

Farm Labor

Release
May 10, 1966
3:00 P.M. (.E.D.T.)

FARM EMPLOYMENT UP AS SPRING WORK GAINS MOMENTUM

The number of workers on farms during the survey week of April 17-23 was 11 percent above a month earlier but was 7 percent below the same period in 1965. Farm employment during the April 1966 survey week totaled 5,151,000 persons, of which 4,011,000 were family workers and 1,140,000 were hired workers. The number of family workers rose 10 percent above the March survey week but dropped 5 percent below April 1965. The number of hired workers increased 15 percent over March, but was down 14 percent from a year earlier. Total farm employment during April increased less than usual from March, mostly because of unfavorable weather during the April survey week, together with better than average progress in field work through March.

Work Day on Farms Increases Slightly

The summary of hours worked on reporting farms on page 6 shows a relatively small increase over the March survey week, as rainy weather and wet soil kept workers out of fields in many areas. Farm operators averaged 45.3 hours worked for the week of April 17-23 -- an increase of 3.6 hours per operator over a month earlier. Other family members averaged 30.9 hours for the week, up only 0.3 hour, while hired workers averaged 35.5 hours, 1.2 hours less than in the March survey period. The average for all workers on reporting farms during the week of April 17-23 was 39.5 hours, a gain of 1.2 hours or 3 percent from March.

Spring Work Advancing Although Rain and Cold Weather Cause Delays in Many Areas

Rain and wet soil interrupted spring planting and other farm work over the eastern two-thirds of the Nation during the survey week, and snow and freezing temperatures were recorded in the northern Plains and Mountain regions. Nevertheless, spring work equaled or exceeded normal progress in many States, reflecting favorable weather earlier in the season. Weather conditions during the week of April 17-23 this year were in sharp contrast to a year earlier, when mild spring weather prevailed over most of the Nation.

Farmers in the Pacific Coast States were busy with usual spring work during the survey week this year. Planting of vegetable crops and caneberries was active in Washington and Oregon. Cutting asparagus and harvesting rhubarb were other important activities. In California, ideal weather conditions prevailed, and demand was strong for workers in strawberry, lemon, and asparagus harvests. Sugar beet and barley harvests were underway in the Imperial Valley, and alfalfa hay harvest became general. Cotton and rice plantings were nearing completion.

Snow and cold weather curtailed field work in central and northern Mountain States. Even so, planting of spring wheat in Montana was 60 percent completed by April 23, ahead of usual progress at this date, reflecting favorable weather earlier in the month. Planting of sugar beets, oats, and barley also was active. Potato planting was well advanced in some southwest sections of Idaho. Farmers in Arizona were harvesting lettuce and citrus; cotton planting was progressing rapidly.

Rainy weather kept South Central region farmers out of fields much of the time during the survey week. However, field work in many areas equaled or exceeded the 1965 pace. Spring plowing was 85 percent completed in Tennessee, compared with 65 percent at the same time last year. Nearly 30 percent of the intended cotton acreage was planted in Texas by the end of the survey week, only slightly less than in 1965; in Mississippi and Louisiana, about 25 percent of the cotton had been planted, both ahead of 1965. Harvest of strawberries was active in southern Alabama counties, and continued with fairly heavy movement in Louisiana. Activity in Louisiana sugarcane fields was at a standstill because of wet soils. Heavy rains halted the vegetable harvest in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

Rainfall was general in North Central States during the survey week, but field work was still ahead of last year in most areas. Plowing for corn and soybeans was 75 percent completed in Ohio and Indiana and 90 percent finished in Illinois, all more than usual for this date. In Iowa, field work was moving ahead rapidly. Progress was less favorable in the northern tier of States because of cold, wet weather. In Wisconsin, field work is reported to be 10 to 14 days later than normal, and spring work is far behind schedule in Minnesota. Field work gained momentum in the Dakotas but was still slow.

Weather conditions during the survey week were relatively favorable for spring work in South Atlantic States. In Florida, vegetable harvest was quite active, and sugarcane harvest is complete. Spring planting of field crops moved ahead rapidly, with corn planting and tobacco setting virtually complete. Cotton and peanut planting is well underway. Farmers in the Carolinas and Georgia were busy planting corn and cotton, and transplanting tobacco. Virginia farmers were preparing soil for peanuts, soybeans, and tobacco. On the Eastern Shore, potatoes were being cultivated, tomatoes transplanted, and sweet corn, snap beans, and cucumbers planted.

