
Farm Labor



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NUMBER OF HIRED WORKERS DOWN-WAGES HIGHER

During the week of January 6-12, 1985, 669,000 people were working on farms and ranches in the seven surveyed States according to the Crop Reporting Board. This includes workers hired directly by the farm operators and agricultural services employees working on farms. This is down 9.7 percent (71,700) from October. Hired workers represented 55 percent (367,000) of the total. Of these workers, 328,000 were hired directly by the farm operators which was 9.0 percent fewer than in October. Farm operators and other unpaid workers who worked 15 hours or more accounted for the remaining 302,000 workers, 3.3 percent below October 1984.

The wage rate for all hired farm workers ranged from \$4.70 per hour in the Mountain Region composed of Arizona and New Mexico to \$7.44 per hour in Hawaii. Farm wage rates in Florida, the Southern Plains and California showed a normal seasonal increase from October, while the Mountain Region declined. The wage rate for Hawaii increased two cents.

During the January 6-12, 1985 survey week, hours worked by the self-employed farm operator ranged from 27.6 hours in Hawaii and the Southern Plains to 35.4 hours in the Mountain Region that included Arizona and New Mexico. The hours worked followed the normal seasonal decline in all areas except Florida. Because of the harvest of citrus and vegetables in Florida, the average hours worked per week normally increases from October to January.

The number of hours worked by unpaid workers ranged from 27.0 hours in the Mountain Region to 37.4 hours in Florida. Florida and the Southern Plains were up 3.9 and 2.2 hours from October, respectively. Hired worker hours ranged from 34.8 hours in Florida to 43.2 hours in the Mountain Region. The hours worked by hired workers in the surveyed areas followed the normal seasonal decline from October.

PERQUISITES AND OTHER BENEFITS

Approximately 48 percent of the hired workers received perquisites such as meals, housing or motor vehicle in addition to the cash wage in January 1985. About 25 percent of the hired workers were furnished a house in addition to the cash wages.

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FARM ACTIVITIES DURING SURVEY WEEK

Precipitation, although not heavy, fell on most of the surveyed areas except Florida during the week. Frost in Northern and Central areas of Florida extended into the northern Everglades. Fair weather allowed increased cotton harvesting until late in the week across the Texas High Plains into Oklahoma. Weather in the central valley of California was foggy and cold, limiting field activities during the week. Lettuce harvest was active in the Imperial Valley.

SOURCE AND RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

The estimates of agricultural labor are based on multiple frame probability surveys. The surveys utilize two sampling frames -- a list frame of agricultural producers and an area frame. The list sample is a stratified random sample containing many employers likely to have large numbers of workers.

The area frame contains all land units in the Nation. A probability sample from the area frame would provide an unbiased estimate for agricultural workers on farms. However, the area frame is a less efficient sampling frame because a large number of workers are hired by a small proportion of farm operators. Therefore, the area frame is used to estimate for the incompleteness in the list. Thereby, the multiple frame sampling approach utilizes the desirable attributes of both frames.

Estimates based on a sample differ somewhat from data that would have been obtained if a complete enumeration had been taken. These differences result from sampling variability. In addition, survey estimates are subject to non-sampling errors. Enumerator training, questionnaire design and testing, and a uniform comprehensive check and review process minimizes the number of non-sampling errors.

Standard errors and relative sampling errors are statistical measures of the variation that occurs by chance because of sampling of the population. Indications from the survey are expected to be within the range of one standard error below to one standard error above the true value in two out of three cases.

WORKERS ON FARMS, FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS,
JANUARY 6-12, 1985

STATE AND REGION	ALL FARM WORKERS 1/	SELF- EMPLOYED	UNPAID	HIRED		
				NUMBER OF WORKERS	EXPECTED TO BE EMPLOYED	
				150 DAYS OR MORE	149 DAYS OR LESS	
						THOUSANDS
FLA	83	15	5	63	48	15
SO. PLAINS 3/	284	178	21	85	74	11
MOUNT. III 4/	44	7	18	19	16	3
CALIF	206	47	8	151	99	52
HAW	13	2	1	10	9	1

HOURS WORKED PER WEEK AND WAGE RATES FOR ALL HIRED WORKERS,
FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS, JANUARY 6-12, 1985 1/

