

Farm Labor

Release
February 10, 1965
3:00 P.M. (E.S.T.)

Winter Number of Farm Workers at Record Low

The required work on the Nation's farms was being done by 4,043,000 persons during the survey week of January 24-30. This number represented a further reduction from the relatively small total for the December 1964 survey week - a Christmas holiday period. The January week total is 10 percent smaller than last year's comparable January force and the smallest total for a survey week in any month of record. The comparable period 10 years earlier had 5,944,000 persons working on farms--nearly a half more. This year's force, however, was capably maintaining livestock and poultry production in the winter-bound northern and central sections while starting some field work in the South.

The 3,322,000 farm operators and other family members doing farm work represented the usual large part of the total but was 10 percent less than the January 1964 total. Farm operators were doing most of the work on many farms during this wintry week. The total of family workers, as usual, excludes family members who did some work but less than 15 hours during the specified survey week.

The 721,000 persons working for pay at farm work during the survey week was a new low for any month. Aside from demands in the States producing citrus and winter vegetables, hired farm employment was extremely low even for January. The two States California and Florida were employing about a third of the national total. The large demand for hired workers in Florida to speed harvest and utilization of the orange crop combined with other State demands to push Florida employment to a new record level, even with some requirements unsatisfied.

New Data Started on Farm Work Hours

This issue begins a new series on average hours of farm work during specified survey weeks. Data on page 6 show State averages of hours worked by farm operators, by other family members and by hired workers on reporting farms during the week of January 24-30, 1965.

The averages for farm operators include farms on which the operator did no work or only a small number of hours during the week. Averages for hired workers also include some workers who worked only short periods. In contrast, the averages for family workers other than the operator represent only those members of farm operators' households who worked 15 hours or more during the week, without receiving cash wages.

All data presented represent the hours worked on reporting farms, not averages for all workers in the respective States. It is believed that this new series will be

of value as a supplement to estimated number of workers and other data indicating trends in labor use in different time periods. For this first report in the January survey week the reporting farms averaged 36.8 hours per week for farm operators, 28.8 hours for other family workers and 33.7 hours for hired workers.

Winter Weather Shapes Farm Work

Farmers, always close to weather influence, had some extremes to contend with during January 1965. In the Pacific Northwest the continued excess of moisture caused added damage and discouraging work. All major rivers in both western and eastern Washington were above flood stage at the end of the month and lowland farm lands along the streams were under water. Similar problems plagued some Oregon farmers, especially along coastal streams and major streams in the Willamette Valley. Mint plantings located near rivers suffered severe erosion losses, some pastures were covered with debris and silt, and rebuilding fences for pastures and other fields will be a big job. It is believed that some heavy freeze damage to fruit buds occurred in some Washington and Oregon fruit orchards that may influence 1965 crops and possibly reduce labor use. Field work in northern California moved slowly under wet conditions but in the San Joaquin Valley cotton harvest was nearly completed. Pruning and spraying of fruit orchards continued and sugar beets were being planted in central and coastal valleys. About half of the Central Valley navel oranges had been picked. Harvest of lemons was increasing in southern California.

Much of the Mountain State region had a relatively mild January that aided livestock operations and saved stored feed. Early calving was under way in southern Idaho and in Colorado. Shed lambing and sheep shearing began in some Wyoming farm flocks in late January. Much of the Mountain region has received above normal rain or snow. Many reservoirs are filled and a large snow-pack to date is being watched with some anticipation of possible spring flooding if a rapid melt should occur. In contrast, the continued drought in eastern Colorado was only slightly eased in January. Livestock in some sections of the mountain region continued on full winter feed.

South Atlantic States had extended periods of open weather in January that aided progress in land preparation. Most tobacco growers in this area had tobacco beds prepared and planted. In Georgia and South Carolina, plowing, discing, and liming of land was well up to schedule. Peach growers in these States noted some cooler days at the month's end with relief, wanting more chilling days of dormancy for their trees, essential for a good crop.

Farmers in North Central States mainly were held to a mid-winter minimum of chores and livestock care with cold weather requiring heavy feeding in most sections. Some grazing of wheat fields was possible, however, in southern Kansas.

In mid-Atlantic States and in New England the wintry weather restricted farm work but brought much needed moisture, both snow and rain, to soak soils and replenish water supplies.

