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Special Note

NASS is in the process of modifying report layouts in order to improve readability. This is the first issue produced using the new layout. This report issue is published using both layouts but future issues will only be produced using this layout. The previous layout is available on the NASS website: www.nass.usda.gov.

Hired Workers Up 6 Percent, Wage Rates up 3 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 1,238,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 12-18, 2009, up 6 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 875,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 363,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.64 per hour during the July 2009 reference week, up 30 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.04 per hour, up 38 cents from last July, while livestock workers earned \$10.03 per hour compared with \$9.98 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.04 per hour, was up 30 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 39.8 hours for hired workers during the survey week, down 2 percent from a year ago.

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California, and in the Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), and Pacific (Oregon and Washington) regions. Critically dry, deteriorating pastures in California led to increased supplemental feeding and a stronger demand for livestock workers. In the Lake, Corn Belt I, and Appalachian II regions, a cooler, drier reference week compared with last year's wet conditions allowed field activities to progress rapidly. Therefore, more hired workers were necessary. Increased pear and grape acreage in the Pacific region heightened the demand for hired workers. Also, hot, dry weather caused dryland pasture conditions to decline, which led to more livestock movement to irrigated fields and increased supplemental feeding. These factors led to a stronger demand for hired workers.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in Florida and in the Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), and Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah) regions. In Florida, declining demand from the equine, dairy, and horticulture industries due to the continuing economic downturn kept the number of hired workers below last year. Wet conditions in the Delta region compared with last year's dry reference week caused hired worker demand to be lower. In the Mountain II region, development of most field crops remained behind normal due to the cool, wet spring. Therefore, fewer hired workers were needed.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Pacific, Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), and Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico) regions, and in Florida. The higher wages in the Pacific region were due to strong demand for highly skilled workers on fruit operations. In the Corn Belt II region and in Florida, there were more salaried workers working fewer hours. This pushed the average wage higher. In the Mountain III region, a higher percentage of nursery and greenhouse workers caused the average wage to increase.

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Hired Workers and Wage Rates, United States, with Comparisons

[Excludes Alaska]

Farm employment	July 6-12, 2008	April 12-18, 2009	July 12-18, 2009
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Hired workers	828	680	875
150 days or more	585	554	611
149 days or less	243	126	264
Agricultural services			
Workers working on farms	345	223	363
Hired farm and service workers	1,173	903	1,238
	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)
Hours worked			
Hired	40.5	40.1	39.8
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Wage rate for			
All hired workers ^{1 2}	10.34	10.84	10.64
Type of worker			
Field and livestock combined	9.74	10.07	10.04
Field	9.66	9.99	10.04
Livestock	9.98	10.25	10.03

¹ Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

² Excludes Agricultural Service workers.

Number of Workers and Hours Worked by Region and United States: July 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	Hired			
	Number of workers	Expected to be employed		Number of hours worked
		150 days or more	149 days or Less	
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours per week)
Northeast I	37	24	13	38.5
Northeast II	38	27	11	39.1
Appalachian I	40	24	16	37.9
Appalachian II	29	18	11	34.5
Southeast	40	28	12	37.4
Florida	36	32	4	37.3
Lake	76	50	26	34.6
Cornbelt I	56	34	22	36.2
Cornbelt II	28	20	8	33.6
Delta	34	28	6	38.5
Northern Plains	40	28	12	41.0
Southern Plains	61	42	19	39.5
Mountain I	29	22	7	41.1
Mountain II	20	14	6	40.1
Mountain III	18	16	2	45.4
Pacific	117	62	55	40.4
California	170	137	33	46.1
Hawaii	6	5	1	37.4
United States ²	875	611	264	39.8

