

Farm Labor



**National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service**

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Washington, D.C.

Released October 9, 1992, by the Agricultural Statistics Board. Estimates refer to the week of September 6-12, 1992.

Number of Hired Workers Down

There were 532,000 hired workers on farms and ranches in the eleven surveyed States during the week of September 6-12, 1992. This compares with 549,000 workers during the September 1991 survey week. There were 69,000 agricultural service employees working on farms and ranches in California and Florida compared to 103,500 in September of 1991.

Average September wage rates received by hired workers in the eleven surveyed States ranged from \$5.05 per hour in North Carolina to \$6.68 per hour in California. Wages were higher when compared with last year except in Michigan, New York, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. In September, agricultural service workers were paid an average of \$5.82 and \$6.63 per hour in California and Florida, respectively.

During the survey week of September 6-12, 1992, cool weather continued in the North Central and Northwestern States. Thunderstorms were active from the Plains eastward. In Florida, Homestead area vegetable growers resumed field preparation for planting winter crops. Squash harvest began in the north. Peanut harvest gained momentum in Texas. Tomato and chile pepper harvests continued in East Texas. Carrot harvest was active in the High Plains. Melon harvests were nearly complete in the Trans Pecos area. Chile pepper harvest was active in New Mexico. California's peach, plum, and nectarine harvests were virtually complete. Grape and fig harvests continued. Broccoli, cauliflower, and lettuce harvests were active. Melon and processing tomato harvests were nearly complete. Summer onion and potato harvests continued. In Oregon, apple harvest continued and hazelnut harvest was getting underway. Pear harvest was beginning in the Hood River Valley. Cranberry harvest began along the southern coast. Vegetable harvests continued in the Willamette Valley. Potato harvest was active in Oregon and Washington. In Washington, apple harvest gained momentum and fall raspberry harvest continued in the west. Hay harvests were on going in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Apple, peach, and grape harvests continued in Pennsylvania. Fruit and vegetable harvests continued in Michigan, as weather permitted. In New York, early variety grape harvest was underway and apple harvest was gaining momentum. Pear and late variety peach harvests were nearly complete in the Lake Ontario region. Fruit, vegetable, and tobacco harvests continued in North Carolina.

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, September 6-12, 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 | : 26 | 40.5 | 6.07 | 6.17 | 6.14 | 5.92 |
| PA | : 21 | 41.0 | 5.60 | 5.98 | 5.97 | 5.45 |
| NC | : 57 | 27.5 | 5.05 | 4.67 | 4.90 | 4.98 |
| FL | : 45 | 38.5 | 6.56 | 6.05 | 5.95 | 6.00 |
| MI | : 20 | 35.6 | 5.55 | 5.54 | 5.62 | 5.45 |
| WI | : 32 | 40.8 | 5.67 | 5.85 | 6.00 | 4.89 |
| TX | : 44 | 41.4 | 5.11 | 4.87 | 4.68 | 4.89 |
| NM | : 7 | 46.9 | 5.46 | 4.99 | 5.26 | 5.26 |
| OR | : 25 | 42.1 | 6.17 | 5.82 | 5.96 | 6.02 |
| WA | : 60 | 42.0 | 6.65 | 6.55 | 6.34 | 6.49 |
| CA | : 195 | 41.7 | 6.68 | 6.12 | 6.14 | 6.20 |

Agricultural Service Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
California and Florida, September 6-12, 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 | 43.0 | 6.63 | 6.00 | <u>3/</u> | 6.00 |
| CA | : 68 | 40.0 | 5.82 | 5.32 | <u>7.00</u> | 5.60 |

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, 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 | <u>4/6.53</u> | <u>4/6.00</u> | <u>4/5.94</u> | <u>4/6.08</u> |

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 | <u>3/</u> | 6.00 |
| CA | 70 | 41.7 | <u>4/5.85</u> | <u>4/5.34</u> | <u>4/7.00</u> | 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.

4/ Revised.

All Hired Workers: Number and Wage Rates,
Selected States, September 8-14, 1991 1/

| State | Number of Workers | Wage Rates <u>2/</u> |
|-------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | 1,000 | 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: Number and Wage Rates,
California and Florida, September 8-14, 1991

| State | Number of Workers Working on Farms | Wage Rates <u>2/</u> |
|-------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | 1,000 | Dollars per Hour |
| FL | 2.5 | 7.90 |
| CA | 101.0 | 5.78 |

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 September 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 September 6-12, 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 August 1992 and September 1991 were subject to revision with this report. Revisions were made for California's August 1992 wage rates. The revisions are footnoted where appropriate. The revisions were based on the tabulation of additional reports by the California Employment Development Department.

The next "Farm Labor" report will be released at 3:00 p.m. ET on November 17, 1992.

The November 17th report will have information for the survey week of October 11-17, 1992. The report will include the number of Total Workers, All Hired Workers, Average Hours Worked by Hired Workers, and the All Hired Worker Wage Rates for 16 States along with regional and U.S. level information. State level information will be available for Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. The hourly method of pay wage rate and the wage rate for field and livestock workers will be available for the 16 States and at the regional and U.S. level. The number of self-employed and unpaid workers along with the corresponding average hours worked will be available for California, Florida, Hawaii, and at the regional and U.S. level. 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. The report will also have the 1992 Annual Average Wage Rates, by State, Region, and US.

