241	191	50	177	148	29	206	166	40
Mich.	206	166	40	165	145	20	180	159	21
Wis.	266	238	28	235	214	21	247	224	23
E. N. Cent.	1145	968	177	932	837	95	1021	901	120
Minn.	261	221	40	198	181	17	215	196	19
Iowa	288	246	42	210	194	16	255	236	19
Mo.	266	227	39	210	194	16	225	205	20
N. Dak.	88	69	19	56	50	6	74	67	7
S. Dak.	88	77	11	69	64	5	85	79	6
Nebr.	153	130	23	117	108	9	121	108	13
Kans.	152	128	24	127	117	10	141	127	14
W. N. Cent.	1296	1098	198	987	908	79	1116	1018	98
Del.	12	7	5	7	5	2	9	6	3
Md.	56	38	18	36	27	9	48	35	13
Va.	177	127	50	131	106	25	150	115	35
W. Va.	64	53	11	44	38	6	50	41	9
N. C.	397	295	102	255	215	40	295	242	53
S. C.	178	117	61	103	75	28	127	88	39
Ga.	160	115	45	97	72	25	129	95	34
Fla.	122	44	78	143	45	98	157	52	105
S. Atl.	1166	796	370	816	583	233	965	674	291
Ky.	232	182	50	172	154	18	196	161	35
Tenn.	229	178	51	156	129	27	188	150	38
Ala.	138	103	35	88	70	18	97	78	19
Miss.	225	160	65	131	105	26	183	140	43
E. S. Cent.	824	623	201	547	458	89	664	529	135
Ark.	195	110	85	136	90	46	168	107	61
La.	144	87	57	101	70	31	122	77	45
Okla.	149	119	30	127	115	12	134	119	15
Tex.	415	243	172	286	211	75	326	240	86
W. S. Cent.	903	559	344	650	486	164	750	543	207
Mont.	48	36	12	36	30	6	44	36	8
Idaho	67	48	19	44	37	7	52	42	10
Wyo.	19	13	6	15	11	4	16	12	4
Colo.	67	48	19	46	39	7	50	42	8
N. Mex.	36	21	15	24	18	6	30	20	10
Ariz.	40	10	30	37	9	28	39	9	30
Utah	33	24	9	22	18	4	24	19	5
Nev.	5	3	2	3	2	1	4	3	1
Mount.	315	203	112	227	164	63	259	183	76
Wash.	111	74	37	75	59	16	98	69	29
Oreg.	97	67	30	73	58	15	85	66	19
Calif.	352	136	216	297	126	171	291	128	163
Pac.	560	277	283	445	243	202	474	263	211
U. S.	6700	4873	1827	4991	3986	1005	5663	4431	1232

1/ Persons employed during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

Workers on farms: Average January through April 1963 1/

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	January through April : 1957-61			January through April : 1962			January through April : 1963		
	Ave. 1957-61			1962			1963		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	29	20	9	24	17	7	25	18	7
N. H.	11	9	2	9	7	2	9	7	2
Vt.	29	22	7	25	20	5	25	19	6
Mass.	34	22	12	26	19	7	26	18	8
R. I.	5	3	2	3	2	1	3	2	1
Conn.	23	17	6	20	15	5	20	15	5
N. Eng.	131	93	38	107	80	27	108	79	29
N. Y.	146	104	42	132	95	37	122	88	34
N. J.	36	25	11	32	22	10	31	20	11
Pa.	180	153	27	153	131	22	144	125	19
M. Atl.	362	282	80	317	248	69	297	233	64
Ohio	226	202	24	205	185	20	195	174	21
Ind.	205	189	16	192	176	16	181	167	14
Ill.	219	180	39	208	168	40	201	164	37
Mich.	197	173	24	182	158	24	176	153	23
Wis.	275	252	23	250	229	21	242	221	21
E. N. Cent.	1122	996	126	1037	916	121	995	879	116
Minn.	238	217	21	220	200	20	219	201	18
Iowa	252	233	19	246	226	20	236	218	18
Mo.	236	216	20	224	204	20	217	199	18
N. Dak.	76	66	10	68	60	8	67	59	8
S. Dak.	84	77	7	77	72	5	76	70	6
Nebr.	137	123	14	132	118	14	125	113	12
Kans.	141	129	12	132	120	12	132	120	12
W. N. Cent.	1164	1061	103	1099	1000	99	1072	980	92
Del.	10	7	3	9	6	3	9	6	3
Md.	48	34	14	45	33	12	45	33	12
Va.	166	134	32	146	118	28	145	115	30
W. Va.	63	52	11	54	45	9	49	41	8
N. C.	291	250	41	264	222	42	278	230	48
S. C.	144	102	42	126	86	40	121	87	34
Ga.	157	122	35	133	99	34	115	85	30
Fla.	139	52	87	146	46	100	143	46	97
S. Atl.	1018	753	265	923	655	268	905	643	262
Ky.	197	171	26	187	160	27	189	161	28
Tenn.	190	159	31	170	140	30	175	143	32
Ala.	116	92	24	99	77	22	99	78	21
Miss.	188	148	40	165	125	40	165	125	40
E. S. Cent.	691	570	121	621	502	119	628	507	121
Ark.	170	118	52	154	100	54	150	96	54
La.	128	88	40	122	84	38	112	76	36
Okla.	143	129	14	136	122	14	130	116	14
Texas	337	247	90	319	222	97	316	224	92
W. S. Cent.	778	582	196	731	528	203	708	512	196
Mont.	46	38	8	42	35	7	42	34	8
Idaho	53	42	11	52	42	10	50	41	9
Wyo.	16	12	4	15	11	4	16	12	4
Colo.	50	42	8	48	40	8	49	41	8
N. Mex.	29	19	10	27	18	9	26	18	8
Ariz.	42	9	33	38	9	29	39	10	29
Utah	27	21	6	25	20	5	23	18	5
Nev.	4	3	1	4	3	1	3	2	1
Mount.	267	186	81	251	178	73	248	176	72
Wash.	95	71	24	88	64	24	87	64	23
Oreg.	78	62	16	81	64	17	78	61	17
Calif.	313	138	175	296	129	167	295	127	168
Pac.	486	271	215	465	257	208	460	252	208
U. S.	6019	4794	1225	5551	4364	1187	5421	4261	1160

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's 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 about 26,000 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 1963, with comparisons, United States	3
Farm Wage Rates and Indexes, April 1, 1963, United States	3
Workers on Farms, April 1963	4
Workers on farms: Comparative estimates, annual average 1962, February and March 1963	5
Average number of workers on farms January through April 1963, by regions and States, with comparisons	6
Basis for Estimates	7