In New England, cool, dry weather provided good conditions for soil preparation and planting of early crops. Potato planting was nearing completion in New Jersey and about half of the early sweet corn had been planted. Limited harvest of asparagus and wintered-over spinach was underway. Pennsylvania farmers made good progress in spring work during the survey week. Potato planting was well underway and planting of early vegetable crops has been completed.

Farm employment and indexes, April 1966, with comparisons, United States

	: Annual : average : 1960-64 ^{1/}	: Annual : average : 1965 ^{1/}	: April : average : 1960-64 ^{1/}	: April : 18-24, : 1965	: April : 17-23, : 1966
FARM EMPLOYMENT					
(Thousands)					
Total	6,662	5,610	6,560	5,544	5,151
Family labor	4,862	4,128	5,008	4,219	4,011
Hired labor	1,800	1,482	1,552	1,325	1,140
INDEXES ^{2/}					
(1910-14=100)					
Total	49	41	50	42	39
Family labor	48	41	48	41	39
Hired labor	53	44	54	46	40
(1957-59=100)					
Total	89	75	90	76	71
Family labor	88	75	89	75	71
Hired labor	92	76	94	80	69

^{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, 1966, United States

	: Annual : average : 1965	: April : average : 1960-64	: April 1, : 1965	: April 1, : 1966
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour ^{1/}	\$ 0.951	\$ 0.783	\$ 0.860	\$ 0.945
Per month with house	223	194	215	237
Per month with board and room ...	171	151	164	180
Per week with board and room	40.25	36.00	39.00	42.00
Per week without board or room ..	51.50	47.25	50.75	55.25
Per day with house	6.20	5.50	6.00	6.60
Per day with board and room	7.40	6.20	6.70	7.30
Per day without board or room ...	7.60	6.70	7.30	8.00
Per hour with house	1.03	.82	.93	1.01
Per hour without board or room ..	1.14	1.08	1.18	1.28
INDEXES ^{2/}				
(1910-14=100)	732	670	731	803
(1957-59=100)	126	115	126	138

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

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

FARM LABOR, May 1966

Crop Reporting Board, SRS, USDA

Workers on Farms, April 1966
(Thousands of persons)

State and division	April average 1960-64 ^{1/}			April 1965			April 1966		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	27	19	8	25	19	6	23	18	5
N.H.	11	8	3	9	7	2	9	7	2
Vt.	26	20	6	22	17	5	20	16	4
Mass.	32	22	10	24	17	7	20	15	5
R.I.	3	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	1
Conn.	21	15	6	20	12	8	17	11	6
N.Eng.	120	86	34	103	74	29	91	68	23
N.Y.	139	93	46	106	78	28	109	77	32
N.J.	36	22	14	32	17	15	30	16	14
Pa.	168	142	26	135	117	18	129	112	17
M.Atl.	343	257	86	273	212	61	268	205	63
Ohio	238	207	31	191	170	21	179	161	18
Ind.	217	193	24	169	152	17	152	139	13
Ill.	247	199	48	209	175	34	189	160	29
Mich.	206	175	31	167	143	24	164	143	21
Wis.	272	247	25	233	214	19	229	212	17
E.N.Cent.	1180	1021	159	969	854	115	913	815	98
Minn.	272	245	27	233	213	20	237	218	19
Iowa	286	262	24	248	228	20	241	222	19
Mo.	253	228	25	223	200	23	201	184	17
N.Dak.	88	75	13	70	60	10	71	62	9
S.Dak.	91	84	7	77	71	6	73	68	5
Nebr.	153	130	23	134	116	18	126	110	16
Kans.	150	134	16	133	119	14	125	113	12
W.N.Cent.	1293	1158	135	1118	1007	111	1074	977	97
Del.	12	7	5	10	6	4	9	5	4
Md.	56	40	16	48	36	12	43	31	12
Va.	176	137	39	137	108	29	131	103	28
W.Va.	66	52	14	51	41	10	48	40	8
N.C.	337	277	60	289	229	60	276	227	49
S.C.	161	105	56	134	86	48	107	76	31
Ga.	173	129	44	134	100	34	121	94	27
Fla.	149	53	96	153	53	100	142	45	97
S.Atl.	1130	800	330	956	659	297	877	621	256
Ky.	214	175	39	186	154	32	172	144	28
Tenn.	210	170	40	187	152	35	163	138	25
Ala.	136	103	33	118	93	25	108	86	22
Miss.	230	160	70	172	120	52	164	117	47
E.S.Cent.	790	608	182	663	519	144	607	485	122
Ark.	201	114	87	171	92	79	125	78	47
La.	144	92	52	110	70	40	110	67	43
Okla.	148	128	20	119	104	15	116	104	12
Texas	383	254	129	324	206	118	268	185	83
W.S.Cent.	876	588	288	724	472	252	619	434	185
Mont.	54	42	12	48	39	9	47	39	8
Idaho	68	51	17	62	46	16	60	44	16
Wyo.	20	14	6	17	11	6	17	12	5
Colo.	59	48	11	51	43	8	47	39	8
N.Mex.	30	20	10	24	14	10	21	14	7
Ariz.	42	10	32	36	8	28	38	7	31
Utah	30	23	7	26	20	6	25	19	6
Nev.	5	3	2	5	3	2	3	2	1
Mount.	308	211	97	269	184	85	258	176	82
Wash.	115	75	40	103	63	40	102	64	38
Oreg.	94	69	25	81	61	20	74	58	16
Calif.	311	135	176	285	114	171	268	108	160
Pac.	520	279	241	469	238	231	444	230	214
U.S.	6580	5008	1552	5544	4219	1325	5151	4011	1140