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker by Region and United States: July 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	Type of worker			Wage rates for all hired workers
	Field	Livestock	Field and livestock combined	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast I	10.32	9.86	10.15	10.92
Northeast II	9.83	9.09	9.65	10.20
Appalachian I	9.18	10.40	9.50	9.88
Appalachian II	9.36	9.76	9.55	10.34
Southeast	8.92	8.84	8.90	9.27
Florida	9.14	9.50	9.20	10.51
Lake	10.55	10.27	10.45	11.04
Cornbelt I	9.78	9.45	9.70	10.30
Cornbelt II	10.88	10.05	10.55	11.01
Delta	8.69	9.15	8.85	9.42
Northern Plains	10.67	10.20	10.50	10.73
Southern Plains	8.94	9.72	9.30	9.88
Mountain I	9.67	9.33	9.50	10.00
Mountain II	10.16	8.54	9.60	10.21
Mountain III	10.09	10.94	10.38	11.19
Pacific	10.93	11.77	11.00	11.43
California	10.10	11.15	10.28	10.98
Hawaii	11.60	13.60	11.81	13.97
United States ²	10.04	10.03	10.04	10.64

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Number of Workers and Hours Worked by Region and United States: April 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	Hired			
	Number of workers	Expected to be employed		Number of hours worked
		150 days or more	149 days or less	
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours per week)
Northeast I	32	26	6	41.1
Northeast II	22	18	4	36.6
Appalachian I	28	25	3	37.4
Appalachian II	21	15	6	36.4
Southeast	36	27	9	42.8
Florida	46	39	7	38.3
Lake	56	42	14	39.5
Cornbelt I	32	26	6	38.0
Cornbelt II	22	17	5	31.8
Delta	33	25	8	36.3
Northern Plains	26	23	3	41.5
Southern Plains	62	53	9	40.7
Mountain I	20	18	2	42.5
Mountain II	19	17	2	41.3
Mountain III	20	19	1	45.2
Pacific	61	40	21	38.0
California	138	119	19	43.9
Hawaii	6	5	1	36.8
United States ²	680	554	126	40.1

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker by Region and United States: April 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	Type of worker			Wage rates for all hired workers
	Field	Livestock	Field and livestock combined	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast I	10.65	9.92	10.35	11.17
Northeast II	10.60	8.86	9.95	11.10
Appalachian I	10.16	10.40	10.25	11.00
Appalachian II	9.23	9.62	9.40	10.10
Southeast	8.80	9.84	9.00	9.22
Florida	9.15	9.35	9.17	10.33
Lake	10.92	10.83	10.88	11.55
Cornbelt I	10.93	10.44	10.72	11.70
Cornbelt II	10.35	12.45	11.15	11.80
Delta	9.30	8.84	9.20	9.60
Northern Plains	10.78	10.08	10.35	10.80
Southern Plains	9.67	9.93	9.80	10.40
Mountain I	10.23	10.01	10.10	10.45
Mountain II	9.68	10.09	9.90	10.60
Mountain III	9.16	9.44	9.29	10.10
Pacific	10.67	12.09	10.80	11.55
California	9.96	10.85	10.14	11.07
Hawaii	11.30	13.20	11.40	13.36
United States ²	9.99	10.25	10.07	10.84

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Number of Workers and Hours Worked by Region and United States: July 6-12, 2008

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	Hired			
	Number of workers	Expected to be employed		Number of hours worked
		150 days or more	149 days or less	
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours per week)
Northeast I	37	24	13	38.0
Northeast II	35	20	15	41.5
Appalachian I	35	26	9	40.3
Appalachian II	21	13	8	33.5
Southeast	41	29	12	36.6
Florida	42	39	3	40.9
Lake	64	44	20	36.5
Cornbelt I	44	33	11	35.0
Cornbelt II	28	21	7	35.6
Delta	39	31	8	39.4
Northern Plains	36	23	13	44.0
Southern Plains	57	43	14	39.0
Mountain I	30	24	6	44.0
Mountain II	23	15	8	43.0
Mountain III	20	17	3	42.0
Pacific	110	51	59	40.6
California	160	127	33	45.5
Hawaii	6	5	1	37.0
United States ²	828	585	243	40.5

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker by Region and United States: July 6-12, 2008

