

Farm Labor

Release
June 10, 1964
3:00 P.M. (E.D.T.)

YEAR'S SPRING CROPS WELL STARTED MAY WORKING FORCE ADEQUATE

By late May the year's crop patterns on most farms were established, and much of the Nation's vast acreage of spring crops was planted and growing. The month brought a push of field work in most sections. By the survey week of May 24-30, the force working on the Nation's more than 3 million farms reached a total of 6,709,000 persons. This was a tenth larger than for the week of late April, representing about the usual seasonal gain. In comparison with the late May farm working force of other recent years, however, this number represents a noteworthy reduction. It is 5 percent below last year and 16 percent below the same month only 5 years earlier.

Farm Family Workers Dominate Force

The continuing importance of farm operators and assisting family members in getting farm work done is shown by the estimated 4,915,000 family workers active on home farms during the May survey week. This was almost three-fourths of the total number of workers--close to the usual dominance at this season. The number of family workers was 5 percent less than a year earlier and continued the series of successive record lows for the date that closely paralleled the progressive reduction in the number of farms. The increased output of farm families is an undoubted factor in the outstanding record of farm production success now counted on by the increasing millions of urban consumers.

Hired farm workers employed May 24-30 were estimated at 1,794,000 persons. This was 4 percent under the May period of last year but represented a seasonal gain of about one-fourth over the rather small hired force of a month earlier. Some important cotton-growing areas reported more extensive use of chemical weed controls with the result that fewer hoe hands were needed than last year. Conditions for weed control in the cotton areas generally have been favorable. The timing of transplanting work in tobacco sections of North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia helped maintain hired worker numbers in these areas at near last year's level. Decreases in hired worker numbers from a year earlier were shown in most regions as indicated in State and regional comparisons on page 4.

Area Reports Show May Progress on the Big Crops

In most geographic areas of the Nation the work done in May was of great value to a successful year. In the North Central Region, including the area where corn is king, corn and soybean planting started somewhat slowly but was

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Statistical Reporting Service
La 1 (6-64)

Crop Reporting Board
Washington, D. C.

mainly completed by the end of the month. Based on the expected 1964 acreage, planting of these two crops in this one region represented about 76 million acres.

In South Central States, long the "land of cotton", planting and required replanting of this crop were completed; most fields were up to good stands, and cultivation was active. Cotton chopping still required many workers despite use of machines and chemical control measures. The harvest of early winter wheat and barley started in the southwest; in the Texas low plains it reached nearly one-fifth completion by the month's end. The northward invasion of the harvesting combines had reached into Oklahoma by the end of May and was expected in parts of Kansas within a few days. Harvest of flax in South Texas was nearly completed. In western Mountain States, generally cool May weather slowed spring plantings and froze off some early sugar beets. However, these fields were replanted and much of the sugar beet crop had been thinned and blocked. Drought reduced grain prospects in eastern Colorado, but late snowfall on the western slope of the Rockies and other western ranges greatly aided irrigation water supplies in Utah and other areas where ample irrigation water means more future harvest employment.

Pacific States had unusually cool, dry, and windy weather that held back crop progress, reduced the tempo of farm work, and brought about some culling of livestock in driest sections. California rice planting was completed, barley harvest was active in the Imperial Valley and reached northward. Valencia orange harvest reached the mid-point stage in the central Valley area. A bountiful supply of apricots, cherries, peaches, and plums was starting to supermarkets with prospect of swift increase with warmer weather.

The Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States had some dry weather but generally good chances to plant crops. Planting of the Maine potato crop was well advanced with completion marked for early June. Oats planting in New York and Pennsylvania was completed. Hay harvest started early with good drying weather. New Jersey asparagus harvest passed the peak and strawberries moved in volume. Blueberries sized well for June harvest.

Work in South Atlantic States was affected considerably by dry weather. Tobacco setting was hindered in Maryland but was mostly completed in other producing areas, as 80 percent was set in North Carolina and Virginia. The Virginia-North Carolina area had one of the fastest peanut planting seasons ever reported, and planting of the crop was virtually finished in May. The harvest of early peaches increased in South Carolina and Georgia, although sharply reduced from usual volume by this year's spring frosts. Florida citrus harvest decreased, following the usual season pattern, to about 1.6 million boxes during the week ending May 30. Shipments also declined for all major vegetables.