STATE AND REGION	HOURS WORKED			WAGE RATE
	SELF- EMPLOYED	UNPAID	HIRED	ALL HIRED
	HOURS			DOLLARS PER HOUR
FLA	33.0	37.4	34.8	5.20
SO. PLAINS 3/	27.6	33.5	40.6	4.71
MOUNT. III 4/	35.4	27.0	43.2	4.70
CALIF	33.5	33.2	39.8	5.64
HAW	27.6	28.4	37.5	7.44

WAGE RATES FOR HIRED WORKERS, FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS,
JANUARY 6-12, 1985 1/

STATE AND REGION	TYPE OF WORK						METHOD OF PAY	
	FIELD:	LIVESTOCK:	LIVESTOCK 2/:	FIELD & VISORY:	SUPER-: OTHER:	PIECE-: HOURLY:	RATE	OTHER
	DOLLARS PER HOUR							
FLA	5.04	4.41	4.99	7.69	5.10	4.50	5.73	6.00
SO. PLAINS 3/	4.15	4.15	4.15	6.34	4.93	4.69	5/	4.84
MOUNT. III 4/	4.68	4.26	4.48	6.52	4.79	4.19	5.94	5.31
CALIF	5.30	5.50	5.33	7.90	6.00	4.83	6.40	6.75
HAW	6.36	5/	6.37	11.11	8.19	6.94	5/	10.38

1/ EXCLUDES AGRICULTURAL SERVICE WORKERS. 2/ WAGE RATES OF FIELD AND LIVE-
STOCK WORKERS COMBINED. 3/ INCLUDES OKLA AND TEX. 4/ INCLUDES ARIZ AND
N MEX. 5/ INSUFFICIENT DATA FOR THIS CATEGORY.

WORKERS ON FARMS, FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS,
OCTOBER 7-13, 1984

STATE AND REGION	ALL FARM WORKERS 1/	SELF-EMPLOYED	UNPAID	HIRED		
				NUMBER OF WORKERS	EXPECTED TO BE EMPLOYED 150 DAYS OR MORE	149 DAYS OR LESS
FLA	85	18	4	63	52	11
SO. PLAINS 3/	292	163	35	94	72	22
MOUNT. III 4/	46.9	8	22.4	16.5	11.5	5
CALIF	234	45	14	175	113	62
HAW	15	2	1	12	10	2

THOUSANDS

HOURS WORKED PER WEEK AND WAGE RATES FOR ALL HIRED WORKERS,
FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS, OCTOBER 7-13, 1984 1/

STATE AND REGION	HOURS WORKED			WAGE RATE	
	SELF-EMPLOYED	UNPAID	HIRED	ALL HIRED	
FLA	33.9	33.5	36.8	4.91	
SO. PLAINS 3/	34.8	31.3	42.2	4.58	
MOUNT. III 4/	48.8	43.2	48.4	4.58	
CALIF	38.8	35.5	44.6	5.32	
HAW	31.0	28.4	37.7	7.42	

WAGE RATES FOR HIRED WORKERS, FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS,
OCTOBER 7-13, 1984 1/

STATE AND REGION	TYPE OF WORK					METHOD OF PAY			
	FIELD	LIVESTOCK	LIVESTOCK 2/	SUPERVISORY	OTHER	HOURLY	PIECE-RATE	OTHER	
FLA	4.27	4.82	4.40	7.46	5.43	4.70	5/	5.79	
SO. PLAINS 3/	4.10	4.25	4.19	6.40	4.82	4.59	5/	4.52	
MOUNT. III 4/	4.42	3.98	4.32	6.11	4.48	4.25	5/	5.43	
CALIF	4.93	5.10	4.98	7.36	5.83	5.05	7.08	6.32	
HAW	6.52	5/	6.48	10.34	8.25	7.01	5/	9.72	

DOLLARS PER HOUR

1/ EXCLUDES AGRICULTURAL SERVICE WORKERS. 2/ WAGE RATES OF FIELD AND LIVESTOCK WORKERS COMBINED. 3/ INCLUDES OKLA AND TEX. 4/ INCLUDES ARIZ AND N MEX. 5/ INSUFFICIENT DATA FOR THIS CATEGORY.

