

Farm Labor



National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Washington, D.C.

Released July 12, 1991, by the Agricultural Statistics Board. Estimates refer to the week of June 9-15, 1991.

Number of Hired Workers Up

There were 566 thousand hired workers on farms and ranches in the eleven surveyed States during the week of June 9-15, 1991, according to the Agricultural Statistics Board. This compares with 487 thousand workers during the May, 1991, survey week. There were 64 thousand agricultural service employees working on farms and ranches in California and Florida compared to 49 thousand in May.

Average June wage rates received by hired workers in the eleven States ranged from \$4.75 per hour in New Mexico to \$6.04 per hour in Florida. Wages were higher when compared with May in New York, Texas, and Wisconsin. In June, agricultural service workers were paid an average of \$5.72 and \$6.85 per hour in California and Florida, respectively.

Favorable weather during the survey week of June 9-15, 1991, allowed fieldwork to progress normally in the eleven surveyed States except in portions of Texas. Southern California Valencia orange, grapefruit, lemon, and table grape harvests continued. In California's Central Valley, cherry, peach, and nectarine harvests continued. Vegetable harvests included broccoli, lettuce, cauliflower and celery. Onion and tomato harvests were ongoing in the Imperial Valley. Hay harvests were active in Oregon and Washington. Green pea harvest was underway. Early summer vegetable harvests continued. In western Oregon, strawberry harvest continued. Sweet cherry harvest began in Benton County, Washington. Onion harvest was active in New Mexico and Texas. In Texas, above normal rainfall slowed fieldwork in the Upper Coast, East, and Trans Pecos areas. Fieldwork was also slowed by wet field conditions in the Cross Timbers and Blacklands areas. Cotton and sorghum planting continued, as weather permitted, in the Plains. Small grain harvest was underway. Peach harvest began in the High Plains. Florida's orange and grapefruit harvests were nearly complete. Vegetable harvests continued but were nearly complete in the southern area. Early variety sweet cherry harvest began in New York while early vegetable harvests continued.

For additional information, call (202) 447-3570. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

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All Hired Workers, June 9-15, 1991 1/

State	Number of Workers	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>
	Thousands	Dollars per Hour
NY	36	5.67
PA	29	5.35
NC	30	4.90
FL	33	6.04
MI	30	5.74
WI	41	4.83
TX	55	5.52
NM	6	4.75
OR	34	5.50
WA	58	5.95
CA	214	6.03

Agricultural Service Workers, June 9-15, 1991

State	Number of Workers Working on Farms	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>
	Thousands	Dollars per Hour
FL	2	6.85
CA	62	5.72

All Hired Workers, May 12-18, 1991 1/

State	Number of Workers	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>
	Thousands	Dollars per Hour
NY	22	5.48
PA	26	5.45
NC	31	4.90
FL	43	6.30
MI	29	5.87
WI	35	4.46
TX	41	5.37
NM	6	4.91
OR	19	5.89
WA	35	6.00
CA	200	6.26

Agricultural Service Workers, May 12-18, 1991

State	Number of Workers Working on Farms	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>
	Thousands	Dollars per Hour
FL	8	7.14
CA	41	5.81

1/ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

2/ Benefits such as housing and meals are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

Source and Reliability of Estimates

These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service during the last two weeks of June using a multiple frame probability survey. The survey used two sampling frames - a list frame and an area frame. The survey collected information from approximately 5,000 farm operators sampled from a list of farm operators and supplemented with data from 1,000 producers operating in randomly selected geographic areas. This insured representation of all farms (and ranches) in the eleven States. Additionally, a list of agricultural service firms was sampled in California and Florida. The survey reference week was June 9-15, 1991.

Two types of errors, sampling and nonsampling, are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both of these types of errors determine the "accuracy" of the indication.

Sampling error occurs because a complete census is not taken. The sample of respondents used to calculate this particular indication is one of a large number of samples that could have been selected in accordance with the sampling design. The sampling error measures the variation among the indications from all possible samples. An indication of 100 with a sampling error of 1 would mean that chances are 19 out of 20 that the indications of all possible samples averaged together would be between 98 and 102 (the indication, plus or minus two times the sampling error). The sampling error expressed as a percent of the indication is called the relative standard error. The relative standard errors for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 10 and 20 percent at the State level. Sampling errors for the all hired farm worker wage rate generally ranged between 3 and 7 percent.

Nonsampling errors can occur in complete censuses as well as sample surveys. They are due to such things as inability to obtain correct information from each person sampled, differences in interpreting questions or definitions, mistakes in coding or processing the data, etc. Careful efforts were made at each step of the survey to minimize nonsampling errors.

Release of Historical Farm Labor Data Series

Statistical Bulletin number 822 titled "Farm Employment and Wage Rates 1910-1990" is now available. This publication combines selected farm labor estimates from 1910 through 1990 into a single reference copy. A history of the farm labor data series is highlighted. Also discussed are the Agricultural Labor Survey sample design, survey definitions, and data collection methods. Estimation procedures and publication of data in the Farm Labor release are presented.

An electronic file containing data in this historical report is also available (\$35). These data are in the form of LOTUS 1-2-3 worksheet files on two (2) DOS compatible, 3 1/2" HD diskettes.

To order a printed copy of "Farm Employment and Wage Rates 1910-1990", ask for Statistical Bulletin number 822 (\$14). To receive the electronic files, ask for Farm Employment and Wage Rates 1910-1990, order #91005Z.

The next "Farm Labor" report will be released at 3:00 p.m. ET on August 13, 1991.

The August 13 report will have information for the survey week of July 7-13, 1991. The report will include the number of All Hired Workers and the All Hired Worker Wage Rates for the monthly and seasonal States along with regional and U.S. level information. The monthly States are California, Florida, New Mexico, and Texas. The seasonal States are Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Wisconsin. Regional and U.S. level information will also include the number of self-employed and unpaid workers along with the corresponding average hours worked (including hired). Wage rates by method of pay, type of worker, type of farm, and economic class of farm will also be available at the regional and U.S. level. The number of Agricultural Service Workers and the corresponding wage rates (including by method of pay and for field workers) will be published for Florida and California.

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