

Farm Labor

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Cool August Slows Harvest Progress August Hired Worker Numbers Sharply Lower

Cool weather during August had important effects on farm work in many parts of the Nation and slowed maturity and harvest progress on important late crops. The total number of persons working on farms during the survey week of August 23-29 at 7,159,000 was 7 percent less than a year earlier and a new low for an August survey week.

The hired working force was reduced most sharply by slower harvests and other factors. The total of 2,259,000 hired workers was by far the lowest of record for this time of year and 12 percent less than the comparable week last year. One of the chief causes was the slower advance of the cotton harvest in South Central and South Atlantic states. The Bureau of the Census ginnings report showed 1,011,220 bales ginned this year for the U.S. to September 1, or almost a fourth less than the 1,326,262 bales ginned to the same date last year. The Crop Reporting Board's September cotton forecast was 14,945,000 bales, slightly above a month earlier, but 3 percent below 1963 production.

Despite some instances of worker shortages on vegetable and fruit crops in different sections of the country the supply of workers during the month generally was reported to be adequate, with some reported instances of under-employment.

The number of farm family members working on home farms during the August survey week totaled 4,900,000 persons, or 4 percent less than a year earlier. This includes farm operators and all other family members working 15 hours or more without receiving cash wages. The August survey week marked the approaching end of the summer vacation, with many teenagers and older youth helping on home farms getting set to go back to school. For some this meant crowding in a vacation trip. For others it brought a little more paternal push to get some farm job finished before school started. Machines have altered the role of "other family" workers on many farms, sometimes lessening the dependence of the operator upon other family members but in turn making the time contributed more valuable for each family member who can drive a tractor, tend a milking machine, operate a barn cleaner or the many other pieces of equipment that cut the routine demands of farm chores.

Hand Pickers Get Started On Cotton

Although machines now pick the major part of the total cotton crop, hand pickers still have an important place in the opening stages of the harvest in

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Crop Reporting Board
Washington, D. C.

many sections. Starts were made in most States producing the 14-million acre, 15-million-bale crop of 1964. The leading producing State, Texas, had one-fifth of its cotton picked by the end of the month, with harvest nearly completed in the Lower Valley and Coastal Bend areas of the State. First bales were being ginned in several counties in the High Plains to the North, and a few bales had been taken from fields in southern Oklahoma. Hand picking was on the increase in Arkansas, principally on drought plantings that were opening early. In Louisiana, hand harvesting was under way in all areas except the northeast with progress ranging from 25 percent completed in the south to 5 percent in the central and just starting in the north. In Mississippi, less than 10 percent of the crop was open, but hand picking was starting in some early fields. Alabama enjoyed some warm days that speeded cotton opening and increased picking in the southeastern part of the State. Georgia picking moved slowly and mostly by hand after heavy rains trailing hurricane Cleo. Many farmers were defoliating cotton to prepare for machine picking and reduce boll rot. In South Carolina picking of some early cotton extended to northern counties. In the far southwestern cotton-producing area of New Mexico, Arizona, and California crops made good progress but picking was started only on a very limited extent in a few earliest fields in desert valleys.

Tobacco Auctioneers Chant Preceded by Hard Field Work

Before the famed chant of the auctioneer can ring through the crowded sale barns a lot of hard and careful work is required back on growers' farms. During the August survey week the harvest of flue-cured tobacco in Virginia made the best progress of the season and moved ahead to more than 40 percent complete. Cutting of fire-cured and sun-cured types was active and burley harvest was under way. Maryland tobacco harvest was 70 percent complete. Harvest of the North Carolina flue-cured crop continued reaching 70 percent completion. In Kentucky, cutting of burley was active and reached over 40 percent completion despite some slow-down from rainy weather. Large numbers of hired workers were employed in the Connecticut Valley shade tobacco crop, and in the Lancaster, Pennsylvania area cutting of tobacco was active.

Work Advances on Large Fruit Crops

During August workers made substantial progress in harvesting fruit crops that are above-average size in many sections. Picking of earliest varieties of New York apples was completed by the end of the month. Peach harvest was active in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Spot picking of Red Delicious apples started in Virginia and West Virginia. Harvest of Michigan Elberta peaches was nearing volume level, following the ending of the earlier varieties. The Colorado peach harvest has been limited to early varieties while the main Elberta harvest was expected to start soon. Picking of Bartlett pears and early summer apples continues in Washington and in Oregon's Rogue River and Hood River Valleys. California's large orchard and vineyard acreages were providing an increasing volume of commodities ranging from figs to lemons. Bartlett pear harvest continued in late districts; harvest of freestone peaches and prunes continued heavy and harvest of table and raisin grape varieties increased.