WORKERS ON FARMS, FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS,
JULY 8-14, 1984

STATE AND REGION	ALL FARM WORKERS 1/	SELF-EMPLOYED	UNPAID	HIRED		
				NUMBER OF WORKERS	EXPECTED TO BE EMPLOYED 150 DAYS OR MORE	149 DAYS OR LESS
THOUSANDS						
FLA	72	20	6	46	38	8
SO. PLAINS 3/	323	137	62	124	65	59
MOUNT. III 4/	56.3	8.6	24.6	23.1	16.7	6.4
CALIF	273	55	12	206	119	87
HAW	16	2.4	1.6	12	10	2

HOURS WORKED PER WEEK AND WAGE RATES FOR ALL HIRED WORKERS,
FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS, JULY 8-14, 1984 1/

STATE AND REGION	HOURS WORKED			WAGE RATE
	SELF-EMPLOYED	UNPAID	HIRED	ALL HIRED
HOURS				
DOLLARS PER HOUR				
FLA	29.2	34.8	38.9	4.66
SO. PLAINS 3/	42.6	37.2	41.3	4.30
MOUNT. III 4/	43.1	35.3	55.3	4.15
CALIF	39.6	39.2	40.7	5.16
HAW	30.4	27.5	37.7	7.21

WAGE RATES FOR HIRED WORKERS, FOR SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS,
JULY 8-14, 1984 1/

STATE AND REGION	TYPE OF WORK					METHOD OF PAY			
	FIELD	LIVESTOCK	LIVESTOCK 2/	SUPERVISORY	OTHER	HOURLY	PIECE-RATE	PIECE-RATE	OTHER
DOLLARS PER HOUR									
FLA	4.09	4.20	4.11	7.14	5.69	4.51	5/	5/	5.18
SO. PLAINS 3/	3.88	4.21	3.99	5/	4.57	4.23	5/	5/	4.27
MOUNT. III 4/	3.85	4.04	3.88	5.94	4.29	3.86	5/	5/	5.13
CALIF	4.88	4.87	4.88	6.90	5.47	4.83	6.79	6.79	6.07
HAW	6.13	5/	6.11	10.03	8.60	6.90	5/	5/	8.80

1/ EXCLUDES AGRICULTURAL SERVICE WORKERS. 2/ WAGE RATES OF FIELD AND LIVESTOCK WORKERS COMBINED. 3/ INCLUDES OKLA AND TEX. 4/ INCLUDES ARIZ AND N MEX. 5/ INSUFFICIENT DATA FOR THIS CATEGORY.

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

Crew leaders and custom crews provided 39,000 workers for the farms in California and Florida during the week of January 6-12, 1985. In October of 1984, 67,800 farm workers were custom crews. The number of agricultural service workers followed the normal seasonal trends with a decrease to 24,000 workers in California and an increase in Florida to 15,000 workers.

The average hourly wages received by workers furnished by agricultural service firms in California and Florida were \$6.17 and \$5.54 per hour, respectively. Comparable wage rates in October 1984 were \$6.41 in California and \$5.04 in Florida.

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES: NUMBER OF WORKERS, AVERAGE HOURS WORKED FOR ALL HIRED WORKERS, WAGE RATE BY TYPE OF WORK, WITH COMPARISONS, FOR CALIFORNIA AND FLORIDA, JANUARY 6-12, 1985 1/ 2/

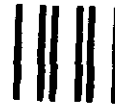
ITEM	JUL 1984		OCT 1984		JAN 1985	
	CALIF	FLA	CALIF	FLA	CALIF	FLA
	THOUSANDS					
NUMBER OF WORKERS WORKING ON FARMS	75	7.5	63	4.8	24	15
	HOURS					
AVERAGE HOURS WORKED	41.4	41.8	37.4	31.9	36.4	28.8
	DOLLARS PER HOUR					
WAGE RATES	6.14	4.29	6.41	5.04	6.17	5.54
METHOD OF PAY						
HOURLY	5.41	4.48	5.50	4.19	5.26	4.42
PIECE-RATE	6.60	3.98	7.00	5.50	6.50	5.99
TYPE OF WORK PERFORMED:						
FIELD	5.05	3.90	5.35	4.46	5.50	5.45

1/ DATA IN THIS TABLE ARE FOR AGRICULTURAL SERVICES PERFORMED ON THE FARM BY CUSTOM SERVICE UNITS SUCH AS CREW LEADERS OR CUSTOM CREWS. THESE STATISTICS ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE REGIONAL TABLES. 2/ VALUE OF ANY PERQUISITES PROVIDED ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE WAGE RATE.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250**

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