

Farm Labor



**National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service**

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Washington, D.C.

Released June 12, 1992, by the Agricultural Statistics Board. Estimates refer to the week of May 10-16, 1992.

Number of Hired Workers Up

There were 529,000 hired workers on farms and ranches in the eleven surveyed States during the week of May 10-16, 1992. This compares with 487,000 workers during the May 1991 survey week. There were 51,500 agricultural service employees working on farms and ranches in California and Florida compared to 49,000 in May of 1991.

Average May wage rates received by hired workers in the eleven surveyed States ranged from \$4.63 per hour in Wisconsin to \$6.45 per hour in Florida. Wages were higher when compared with last year except in Texas and Washington. In May, agricultural service workers were paid an average of \$5.80 and \$7.44 per hour in California and Florida, respectively.

During the survey week of May 10-16, 1992, field activities were slowed by rain in portions of Texas. Cotton planting continued in the Plains and Cross Timbers areas, as weather permitted. Small grain harvest was just beginning in the Cross Timbers area. Early variety peach harvest was underway. Melon harvest continued in the Rio Grande Valley. Lettuce harvest was active in New Mexico. Cotton planting was nearly complete in California. Navel orange harvest slowed while Valencia orange and south coast lemon harvests continued. Desert table grape harvest began. Cherry, plum, nectarine, and apricot harvests were active. Spring potato harvest was ongoing in the Kern-Tulare district. Cucumber harvest continued. Light harvest of artichokes continued along the central coast while asparagus harvest remained active in the Sacramento Delta and Salinas Valley. Broccoli, cauliflower, and celery harvests were active in the Salinas-Watsonville and Santa Maria areas. Lettuce harvest continued in the Salinas-Watsonville area. Rhubarb harvest was ongoing in western Washington and asparagus was being cut in the east. In Oregon, early variety strawberry harvest was underway. Corn planting was active in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. In New York, asparagus harvest was active. Tobacco transplanting continued in North Carolina. In Florida, Valencia orange harvest slowed seasonally and grapefruit harvest was virtually complete. Vegetable harvests continued.

For Information call Tom Kurtz at (202) 690-3228. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

All Hired Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
Selected States, May 10-16, 1992 1/

State	: Number : of : Workers	: Average : Hours : Worked	: Wage Rates <u>2/</u>			
			: All : Hired	: Paid : Hourly	: Field : Workers	: Field & Lvstk : Workers Comb
	: Thousands	Hours	----- Dollars per Hour -----			
NY	: 21	38.4	6.00	6.41	6.06	5.74
PA	: 31	42.0	6.17	6.00	5.87	5.72
NC	: 39	31.9	5.02	4.71	4.77	4.90
FL	: 47	41.0	6.45	6.00	6.08	6.02
MI	: 26	37.5	6.17	5.10	5.39	5.29
WI	: 25	35.4	4.63	4.37	4.95	4.54
TX	: 48	38.4	5.07	5.08	4.72	4.98
NM	: 7	44.2	5.26	5.24	4.55	4.97
OR	: 29	38.8	6.25	5.91	6.00	6.00
WA	: 39	37.0	5.88	5.60	5.69	5.75
CA	: 217	42.1	6.30	5.83	6.00	6.01

Agricultural Service Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
California and Florida, May 10-16, 1992

State	: Number : Working : on : Farms	: Average : Hours : Worked	: Wage Rates <u>2/</u>			
			: All : Hired	: Paid : Hourly	: Paid : Piece Rate	: Field : Workers
	: Thousands	Hours	----- Dollars per Hour -----			
FL	: 6.5	28.0	7.44	6.85	7.30	7.10
CA	: 45.0	40.4	5.80	5.12	7.18	5.54

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.

All Hired Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
Selected States, April 12-18, 1992 1/

State	Number of Workers	Average Hours Worked	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>			
			All Hired	Paid Hourly	Field Workers	Field & Lvstk Workers Comb
	Thousands	Hours	Dollars per Hour			
NY	24	37.7	5.85	6.14	5.77	5.50
PA	25	40.0	6.10	6.15	5.70	5.62
NC	36	38.5	5.29	5.12	4.72	4.93
FL	65	35.0	6.39	5.80	5.91	5.97
MI	20	41.6	6.34	5.62	5.27	5.73
WI	23	40.2	5.17	4.97	5.97	4.76
TX	53	37.7	5.27	4.86	4.79	4.81
NM	7	43.6	6.06	5.66	5.18	5.36
OR	26	35.4	6.36	6.09	6.05	6.03
WA	28	39.0	6.45	6.02	5.68	6.02
CA	166	42.3	6.70	6.10	6.12	6.16

Agricultural Service Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
California and Florida, April 12-18, 1992

State	Number Working on Farms	Average Hours Worked	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>			
			All Hired	Paid Hourly	Paid Piece Rate	Field Workers
	Thousands	Hours	Dollars per Hour			
FL	11	27.0	7.85	6.50	7.90	7.39
CA	41	36.5	5.82	5.41	6.75	5.59

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.

All Hired Workers: Number and Wage Rates,
Selected States, 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: Number and Wage Rates,
California and Florida, 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.

Reliability of Farm Labor Estimates

Survey Procedures: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service during the last two weeks of May using sampling procedures to ensure every employer of agricultural workers had a chance of being selected.

Two samples of farm operators are selected. First, NASS maintains a list of farms that hire farm workers. Farms on this list are classified by size and type. Those expected to employ large numbers of workers are selected with greater frequency than those hiring few or no workers. A second sample consists of segments of land scientifically selected from aerial photography. Each June, highly trained interviewers locate each selected land segment and identify every farm operating land within the sample segment's boundaries. The names of farms found in these area segments are matched against the list of farms; those not found on the list are included in the labor survey sample to represent all farms not on the NASS list. This methodology is known as multiple frame sampling, with an area sample used to measure the incompleteness of the list. Additionally, a list of agricultural service firms was sampled in California and Florida. The survey reference week was May 10-16, 1992.

Reliability: Two types of errors, sampling and nonsampling, are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both types affect the "precision" of the estimates.

Sampling error occurs because a complete census is not taken. The sampling error measures the variation in estimates from the average of all possible samples. An estimate of 100 with a sampling error of 1 would mean that chances are 19 out of 20 that the estimates from all possible samples averaged together would be between 98 and 102; which is the survey estimate, plus or minus two times the sampling error. The sampling error expressed as a percent of the estimate is called the relative sampling error. The relative sampling error for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 15 and 25 percent at the published State level. Relative sampling errors for the all hired farm worker wage rate generally ranged between 2 and 6 percent. The relative sampling error for hourly paid workers, and field and livestock workers combined ranged between 2 and 8 percent.

Nonsampling errors can occur in complete censuses as well as in sample surveys. They are caused by the inability to obtain correct information from each operation sampled, differences in interpreting questions or definitions, and mistakes in coding or processing the data. Special efforts are taken 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 after the original publication date. The basis for revision must be supported by additional data that directly affect the level of the estimate. Worker numbers and wage rates for April 1992 and May 1991 were subject to revision with this report. No revisions were made but previous data are reprinted in this report for your information.

The next "Farm Labor" report will be released at 3:00 p.m. ET on July 10, 1992.

The July 10th report will have information for the survey week of June 7-13, 1992. The report will include the number of hired workers and the average hours worked. Wage rate information will include the all hired worker wage rate, the hourly wage rate, the field worker wage rate, and the combined field and livestock 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 wage rates will be published for California and Florida.

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