The month brought some newsworthy crises affecting considerable areas. Dry weather dominated some of the eastern and central areas. Hurricane Cleo was bad news for parts of Florida, blowing off many grapefruit as part of large property damage. For Nevada, August brought the worst range fire in many years, burning about 400,000 acres, about 6 percent of the entire land area of the State.

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

	: Annual : average : 1958-62 1/	: Annual: : average : 1962	: Annual: : average : 1963	: August : average : 1958-62 1/	: Aug. : 18-21, : 1963	: Aug. : 23-29, : 1964
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)						
Total	7,104	6,700	6,518	8,465	7,684	7,159
Family labor	5,197	4,873	4,738	5,722	5,113	4,900
Hired labor	1,907	1,827	1,780	2,743	2,571	2,259
INDEXES 2/						
(1910-14=100)						
Total	52	49	48	53	48	45
Family labor	51	48	47	51	46	44
Hired labor	56	54	52	56	53	46
(1957-59=100)						
Total	94	90	86	95	87	80
Family labor	94	88	86	94	84	81
Hired labor	97	93	91	97	91	80

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, 1964, United States

	: Annual : average : 1963	: July : average : 1958-62	: July 1, : 1963	: July 1, : 1964
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	\$ 0.880	\$ 0.802	\$ 0.872	\$ 0.897
Per month with house	206	198	215	222
Per month with board and room	159	147	159	163
Per week with board and room	37.50	36.50	39.00	40.25
Per week without board and room	48.50	47.00	51.00	52.75
Per day with house	5.70	5.20	5.70	5.80
Per with board and room	6.90	6.80	7.40	7.60
Per day without board or room	7.10	6.40	7.00	7.20
Per hour with house94	.92	.98	1.02
Per hour without board or room	1.05	1.01	1.09	1.13
INDEXES 2/				
(1910-14=100)	677	625	681	701
(1957-59=100)	116	107	117	121

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

2/ Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Workers on Farms, August 1964 1/

(Thousands of persons)

State and Region	August Average			August 1963			August 1964		
	1958-62			Week of 18-21			Week of 23-29		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	40	22	18	39	22	17	37	22	15
N. H.	15	10	5	12	8	4	11	7	4
Vt.	29	21	8	24	18	6	26	21	5
Mass.	45	25	20	40	20	20	37	19	18
R. I.	7	5	2	3	2	1	3	2	1
Conn.	34	20	14	31	16	15	33	17	16
N. Eng.	170	103	67	149	86	63	147	88	59
N. Y.	215	117	98	171	104	67	156	98	58
N. J.	64	29	35	57	24	33	50	20	30
Pa.	242	188	54	196	154	42	183	149	34
M. Atl.	521	334	187	424	282	142	389	267	122
Ohio	258	200	58	235	180	55	213	171	42
Ind.	232	194	38	199	167	32	185	160	25
Ill.	257	199	58	231	183	48	230	185	45
Mich.	274	200	74	261	185	76	218	164	54
Wisc.	334	290	44	291	248	43	271	239	32
E. N. Cent.	1355	1083	272	1217	963	254	1117	919	198
Minn.	324	260	64	304	241	63	285	237	48
Iowa	330	269	61	329	263	66	299	248	51
Mo.	342	266	76	294	239	55	288	243	45
N. Dak.	136	95	41	121	86	35	114	83	31
S. Dak.	117	93	24	105	84	21	95	80	15
Nebr.	177	142	35	163	129	34	155	128	27
Kans.	195	147	48	163	127	36	166	131	35
W. N. Cent.	1621	1272	349	1479	1169	310	1402	1150	252
Del.	17	9	8	15	8	7	14	8	6
Md.	76	46	30	67	43	24	66	42	24
Va.	231	146	85	188	114	74	198	126	72
W. Va.	84	69	15	65	54	11	61	52	9
N. C.	659	447	212	666	416	250	620	362	258
S. C.	256	165	91	222	135	87	187	128	59
Ga.	207	148	59	254	190	64	192	134	58
Fla.	98	46	52	93	40	53	83	38	45
S. Atl.	1628	1076	552	1570	1000	570	1421	890	531
Ky.	282	204	78	285	190	95	276	190	86
Tenn.	263	186	77	248	168	80	232	176	56
Ala.	143	109	34	119	88	31	104	83	21
Miss.	275	206	69	211	150	61	211	155	56
E. S. Cent.	963	705	258	863	596	267	823	604	219
Ark.	247	119	128	222	98	124	184	90	94
La.	180	94	86	179	83	96	171	81	90
Okla.	169	115	54	149	106	43	116	92	24
Texas	510	275	235	449	242	207	426	236	190
W. S. Cent.	1106	603	503	999	529	470	897	499	398
Mont.	59	40	19	57	38	19	56	39	17
Idaho	92	58	34	87	54	33	90	55	35
Wyo.	23	16	7	23	15	8	23	14	9
Colo.	88	60	28	74	49	25	72	53	19
N. Mex.	41	23	18	37	21	16	33	17	16
Ariz.	42	11	31	33	9	24	32	8	24
Utah	42	28	14	38	26	12	40	26	14
Nev.	7	4	3	6	4	2	7	3	4
Mount.	394	240	154	355	216	139	353	215	138
Wash.	151	87	64	140	79	61	134	77	57
Oreg.	121	66	55	133	63	70	126	66	60
Calif.	435	153	282	355	130	225	350	125	225
Pac.	707	306	401	628	272	356	610	268	342
U. S.	8465	5722	2743	7684	5113	2571	7159	4900	2259