Farm employment and indexes, May 1964, with comparisons, United States

	: Annual : average : 1958-62 1/	: Annual : average : 1962	: Annual : average : 1963	: May : average : 1958-62 1/	: May : 19-25, : 1963	: May : 24-30, : 1964
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)						
Total	7,104	6,700	6,518	7,704	7,036	6,709
Family labor	5,197	4,873	4,738	5,661	5,167	4,915
Hired labor	1,907	1,827	1,780	2,043	1,869	1,794
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)						
Total	52	49	48	53	48	46
Family labor	51	48	47	51	47	45
Hired labor	56	54	52	57	52	50
(1957-59=100)						
Total	94	90	86	96	87	83
Family labor	94	88	86	94	86	82
Hired labor	97	93	91	98	90	86

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, 1964, United States

	: Annual : average : 1963	: April : average : 1958-62	: April : 1, 1963	: April 1, : 1964
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	\$ 0.880	\$ 0.732	\$ 0.799	\$ 0.827
Per month with house	206	182	199	206
Per month with board and room	159	143	154	158
Per week with board and room	37.50	34.50	36.50	38.00
Per week without board and room ...	48.50	45.00	47.25	49.25
Per day with house	5.70	5.10	5.60	5.90
Per day with board and room	6.90	5.90	6.30	6.50
Per day without board or room	7.10	6.30	6.80	7.10
Per hour with house94	.76	.84	.86
Per hour without board or room ...	1.05	1.01	1.11	1.14
INDEXES 2/				
(1910-14=100)	677	630	683	703
(1957-59=100)	116	108	117	121

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

2/ Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Workers on Farms, May 1964

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	May Average 1958-62 1/2			May 1963 Week of 19-25			May 1964 Week of 24-30		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
	Maine	37	22	15	33	20	13	34	22
N. H.	12	9	3	12	8	4	11	8	3
Vt.	30	22	8	24	18	6	24	18	6
Mass.	40	26	14	33	20	13	32	20	12
R. I.	4	3	1	3	2	1	2	1	1
Conn.	26	17	9	24	15	9	23	14	9
N. Eng.	149	99	50	129	83	46	126	83	43
N. Y.	161	105	56	140	92	48	127	84	43
N. J.	49	25	24	46	21	25	44	20	24
Penn.	198	162	36	165	136	29	161	135	26
M. Atl.	408	292	116	351	249	102	332	239	93
Ohio	263	223	40	232	198	34	221	192	29
Ind.	256	225	31	228	203	25	215	191	24
Ill.	285	228	57	282	221	61	266	216	50
Mich.	250	210	40	232	196	36	223	186	37
Wis.	306	279	27	273	247	26	266	241	25
E. N. Cent.	1360	1165	195	1247	1065	182	1191	1026	165
Minn.	305	265	40	286	253	33	281	245	36
Iowa	324	288	36	313	278	35	299	268	31
Mo.	279	240	39	259	223	36	261	225	36
N. Dak.	102	81	21	91	74	17	91	74	17
S. Dak.	96	87	9	91	83	8	89	81	8
Nebr.	177	149	28	158	132	26	147	125	22
Kans.	172	145	27	156	133	23	155	130	25
W. N. Cent.	1455	1255	200	1354	1176	178	1323	1148	175
Del.	14	8	6	15	8	7	12	7	5
Md.	65	41	24	60	39	21	56	37	19
Va.	220	168	52	178	137	41	177	133	44
W. Va.	82	63	19	63	51	12	63	48	15
N. C.	428	340	88	393	305	88	388	291	97
S. C.	207	136	71	180	116	64	149	98	51
Ga.	198	141	57	180	123	57	157	106	51
Fla.	135	53	82	118	43	75	124	40	84
S. Atl.	1349	950	399	1187	822	365	1126	760	366
Ky.	227	181	46	229	180	49	241	183	58
Tenn.	249	192	57	234	176	58	230	171	59
Ala.	191	140	51	173	131	42	167	127	40
Miss.	305	209	96	275	177	98	258	174	84
E. S. Cent.	972	722	250	911	664	247	896	655	241
Ark.	244	131	113	230	116	114	203	105	98
La.	149	88	61	147	84	63	137	78	58
Okla.	169	138	31	164	132	32	138	115	23
Texas	468	278	190	415	270	145	371	225	146
W. S. Cent.	1000	635	365	956	602	354	849	523	326
Mont.	54	39	15	51	37	14	51	36	15
Idaho	72	50	22	72	49	23	69	47	22
Wyo.	24	16	8	22	15	7	22	14	8
Colo.	68	52	16	64	51	13	60	49	11
N. Mex.	40	23	17	28	19	9	33	18	15
Ariz.	46	9	37	41	8	33	42	8	34
Utah	38	26	12	37	24	13	37	23	14
Nev.	6	4	2	7	4	3	6	4	2
Mount.	348	219	129	322	207	115	320	199	121
Wash.	140	91	49	130	89	41	114	78	36
Oreg.	112	79	33	103	68	35	100	70	30
Calif.	381	154	227	346	142	204	332	134	198
Pac.	633	324	309	579	299	280	546	282	264
U. S.	7704	5661	2043	7036	5167	1869	6709	4915	1794