Farm employment and indexes, January 1965, with comparisons, United States

	Annual average 1959-63 ^{1/}	Annual average 1963	Annual average 1964	January average 1959-63 ^{1/}	January 19-25, 1964	January 24-30, 1965
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands)						
Total	6,907	6,518	6,110	4,924	4,495	4,043
Family labor	5,040	4,738	4,506	4,010	3,685	3,322
Hired labor	1,867	1,780	1,604	914	810	721
INDEXES ^{2/}						
(1910-14=100)						
Total	51	48	45	51	47	42
Family labor	50	47	44	50	46	41
Hired labor	55	52	47	55	49	43
(1957-59=100)						
Total	91	86	81	93	85	76
Family labor	91	86	82	92	85	76
Hired labor	95	91	82	95	85	75

^{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, January 1, 1965, United States

	Annual average 1964	January average 1959-63	January 1, 1964	January 1, 1965
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour ^{1/}	\$ 0.904	\$ 0.910	\$ 0.962	\$ 1.01
Per month with house	212	196	209	221
Per month with board and room ...	162	155	163	172
Per week with board and room	38.50	35.00	37.25	38.00
Per week without board and room..	49.50	46.75	48.00	50.00
Per day with house	5.90	5.50	6.00	6.10
Per day with board and room	7.10	6.30	6.80	7.10
Per day without board or room ...	7.30	6.60	7.00	7.30
Per hour with house97	.83	.88	.97
Per hour without board or room ..	1.08	1.08	1.14	1.19
INDEXES ^{2/}				
(1910-14=100)	695	638	673	708
(1957-59=100)	120	110	116	122

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

^{2/} Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Workers on Farms, January 1965
(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	January Average 1959-63 1/			January 1964 Week of 19-25			January 1965 Week of 24-30		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	25	19	6	21	16	5	20	16	4
N. H.	9	7	2	8	6	2	8	6	2
Vt.	24	19	5	20	16	4	21	17	4
Mass.	24	17	7	20	15	5	20	15	5
R. I.	3	2	1	2	1	1	3	2	1
Conn.	18	13	5	14	11	3	15	11	4
N. Eng.	103	77	26	85	65	20	87	67	20
N. Y.	125	94	31	106	82	24	95	74	21
N. J.	30	21	9	25	17	8	23	15	8
Pa.	144	124	20	119	104	15	111	96	15
M. Atl.	299	239	60	250	203	47	229	185	44
Ohio	172	158	14	151	140	11	147	137	10
Ind.	167	158	9	154	147	7	134	127	7
Ill.	177	148	29	164	139	25	142	123	19
Mich.	167	143	24	152	131	21	132	115	17
Wis.	238	222	16	214	199	15	204	191	13
E. N. Cent.	921	829	92	835	756	79	759	693	66
Minn.	196	183	13	193	182	11	171	161	10
Iowa	211	196	15	192	178	14	178	168	10
Mo.	205	191	14	198	185	13	181	170	11
N. Dak.	57	50	7	48	44	4	44	39	5
S. Dak.	67	62	5	62	58	4	54	51	3
Nebr.	120	112	8	114	105	9	97	92	5
Kans.	121	113	8	111	105	6	102	95	7
W. N. Cent.	977	907	70	918	857	61	827	776	51
Del.	8	6	2	7	5	2	5	4	1
Md.	38	28	10	35	27	8	30	23	7
Va.	132	108	24	123	102	21	102	86	16
W. Va.	50	43	7	38	33	5	35	30	5
N. C.	232	204	28	213	189	24	201	175	26
S. C.	111	86	25	90	71	19	68	55	13
Ga.	106	86	20	84	62	22	93	75	18
Fla.	133	41	92	134	40	94	150	42	108
S. Atl.	810	602	208	724	529	195	684	490	194
Ky.	171	155	16	178	158	20	148	133	15
Tenn.	158	138	20	151	135	16	139	125	14
Ala.	85	69	16	78	66	12	78	65	13
Miss.	127	106	21	110	93	17	101	82	19
E. S. Cent.	541	468	73	517	452	65	466	405	61
Ark.	115	94	21	117	95	22	83	70	13
La.	95	75	20	82	64	18	79	62	17
Okla.	122	113	9	114	107	7	98	91	7
Tex.	281	210	71	250	192	58	211	162	49
W. S. Cent.	613	492	121	563	458	105	471	385	86
Mont.	35	30	5	34	29	5	31	27	4
Idaho	41	35	6	38	33	5	36	32	4
Wyo.	12	10	2	12	10	2	11	9	2
Colo.	41	35	6	37	32	5	31	27	4
N. Mex.	26	17	9	25	17	8	19	14	5
Ariz.	42	10	32	37	8	29	35	7	28
Utah	22	18	4	18	15	3	17	14	3
Nev.	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1
Mount.	222	157	65	204	146	58	183	132	51
Wash.	73	60	13	67	52	15	58	47	11
Oreg.	62	53	9	60	51	9	57	47	10
Calif.	303	126	177	272	116	156	222	95	127
Pac.	438	239	199	399	219	180	337	189	148
U. S.	4924	4010	914	4495	3685	810	4043	3322	721