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
June and July 1964 1/
(Thousands of persons)

State and Region	Annual Average			June 1964			July 1964		
	1963			Week of 21-27			Week of 19-25		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	32	20	12	36	22	14	36	22	14
N. H.	10	7	3	12	8	4	12	8	4
Vt.	24	18	6	25	19	6	25	19	6
Mass.	30	18	12	34	20	14	39	19	20
R. I.	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1
Conn.	22	14	8	27	15	12	35	16	19
N. Eng.	121	79	42	137	86	51	150	86	64
N. Y.	143	96	47	162	98	64	162	101	61
N. J.	39	21	18	50	21	29	59	24	35
Pa.	162	134	28	187	152	35	190	154	36
M. Atl.	344	251	93	399	271	128	411	279	132
Ohio	217	183	34	241	194	47	237	191	46
Ind.	199	173	26	236	202	34	217	182	35
Ill.	235	187	48	277	210	67	261	194	67
Mich.	206	165	41	247	183	64	266	186	80
Wis.	258	230	28	278	243	35	273	241	32
E. N. Cent.	1115	938	177	1279	1032	247	1254	994	260
Minn.	256	220	36	323	251	72	366	279	87
Iowa	283	243	40	335	268	67	364	275	89
Mo.	256	220	36	295	242	53	301	241	60
N. Dak.	83	67	16	88	70	18	122	83	39
S. Dak.	87	76	11	97	82	15	104	83	21
Nebr.	144	122	22	169	133	36	185	142	43
Kans.	149	126	23	194	139	55	191	137	54
W. N. Cent.	1258	1074	184	1501	1185	316	1633	1240	393
Del.	12	7	5	14	8	6	15	8	7
Md.	54	37	17	61	40	21	66	42	24
Va.	170	119	51	193	114	79	186	109	77
W. Va.	57	47	10	68	50	18	59	49	10
N. C.	407	291	116	479	298	181	608	335	273
S. C.	162	108	54	185	118	67	230	134	96
Ga.	170	124	46	177	117	60	167	110	57
Fla.	121	44	77	96	40	56	92	37	55
S. Atl.	1153	777	376	1273	785	488	1423	824	599
Ky.	238	185	53	272	187	85	243	174	69
Tenn.	235	178	57	267	181	86	223	154	69
Ala.	136	103	33	126	97	29	102	85	17
Miss.	211	146	65	239	165	74	192	132	60
E. S. Cent.	820	612	208	904	630	274	760	545	215
Ark.	190	106	84	207	103	104	195	87	108
La.	141	82	59	138	75	63	130	68	62
Okla.	144	118	26	161	128	33	131	104	27
Texas	389	241	148	458	260	198	415	240	175
W. S. Cent.	864	547	317	964	566	398	871	499	372
Mont.	48	36	12	53	35	18	63	38	25
Idaho	67	47	20	90	54	36	96	56	40
Wyo.	19	13	6	22	13	9	24	13	11
Colo.	62	45	17	73	49	24	73	49	24
N. Mex.	34	20	14	34	19	15	35	20	15
Ariz.	39	9	30	41	8	33	33	8	25
Utah	31	22	9	40	24	16	40	25	15
Nev.	5	3	2	7	4	3	8	5	3
Mount.	305	195	110	360	206	154	372	214	158
Wash.	111	72	39	166	95	71	167	94	73
Oreg.	93	64	29	133	77	56	135	71	64
Calif.	334	129	205	335	126	209	340	123	217
Pac.	538	265	273	634	298	336	642	288	354
U. S.	6519	4738	1780	7451	5059	2392	7516	4969	2547