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 averages 1963
March and April 1964

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual Average			March 1964			April 1964		
	1963			Week of 22-28			Week of 19-25		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	32	20	12	25	19	6	28	20	8
N. H.	10	7	3	9	7	2	9	7	2
Vt.	24	18	6	21	17	4	24	18	6
Mass.	30	18	12	24	16	8	28	19	9
R. I.	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
Conn.	22	14	8	18	13	5	19	13	6
N. Eng.	121	79	42	99	73	26	110	78	32
N. Y.	143	96	47	112	80	32	121	85	36
N. J.	39	21	18	28	19	9	35	19	16
Pa.	162	134	28	145	126	19	147	125	22
M. Atl.	344	251	93	285	225	60	303	229	74
Ohio	217	183	34	200	178	22	220	195	25
Ind.	199	173	26	179	167	12	196	177	19
Ill.	235	187	48	190	158	32	224	184	40
Mich.	206	165	41	176	154	22	198	169	29
Wis.	258	230	28	237	218	19	254	232	22
E. N. Cent.	1115	938	177	982	875	107	1092	957	135
Minn.	256	220	36	203	187	16	268	244	24
Iowa	283	243	40	236	222	14	268	246	22
Mo.	256	220	36	207	191	16	249	225	24
N. Dak.	83	67	16	66	60	6	83	73	10
S. Dak.	87	76	11	77	73	4	87	80	7
Nebr.	144	122	22	117	108	9	140	120	20
Kans.	149	126	23	136	125	11	140	127	13
W. N. Cent.	1258	1074	184	1042	966	76	1235	1115	120
Del.	12	7	5	7	5	2	10	6	4
Md.	54	37	17	43	33	10	48	35	13
Va.	170	119	51	146	120	26	162	128	34
W. Va.	57	47	10	50	42	8	57	45	12
N. C.	407	291	116	252	215	37	296	244	52
S. C.	162	108	54	109	78	31	148	97	51
Ga.	170	124	46	124	93	31	153	110	43
Fla.	121	44	77	146	49	97	139	49	90
S. Atl.	1153	777	376	877	635	242	1013	714	299
Ky.	238	185	53	193	158	35	218	176	42
Tenn.	235	178	57	181	149	32	196	161	35
Ala.	136	103	33	96	80	16	123	96	27
Miss.	211	146	65	172	132	40	211	145	66
E. S. Cent.	820	612	208	642	519	123	748	578	170
Ark.	190	106	84	142	93	49	170	101	69
La.	141	82	59	110	72	38	128	76	52
Okla.	144	118	26	129	117	12	141	123	18
Texas	389	241	148	311	227	84	359	246	113
W. S. Cent.	864	547	317	692	509	183	798	546	252
Mont.	48	36	12	41	35	6	53	41	12
Idaho	67	47	20	49	41	8	64	49	15
Wyo.	19	13	6	16	12	4	20	13	7
Colo.	62	45	17	46	39	7	55	46	9
N. Mex.	34	20	14	28	19	9	27	18	9
Ariz.	39	9	30	37	9	28	42	9	33
Utah	31	22	9	21	17	4	27	21	6
Nev.	5	3	2	4	3	1	4	3	1
Mount.	505	195	110	242	175	67	292	200	92
Wash.	111	72	39	90	67	23	112	74	38
Oreg.	93	64	29	81	64	17	97	68	29
Calif.	334	129	205	272	119	153	298	121	177
Pac.	538	265	273	443	250	193	507	263	244
U. S.	6518	4738	1780	5304	4227	1077	6098	4680	1418