^{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 1966 ^{1/}

(Thousands of persons)

State and division	January through April : Av. 1960-64			January through April : 1965			January through April : 1966		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	25	18	7	23	18	5	22	17	5
N.H.	9	7	2	8	6	2	8	6	2
Vt.	24	19	5	21	17	4	20	16	4
Mass.	26	18	8	22	16	6	19	14	5
R.I.	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
Conn.	19	14	5	17	12	5	14	10	4
N.Eng.	106	78	28	93	70	23	85	64	21
N.Y.	128	92	36	100	76	24	98	74	24
N.J.	31	21	10	26	16	10	23	15	8
Pa.	153	132	21	124	108	16	115	101	14
M.Atl.	312	245	67	250	200	50	236	190	46
Ohio	203	183	20	169	155	14	155	142	13
Ind.	186	172	14	151	140	11	143	134	9
Ill.	202	166	36	167	143	24	160	137	23
Mich.	182	158	24	149	129	20	147	128	19
Wis.	250	229	21	215	198	17	209	193	16
E.N.Cent.	1023	908	115	851	765	86	814	734	80
Minn.	221	202	19	190	176	14	192	178	14
Iowa	240	222	18	207	193	14	203	189	14
Mo.	222	204	18	193	179	14	182	168	14
N.Dak.	68	60	8	56	50	6	54	48	6
S.Dak.	77	71	6	64	60	4	64	60	4
Nebr.	131	117	14	109	99	10	107	98	9
Kans.	133	122	11	114	104	10	111	102	9
W.N.Cent.	1092	998	94	1079	861	218	913	843	70
Del.	9	6	3	7	5	2	6	4	2
Md.	44	32	12	37	28	9	34	26	8
Va.	147	118	29	117	96	21	112	90	22
W.Va.	54	45	9	41	35	6	39	33	6
N.C.	267	227	40	229	192	37	216	182	34
S.C.	126	88	38	89	65	24	86	63	23
Ga.	134	102	32	108	83	25	102	80	22
Fla.	142	46	96	151	46	105	139	38	101
S.Atl.	923	664	259	779	550	229	734	516	218
Ky.	189	162	27	162	140	22	159	136	23
Tenn.	176	146	30	157	133	24	144	124	20
Ala.	102	80	22	91	74	17	81	66	15
Miss.	167	127	40	133	99	34	126	95	31
E.S.Cent.	634	515	119	543	446	97	510	421	89
Ark.	153	102	51	122	79	43	103	72	31
La.	117	80	37	96	66	30	89	59	30
Okl.	133	120	13	108	98	10	111	102	9
Texas	316	224	92	250	178	72	231	170	61
W.S.Cent.	719	526	193	576	421	155	534	403	131
Mont.	42	35	7	38	32	6	38	32	6
Idaho	51	41	10	46	38	8	44	36	8
Wyo.	16	12	4	13	9	4	14	10	4
Colo.	48	40	8	39	34	5	39	33	6
N.Mex.	27	18	9	22	14	8	19	13	6
Ariz.	40	9	31	35	7	28	36	7	29
Utah	24	19	5	20	16	4	19	15	4
Nev.	3	2	1	4	2	2	3	2	1
Mount.	251	176	75	217	152	65	212	148	64
Wash.	91	66	25	80	56	24	80	58	22
Oreg.	78	62	16	71	56	15	64	52	12
Calif.	298	130	168	263	109	154	250	101	149
Pac.	467	258	209	414	221	193	394	211	183
U.S.	5527	4368	1159	4802	3686	1116	4432	3530	902

