

# Farm Labor



National  
Agricultural  
Statistics  
Service

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Washington, D.C.

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Released October 11, 1991, by the Agricultural Statistics Board. Estimates refer to the week of September 8-14, 1991.

## Number of Hired Workers Down

There were 549 thousand hired workers on farms and ranches in the eleven surveyed States during the week of September 8-14, 1991. This compares with 658 thousand workers during the August 1991, survey week. No comparable survey was conducted in September 1990. There were 103.5 thousand agricultural service employees working on farms and ranches in California and Florida compared to 55.6 thousand in August.

Average September wage rates received by hired workers in the eleven States ranged from \$4.84 per hour in Wisconsin to \$6.40 per hour in Washington. Wages were lower when compared with August in California, Florida, Texas, and Wisconsin. In September, agricultural service workers were paid an average of \$5.78 and \$7.90 per hour in California and Florida, respectively.

Rain hampered field activities in portions of New Mexico, Texas, and Wisconsin during the survey week of September 8-14, 1991. In California, rice and cotton harvests were underway. Grape harvest for raisin, juice, and wine production was active. Almond and walnut harvests were in full swing. Peach, nectarine, plum, Asian pear, and apple harvests were active. Lemon harvest was active in Riverside County. Broccoli, cauliflower, and celery harvests were ongoing while melon harvest activity slowed. Lettuce planting began in the Desert area. In Oregon and Washington, small grain harvests were nearly complete and winter wheat seeding was underway. Pear harvest continued and early variety apple harvest was active. Late vegetable crop harvests continued. Potato harvest was active in Oregon. Blueberry harvest was nearly complete in western Washington. Pepper harvest continued in New Mexico and Texas. Rain hampered fieldwork throughout much of Texas early in the survey week. Small grain seeding continued as weather permitted. Carrot harvest was in full swing in the High Plains. Melon harvest resumed in the Trans Pecos area. In Florida, vegetable planting continued in the southern areas and in the north, squash, eggplant, and cucumber harvests were underway. Citrus producers in several areas harvested early bloom oranges. Grapefruit harvest was active. In North Carolina, tobacco and peach harvest activities slowed and apple harvest was just getting underway. Grape and apple harvests continued in Pennsylvania and New York. In New York, McIntosh apple harvest was active in the Champlain Valley and nearly complete in the Hudson Valley. Vegetable harvests continued at near peak levels. Rain hampered field activities in Wisconsin. Apple and grape harvests continued in Michigan.

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For additional information, call Tom Kurtz at (202) 475-3228. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

All Hired Workers, September 8-14, 1991 1/

State	Number of Workers	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>
	Thousands	Dollars per Hour
NY	31	6.18
PA	36	5.67
NC	47	5.44
FL	45	6.25
MI	37	6.30
WI	28	4.84
TX	41	4.89
NM	8	5.17
OR	36	6.01
WA	40	6.40
CA	200	6.33

Agricultural Service Workers, September 8-14, 1991

State	Number of Workers Working on Farms	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>
	Thousands	Dollars per Hour
FL	2.5	7.90
CA	101.0	5.78

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

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 September 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 September 8-14, 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 8 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 August 1991, for the monthly and seasonal States. No revisions were made but the information for August 1991 is reprinted in this report for your information.

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

The November 13th report will have information for the survey week of October 6-12, 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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