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 August 1964 1/

(Thousands of persons)

State and Region	: January through August : Ave. 1958-62			: January through August : 1963			: January through August : 1964		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	35	22	13	30	20	10	31	21	10
N. H.	12	9	3	11	8	3	11	8	3
Vt.	29	22	7	24	18	6	22	17	5
Mass.	39	24	15	30	18	12	30	18	12
R. I.	4	3	1	3	2	1	2	1	1
Conn.	26	17	9	25	15	10	23	14	9
N. Eng.	145	97	48	123	81	42	119	79	40
N. Y.	166	107	59	143	95	48	131	88	43
N. J.	46	26	20	43	22	21	40	20	20
Pa.	198	162	36	166	137	29	158	133	25
M. Atl.	410	295	115	352	254	98	329	241	88
Ohio	242	205	37	219	184	35	207	178	29
Ind.	225	199	26	203	179	24	192	172	20
Ill.	250	198	52	238	186	52	223	179	44
Mich.	230	186	44	215	171	44	205	164	41
Wisc.	294	265	29	265	236	29	252	227	25
E. N. Cent.	1241	1053	188	1140	956	184	1079	920	159
Minn.	87	242	45	271	228	43	264	225	39
Iowa	298	255	43	289	245	44	274	236	38
Mo.	270	232	38	251	216	35	248	216	32
N. Dak.	96	75	21	88	70	18	83	67	16
S. Dak.	94	82	12	88	77	11	84	74	10
Nebr.	161	135	26	148	124	24	143	121	22
Kans.	166	137	29	154	127	27	152	126	26
W. N. Cent.	1372	1158	214	1289	1087	202	1248	1065	183
Del.	13	8	5	12	7	5	10	6	4
Md.	58	38	20	55	37	18	51	35	16
Va.	194	136	58	172	118	54	164	117	47
W. Va.	72	58	14	58	47	11	54	44	10
N. C.	431	311	120	419	289	130	386	267	119
S. C.	195	123	72	166	107	59	150	100	50
Ga.	173	126	47	160	116	44	145	102	43
Fla.	126	48	78	120	43	77	119	42	77
S. Atl.	1262	848	414	1162	764	398	1079	713	366
Ky.	228	179	49	223	170	53	224	172	52
Tenn.	221	170	51	211	158	53	205	158	47
Ala.	129	100	29	116	89	27	110	88	22
Miss.	219	167	52	197	141	56	190	137	53
E. S. Cent.	797	616	181	747	558	189	729	555	174
Ark.	201	117	84	187	102	85	168	96	72
La.	142	87	55	133	78	55	125	73	52
Okla.	157	127	30	143	118	25	132	113	19
Texas	410	258	152	388	249	139	359	230	129
W. S. Cent.	910	589	321	851	547	304	784	512	272
Mont.	52	38	14	49	36	13	49	36	13
Idaho	70	48	22	68	47	21	67	47	20
Wyo.	21	14	7	20	13	7	19	12	7
Colo.	67	49	18	61	45	16	57	44	13
N. Mex.	36	21	15	32	20	12	30	18	12
Ariz.	42	10	32	37	9	28	37	8	29
Utah	34	24	10	32	22	10	31	21	10
Nev.	5	3	2	5	3	2	5	3	2
Mount.	327	207	120	304	195	109	295	189	106
Wash.	128	82	46	119	76	43	116	75	41
Oreg.	103	68	35	103	66	37	101	66	35
Calif.	355	141	214	324	129	195	306	122	184
Pac.	586	291	295	546	271	275	523	263	260
U. S.	7050	5154	1896	6514	4713	1801	6185	4537	1648

1/ Average number during survey week of each month.

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