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

Farm Work: Weekly Hours Worked Per Worker

State and division	Average for reporting farms - week of April 17-23, 1966					
	Farm Operator	Other Family Members	All Family 1/	Hired Workers	All Workers	
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	
Maine	56.5	31.8	48.6	38.5	45.0	
N.H.	58.3	31.5	50.2	36.8	45.9	
Vt.	63.4	45.8	59.2	43.8	52.6	
Mass.	62.2	30.0	51.5	41.8	47.3	
R.I.	57.7	28.5	51.8	41.5	45.7	
Conn.	60.5	35.1	54.4	41.2	49.0	
N.Eng.	59.9	34.9	52.6	40.8	48.0	
N.Y.	60.7	34.6	52.4	41.6	48.6	
N.J.	46.2	20.2	36.8	40.7	38.0	
Pa.	51.4	30.7	44.3	31.2	41.4	
M.Atl.	54.9	31.6	47.1	38.6	43.9	
Ohio	50.4	32.1	45.0	28.5	41.8	
Ind.	41.1	30.5	39.1	28.1	36.8	
Ill.	43.2	34.3	41.5	34.6	40.2	
Mich.	50.3	33.7	45.0	34.1	42.7	
Wis.	61.4	30.0	48.5	36.7	46.6	
E.N.Cent.	49.1	32.1	43.7	32.9	42.0	
Minn.	54.9	31.5	46.1	31.9	44.1	
Iowa	61.0	32.2	51.8	33.0	47.8	
Mo.	42.8	33.3	40.7	28.8	38.8	
N.Dak.	53.6	36.3	47.6	42.9	46.8	
S.Dak.	59.4	32.6	51.4	39.5	49.7	
Nebr.	54.2	36.0	48.9	31.9	46.0	
Kans.	47.4	30.8	43.3	33.0	41.4	
W.N.Cent.	52.8	32.8	46.6	33.1	44.4	
Del.	45.4	40.0	44.0	30.7	39.0	
Md.	45.8	33.9	42.7	35.7	40.0	
Va.	42.9	31.9	40.2	33.9	37.7	
W.Va.	37.2	26.1	34.4	28.3	33.2	
N.C.	38.3	26.4	34.8	28.0	31.8	
S.C.	39.6	28.5	36.6	24.9	30.2	
Ga.	39.3	29.9	36.9	28.7	33.3	
Fla.	37.0	24.5	34.0	32.3	32.8	
S.Atl.	39.6	28.4	36.6	30.4	33.4	
Ky.	37.9	29.7	36.0	26.1	32.4	
Tenn.	33.4	27.3	32.2	28.4	31.1	
Ala.	34.6	26.7	33.0	31.1	32.3	
Miss.	37.2	27.5	34.5	33.3	33.8	
E.S.Cent.	35.7	27.9	33.9	30.2	32.4	
Ark.	33.7	30.3	33.1	32.0	32.7	
La.	33.6	27.0	32.1	31.7	31.9	
Okla.	39.6	27.4	36.6	23.2	33.8	
Texas	35.4	30.9	34.5	35.0	34.7	
W.S.Cent.	35.7	29.5	34.3	32.7	33.6	
Mont.	54.0	37.3	48.7	42.4	47.3	
Idaho	52.9	29.2	44.9	33.5	42.0	
Wyo.	56.1	38.3	50.0	38.5	46.7	
Colo.	51.2	34.2	46.5	43.6	45.7	
N.Mex.	48.8	34.1	45.4	42.8	44.4	
Ariz.	47.4	30.3	43.2	47.3	45.6	
Utah	47.8	26.1	39.4	28.0	36.5	
Nev.	44.7	30.1	41.3	51.2	46.2	
Mount.	51.7	32.8	45.7	41.5	44.2	
Wash.	49.9	29.9	44.2	36.6	40.9	
Oreg.	45.9	32.5	41.9	32.3	39.2	
Calif.	51.3	37.3	47.7	49.3	49.0	
Pac.	49.6	34.1	45.3	45.8	45.5	
U.S.	45.3	30.9	41.0	35.5	39.5	

1/ Includes as "other family" only those farm household members working 15 hours or more per week without receiving cash wages.

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

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