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 May 1964 1/
(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	January through May Ave. 1958-62			January through May 1963			January through May 1964		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	30	20	10	27	19	8	26	19	7
N.H.	11	9	2	10	7	3	11	9	2
Vt.	28	21	7	23	18	5	20	15	5
Mass.	33	22	11	27	18	9	25	17	8
R. I.	4	3	1	3	2	1	2	1	1
Conn.	22	16	6	20	14	6	19	13	6
N. Eng.	128	91	37	110	78	32	103	74	29
N. Y.	145	101	44	126	89	37	114	82	32
N. J.	37	24	13	33	20	13	31	18	13
Pa.	177	150	27	148	127	21	142	122	20
M. Atl.	359	275	84	307	236	71	287	222	65
Ohio	227	201	26	203	179	24	193	173	20
Ind.	211	192	19	190	174	16	180	166	14
Ill.	228	186	42	217	175	42	202	168	34
Mich.	205	177	28	188	162	26	183	157	26
Wis.	275	252	23	248	226	22	239	219	20
E. N. Cent.	1146	1008	138	1046	916	130	997	883	114
Minn.	246	222	24	232	211	21	227	207	20
Iowa	265	242	23	250	229	21	240	221	19
Mo.	241	217	24	226	204	22	221	201	20
N. Dak.	79	67	12	72	62	10	68	60	8
S. Dak.	85	78	7	79	73	6	76	70	6
Nebr.	145	128	17	132	117	15	126	112	14
Kans.	146	131	15	136	122	14	132	119	13
W. N. Cent.	1207	1085	122	1127	1018	109	1090	990	100
Del.	11	7	4	10	6	4	8	5	3
Md.	50	35	15	47	34	13	43	32	11
Va.	170	135	35	152	119	33	147	117	30
W. Va.	64	52	12	52	43	9	50	41	9
N. C.	309	259	50	301	245	56	277	229	48
S. C.	152	105	47	132	92	40	118	83	35
Ga.	159	119	40	140	105	35	124	90	34
Fla.	143	51	92	138	45	93	137	44	93
S. Atl.	1058	763	295	972	689	283	904	641	263
Ky.	200	170	30	196	164	32	201	166	35
Tenn.	197	161	36	187	150	37	183	150	33
Ala.	126	98	28	115	88	27	110	88	22
Miss.	205	153	52	187	136	51	175	129	46
E. S. Cent.	728	582	146	685	538	147	669	533	136
Ark.	181	116	65	166	100	66	151	97	54
La.	131	87	44	119	78	41	111	71	40
Okla.	146	128	18	136	119	17	131	117	14
Texas	357	245	112	336	233	103	315	221	94
W. S. Cent.	815	576	239	757	530	227	708	506	202
Mont.	46	37	9	44	35	9	43	34	9
Idaho	56	43	13	54	42	12	53	42	11
Wyo.	18	13	5	17	12	5	17	12	5
Colo.	53	43	10	52	43	9	47	40	7
N. Mex.	31	20	11	27	19	8	28	18	10
Ariz.	44	10	34	38	9	29	38	8	30
Utah	29	22	7	26	20	6	24	18	6
Nev.	4	3	1	5	3	2	4	3	1
Mount.	281	191	90	263	183	80	254	175	79
Wash.	104	74	30	96	69	27	92	66	26
Oreg.	85	66	19	82	62	20	82	62	20
Calif.	324	140	184	304	129	175	286	122	164
Pac.	513	280	233	482	260	222	460	250	210
U. S.	6235	4851	1384	5749	4448	1301	5472	4274	1198

1/ Average number during survey week of each month.

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