

Farm Labor



National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Washington, D.C.

Released September 13, 1991, by the Agricultural Statistics Board. Estimates refer to the week of August 11-17, 1991.

Number of Hired Workers Up

There were 658 thousand hired workers on farms and ranches in the eleven surveyed States during the week of August 11-17, 1991. This compares with 631 thousand workers during the July, 1991, survey week. No comparable survey was conducted in August 1990. There were 55.6 thousand agricultural service employees working on farms and ranches in California and Florida compared to 73.1 thousand in July.

Average June wage rates received by hired workers in the eleven States ranged from \$4.90 per hour in Wisconsin to \$6.40 per hour in Florida. Wages were lower when compared with July in New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington. In August, agricultural service workers were paid an average of \$5.76 and \$7.10 per hour in California and Florida, respectively.

Rain slowed fieldwork activities in portions of California, North Carolina, and Texas during the survey week of August 11-17, 1991. In California, table grape harvest was active but was running behind normal. Asian pear harvest was underway and early variety apple harvest continued. Nectarine and plum harvests were active. Broccoli, cauliflower, celery, melon, tomato, sweet potato, and lettuce harvests continued. Transplanting fall cauliflower was active and fall crop lettuce planting was underway. Small grain harvests continued in Oregon and Washington. In Oregon, tart cherry harvest was complete and early peach harvest was underway in the Willamette Valley. Apple harvest was ongoing in Lane County and pear harvest was underway in the Medford area. Vegetable harvests continued. In Washington, summer vegetable harvests were active and pear harvest began. Chile harvest continued in New Mexico and Texas. Rains early in the week slowed fieldwork in the central and northern areas of Texas. Fall vegetable planting began in East Texas. Potato harvest was nearly complete in the High Plains. Onion, cucumber, and cantaloupe harvests were active in the Trans Pecos area. Cotton harvest continued and was nearly complete in the Rio Grande Valley. Rice harvest continued. New crop grapefruit harvest was underway in Florida but was slower than normal due to lagging crop maturity. Vegetable planting continued and new fruit tree planting was active. Rain slowed fieldwork in North Carolina. Peach harvest was nearly complete and tobacco harvest continued. Apple, peach, and grape harvests were ongoing in Pennsylvania. In New York, early variety grape and pear harvests continued. Apple harvest was two weeks ahead of normal in the Hudson Valley. Hay harvest was active in Wisconsin.

For information, call Tom Kurtz (202) 447-3228. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

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All Hired Workers, August 11-17, 1991 1/

| State | Number of Workers | Wage Rates <u>2/</u> |
|-------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | Thousands | Dollars Per Hour |
| NY | 30 | 5.67 |
| PA | 36 | 5.60 |
| NC | 95 | 4.98 |
| FL | 45 | 6.40 |
| MI | 46 | 6.20 |
| WI | 26 | 4.90 |
| TX | 63 | 5.75 |
| NM | 9 | 4.96 |
| OR | 32 | 5.93 |
| WA | 54 | 5.75 |
| CA | 222 | 6.34 |

Agricultural Service Workers, August 11-17, 1991

| State | Number of Workers Working on Farms | Wage Rates <u>2/</u> |
|-------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Thousands | Dollars Per Hour |
| FL | 1.6 | 7.10 |
| CA | 54.0 | 5.76 |

All Hired Workers, July 7-13, 1991 1/

| State | Number of Workers | Wage Rates <u>2/</u> |
|-------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | Thousands | Dollars Per Hour |
| NY | 33 | 5.81 |
| PA | 35 | 5.62 |
| NC | 71 | 4.96 |
| FL | 45 | 6.35 |
| MI | 48 | 5.45 |
| WI | 35 | 4.34 |
| TX | 53 <u>3/</u> | 4.88 |
| NM | 9 | 4.65 |
| OR | 43 | 5.75 |
| WA | 49 | 5.80 |
| CA | 210 | 6.23 |

Agricultural Service Workers, July 7-13, 1991

| State | Number of Workers Working on Farms | Wage Rates <u>2/</u> |
|-------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Thousands | Dollars Per Hour |
| FL | 3.1 <u>3/</u> | 7.21 |
| CA | 70.0 | 5.56 |

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. 3/ Revised.

Source and Reliability of Estimates

These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service during the last two weeks of August 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 2,700 farm operators sampled from a list of farm operators and supplemented with data from 1,400 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 August 11-17, 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.

Revision Policy: Farm Labor information is subject to revision the next time the information is published or the year following the original publication date. Information contained in this publication that was subject to revision was the number of hired workers and the all hired wage rates for July, 1991, for the monthly and seasonal States.

Revisions: Revisions included in this report are hired workers in Texas and agricultural service workers in Florida. Revisions are footnoted in the appropriate tables. Information for the other States is reprinted for your information.

The next Farm Labor report will be released at 3:00 p.m. ET on October 11, 1991.

The October 11th report will have information for the survey week of September 8-14, 1991. The report will include number of All Hired Workers and the All Hired Worker Wage Rates for the monthly and seasonal States. The monthly States are California, Florida, New Mexico, and Texas. The seasonal States are Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Wisconsin. No regional or U.S. level information will be included. The number of Agricultural Service Workers and the corresponding All Hired Worker Wage Rate will be published for California and Florida.

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