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 1/

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Jan.-Dec. Average 1958-62			Jan.-Dec. Average 1963			Jan.-Dec. Average 1964		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	36	21	15	32	20	12	31	20	11
N. H.	12	9	3	10	7	3	11	8	3
Vt.	28	21	7	24	18	6	22	17	5
Mass.	37	23	14	30	18	12	28	17	11
R.I.	4	3	1	3	2	1	3	2	1
Conn.	26	17	9	22	14	8	22	14	8
N. Eng.	143	94	49	121	79	42	117	78	39
N. Y.	166	108	58	143	96	47	131	89	42
N. J.	45	25	20	39	21	18	37	19	18
Pa.	193	158	35	162	134	28	153	129	24
M. Atl.	404	291	113	344	251	93	321	237	84
Ohio	240	203	37	217	183	34	203	175	28
Ind.	219	192	27	199	173	26	185	164	21
Ill.	248	199	49	235	187	48	216	176	40
Mich.	220	178	42	206	165	41	193	155	38
Wis.	287	257	30	258	230	28	245	220	25
E. N. Cent.	1214	1029	185	1115	938	177	1042	890	152
Minn.	270	231	39	256	220	36	249	216	33
Iowa	291	252	39	283	243	40	267	232	35
Mo.	277	236	41	256	220	36	248	216	32
N. Dak.	93	73	20	83	67	16	78	64	14
S. Dak.	93	81	12	87	76	11	81	72	9
Nebr.	158	134	24	144	122	22	136	117	19
Kans.	162	137	25	149	126	23	145	123	22
W. N. Cent.	1344	1144	200	1258	1074	184	1204	1040	164
Del.	12	7	5	12	7	5	10	6	4
Md.	57	38	19	54	37	17	50	35	15
Va.	190	136	54	170	119	51	162	117	45
W. Va.	72	59	13	57	47	10	53	44	9
N. C.	420	315	105	407	291	116	367	263	104
S. C.	192	127	65	162	108	54	143	98	45
Ga.	182	132	50	170	124	46	154	109	45
Fla.	124	48	76	121	44	77	119	43	76
S. Atl.	1249	862	387	1153	777	376	1058	715	343
Ky.	239	191	48	238	185	53	229	181	48
Tenn.	252	193	59	235	178	57	224	176	48
Ala.	153	117	36	136	103	33	128	100	28
Miss.	245	180	65	211	146	65	201	143	58
E. S. Cent.	889	681	208	820	612	208	782	600	182
Ark.	211	123	88	190	106	84	166	96	70
La.	155	95	60	141	82	59	133	78	55
Okla.	158	126	32	144	118	26	129	109	20
Texas	424	258	166	389	241	148	354	221	133
W. S. Cent.	948	602	346	864	547	317	782	504	278
Mont.	51	38	13	48	36	12	47	35	12
Idaho	68	48	20	67	47	20	66	47	19
Wyo.	20	14	6	19	13	6	19	12	7
Colo.	66	48	18	62	45	17	57	43	14
N. Mex.	40	22	18	34	20	14	32	19	13
Ariz.	47	10	37	39	9	30	38	8	30
Utah	35	25	10	31	22	9	30	21	9
Nev.	5	3	2	5	3	2	4	3	1
Mount.	332	208	124	305	195	110	293	188	105
Wash.	116	77	39	111	72	39	108	71	37
Oreg.	96	66	30	93	64	29	93	63	30
Calif.	369	143	226	334	129	205	310	120	190
Pac.	581	286	295	538	265	273	511	254	257
U. S.	7104	5197	1907	6518	4738	1780	6110	4506	1604

