

Farm Labor



National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Washington, D.C.

Released September 11, 1992, by the Agricultural Statistics Board. Estimates refer to the week of August 9-15, 1992.

Number of Hired Workers Down

There were 558,000 hired workers on farms and ranches in the eleven surveyed States during the week of August 9-15, 1992. This compares with 658,000 workers during the August 1991 survey week. There were 71,000 agricultural service employees working on farms and ranches in California and Florida compared to 55,600 in August of 1991.

Average August wage rates received by hired workers in the eleven surveyed States ranged from \$4.95 per hour in Texas to \$6.97 per hour in Washington. Wages were higher when compared with last year except in Michigan and Texas. In August, agricultural service workers were paid an average of \$5.88 and \$6.75 per hour in California and Florida, respectively.

During the survey week of August 9-15, 1992, hot, dry weather prevailed in California and the Pacific Northwest. Cool, damp weather dominated much of the eastern half of the Nation. Rain hampered farm work in portions of Texas. Corn and sorghum harvests continued, as weather permitted. Sweetpotato harvest was underway in East Texas while potato harvest was nearly complete in the High Plains area. Onion and cucumber harvests continued. Chile pepper harvest was active in Texas and New Mexico. Rain hampered hay harvest in portions of New Mexico. In California, raisin and table grape harvests continued. Some wine and juice grapes were picked. Almond harvest continued. Valencia orange, avocado, and grapefruit harvests were ongoing. Stone fruit harvests were nearing completion. Prune harvest was in full swing and Asian pear picking continued. Summer vegetable harvests were tapering off. Small grain harvests continued in Washington and Oregon. Fresh market potato harvest was ongoing. Apple, peach, pear, and berry harvests continued. Summer storage onion harvest was active. Hay and small grain harvests were ongoing in Wisconsin. Fruit and vegetable harvests continued in Michigan and Pennsylvania. Numerous showers and thunderstorms limited farm work in New York. Hay and small grain harvests continued, as weather permitted. Tobacco and peach harvests were active in North Carolina. Tomato transplanting and winter vegetable seeding were ongoing in Florida.

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, August 9-15, 1992 1/

State	Number of Workers	Average Hours Worked	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>			
			All Hired	Paid Hourly	Field Workers	Field & Lvstk Workers Comb
	1,000	Hours	Dollars per Hour			
NY	23	36.5	5.84	6.00	6.01	5.65
PA	24	42.0	5.91	6.17	6.24	5.69
NC	72	24.3	5.04	4.78	4.97	4.97
FL	45	38.0	6.58	6.18	6.00	6.03
MI	24	32.4	5.90	5.56	5.79	5.67
WI	35	39.1	5.48	5.58	5.80	4.69
TX	51	42.0	4.95	4.90	4.72	4.82
NM	6	40.7	5.36	5.27	5.02	5.13
OR	33	42.5	6.08	5.68	6.02	6.00
WA	35	43.0	6.97	6.26	6.31	6.48
CA	210	43.7	6.41	5.90	6.02	6.05

Agricultural Service Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
California and Florida, August 9-15, 1992

State	Number Working on Farms	Average Hours Worked	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>			
			All Hired	Paid Hourly	Paid Piece Rate	Field Workers
	1,000	Hours	Dollars per Hour			
FL	1	44.0	6.75	6.50	3/	6.00
CA	70	41.7	5.88	5.29	7.12	5.63

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/ Insufficient data.

All Hired Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
Selected States, July 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
	: 1,000	Hours	----- Dollars per Hour -----			
NY	: 30	36.7	5.80	5.99	5.82	5.45
PA	: 28	42.0	6.00	6.07	5.97	5.69
NC	: 66	34.2	4.86	4.67	4.63	4.73
FL	: 39	39.5	6.55	6.00	5.99	5.97
MI	: 22	35.0	5.68	5.31	5.29	5.28
WI	: 30	46.6	4.82	4.86	4.65	4.38
TX	: 64	37.9	5.20	4.82	4.60	5.00
NM	: 7	39.1	5.07	4.71	4.37	4.80
OR	: 30	39.9	6.02	5.83	5.98	5.95
WA	: 45	36.0	6.68	5.89	5.88	6.21
CA	: 195	45.8	6.43	5.91	5.83	6.00

Agricultural Service Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
California and Florida, July 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
	: 1,000	Hours	----- Dollars per Hour -----			
FL	: 3.8	41.0	6.17	6.00	<u>3/</u>	5.99
CA	: 81.0	41.1	5.58	5.15	7.12	5.42

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/ Insufficient data.

All Hired Workers: Number and Wage Rates,
Selected States, August 11-17, 1991 1/

State	Number of Workers	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>
	1,000	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: Number and Wage Rates,
California and Florida, August 11-17, 1991

State	Number of Workers Working on Farms	Wage Rates <u>2/</u>
	1,000	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.

Reliability of Farm Labor Estimates

Survey Procedures: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service, except in California, during the last two weeks of August using sampling procedures to ensure every employer of agricultural workers had a chance of being selected. In California, the survey was conducted by the California Employment Development Department.

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 Florida. The survey reference week was August 9-15, 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 3 and 6 percent. The relative sampling error for hourly paid workers, field workers, and field and livestock workers combined also ranged between 3 and 6 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 July 1992 and August 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 October 9, 1992.

The October 9th report will have information for the survey week of September 6-12, 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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