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

Farm Work: Weekly Hours Worked Per Worker

State and division	Average for reporting farms - week of January 24-30, 1965					
	Farm Operator	Other family members 1/	All Family 1/	Hired Workers	All Workers 1/	
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	
Maine	48.5	32.3	44.3	38.7	42.5	
N. H.	61.7	28.1	54.6	43.6	50.4	
Vt.	64.6	47.7	59.0	47.1	54.4	
Mass.	62.3	32.6	52.6	38.7	46.6	
R. I.	52.4	2/	52.4	58.6	55.1	
Conn.	55.8	39.0	50.8	39.8	47.2	
N. Eng.	57.3	36.4	51.4	42.1	47.7	
N. Y.	52.7	31.4	47.2	40.7	45.0	
N. J.	40.2	30.7	37.8	33.8	36.5	
Pa.	47.7	29.3	41.7	35.4	40.3	
M. Atl.	49.2	30.3	43.7	37.6	42.0	
Ohio	42.4	29.6	38.8	30.3	37.5	
Ind.	33.4	28.8	32.6	28.7	31.9	
Ill.	34.2	31.9	33.9	35.0	34.0	
Mich.	43.3	35.8	41.3	32.5	39.6	
Wis.	56.5	27.2	44.4	36.1	43.2	
E. N. Cent.	41.8	30.5	38.0	33.2	37.1	
Minn.	44.5	26.6	38.9	30.8	37.9	
Iowa	41.5	27.2	37.7	30.3	36.7	
Mo.	38.2	29.3	36.0	26.2	34.6	
N. Dak.	34.2	31.8	33.6	32.9	33.5	
S. Dak.	38.6	27.5	35.7	30.0	35.1	
Nebr.	38.3	33.9	37.3	31.9	36.7	
Kans.	36.5	31.0	35.3	34.3	35.2	
W. N. Cent.	39.7	28.9	36.8	30.5	36.0	
Del.	31.6	28.4	30.9	24.5	29.1	
Md.	37.0	29.5	35.1	38.2	36.1	
Va.	35.1	27.9	33.5	35.0	34.0	
W. Va.	31.6	25.0	30.2	25.0	29.3	
N. C.	28.0	25.5	27.4	23.2	26.0	
S. C.	34.5	24.8	32.4	26.7	29.8	
Ga.	33.3	28.4	32.3	27.3	30.1	
Fla.	39.5	24.6	36.2	29.3	32.5	
S. Atl.	32.3	26.4	31.0	28.8	29.6	
Ky.	31.8	26.5	30.8	24.1	28.6	
Tenn.	25.9	25.4	25.8	21.8	24.8	
Ala.	28.3	24.0	27.4	29.7	28.2	
Miss.	32.1	28.4	31.6	34.9	33.6	
E. S. Cent.	29.4	26.1	28.8	28.1	28.5	
Ark.	27.9	28.4	28.0	27.1	27.8	
La.	30.6	33.5	31.2	27.1	29.8	
Okla.	34.1	28.1	32.8	32.2	32.7	
Tex.	34.7	32.1	34.3	34.5	34.4	
W. S. Cent.	32.7	30.8	32.4	31.7	32.2	
Mont.	35.1	35.7	35.2	42.3	36.6	
Idaho	34.9	27.9	33.2	30.9	32.9	
Wyo.	40.5	27.4	36.7	34.5	36.1	
Colo.	33.7	26.0	31.7	37.2	32.7	
N. Mex.	38.5	25.5	34.8	37.4	35.7	
Ariz.	45.8	32.3	42.1	39.8	40.7	
Utah	34.2	30.4	33.2	29.5	32.6	
Nev.	44.2	31.8	41.2	46.6	42.8	
Mount.	36.0	29.3	34.2	38.2	34.6	
Wash.	30.7	27.6	30.1	31.5	30.5	
Oreg.	33.6	29.0	32.4	33.1	32.6	
Calif.	39.8	29.5	37.8	42.6	41.4	
Pac.	35.9	28.9	34.4	41.1	36.4	
U. S.	36.8	28.8	34.7	33.7	34.0	

1/ Includes as "other family" only those farm household members working 15 hours or more per week without receiving cash wages.
 2/ None reported.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
STATISTICAL REPORTING SERVICE
AGRICULTURAL ESTIMATES DIVISION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

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IN THIS ISSUE

	<u>Page</u>
Comments	1 - 2
Farm employment, wage rates, and indexes, United States ..	3
Workers on Farms, January 1965	4
Workers on farms: Comparative estimates, annual averages	5
Weekly hours worked per worker on reporting farms January 24-30, 1965 by States and regions	6