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	Type of worker			Wage rates for all hired workers
	Field	Livestock	Field and livestock combined	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast I	9.68	9.89	9.75	10.50
Northeast II	9.66	8.68	9.50	10.10
Appalachian I	9.04	9.29	9.10	9.60
Appalachian II	9.80	9.38	9.65	10.72
Southeast	8.56	8.27	8.50	9.00
Florida	8.84	9.25	8.90	9.90
Lake	10.10	10.09	10.10	10.75
Cornbelt I	10.27	10.87	10.43	10.90
Cornbelt II	10.29	9.23	9.90	10.25
Delta	9.18	9.74	9.42	9.88
Northern Plains	9.89	10.17	10.00	10.27
Southern Plains	8.60	10.12	9.20	9.80
Mountain I	10.49	8.98	9.78	10.00
Mountain II	10.39	11.14	10.65	11.00
Mountain III	9.21	11.44	9.85	10.55
Pacific	9.85	10.22	9.87	10.35
California	9.85	11.00	10.00	10.74
Hawaii	11.10	12.50	11.21	13.33
United States ²	9.66	9.98	9.74	10.34

¹ Region map on page 16.

² Excludes Alaska.

Combined Field and Livestock Worker Wage Rates, by Type of Farm, by Region and 48 States: July 6-12, 2008

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region ¹	Field crops	Other crops	Livestock and poultry	All farms
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast	10.46	9.68	9.33	9.62
Appalachian	8.98	9.30	9.46	9.28
Southeast	7.90	8.78	8.65	8.70
Lake	11.05	9.78	10.13	10.10
Cornbelt	10.74	9.42	10.24	10.21
Delta	9.07	9.10	9.73	9.42
Northern Plains	9.61	10.72	10.18	10.00
Southern Plains	7.70	8.81	10.04	9.20
Mountain	9.71	(D)	10.26	10.09
Pacific	9.64	9.85	10.62	9.95
48 States	9.47	9.70	9.88	9.74

Combined Field and Livestock Worker Wage Rates, by Type of Farm, by Region and 48 States: July 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region ¹	Field crops	Other crops	Livestock and poultry	All farms
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast	10.99	9.97	9.57	9.89
Appalachian	8.32	10.13	9.76	9.52
Southeast	8.29	9.09	9.10	9.03
Lake	11.57	10.50	10.07	10.45
Cornbelt	10.44	9.48	9.97	9.97
Delta	8.26	9.24	9.22	8.85
Northern Plains	10.83	10.16	10.12	10.50
Southern Plains	(D)	8.77	9.49	9.30
Mountain	(D)	9.46	9.22	9.85
Pacific	10.78	10.39	11.33	10.55
48 States	10.16	10.05	9.95	10.04

¹ Regions consist of the following States:

Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

Appalachian: Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.

Southeast: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina.

Lake: Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin.

Cornbelt: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio.

Delta: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi.

Northern Plains: Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.

Southern Plains: Oklahoma, Texas.

Mountain: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming.

Pacific: California, Oregon, Washington.

48 States: All States, excluding Alaska and Hawaii.

All Hired Worker Wage Rates, by Economic Class of Farm by Region and 48 States: July 6-12, 2008

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region ¹	Gross value sales-\$1,000						All farms
	<50	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000+	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast	10.00	9.72	9.43	9.89	9.68	10.67	10.30
Appalachian	9.10	8.52	10.07	9.32	9.52	10.82	9.97
Southeast	8.76	7.88	9.09	9.52	9.44	9.82	9.48
Lake	7.22	8.61	8.28	11.03	10.71	11.48	10.75
Cornbelt	9.43	10.76	10.54	9.99	10.86	10.88	10.64
Delta	9.61	8.56	10.01	9.54	9.61	10.34	9.88
Northern Plains	6.70	7.95	9.47	10.06	10.35	11.64	10.27
Southern Plains	10.52	9.64	8.66	8.19	9.48	10.15	9.80
Mountain	(D)	10.48	9.83	10.03	8.78	10.97	10.46
Pacific	9.90	11.33	9.86	10.68	10.65	10.65	10.59
48 States	9.69	9.92	9.48	10.09	10.06	10.71	10.32

All Hired Worker Wage Rates, by Economic Class of Farm by Region and 48 States: July 12-18, 2009

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

Region ¹	Gross value sales-\$1,000						All farms
	<50	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000+	
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Northeast	10.68	8.08	8.61	10.44	9.59	11.34	10.55
Appalachian	8.75	8.89	10.39	9.37	8.99	10.77	10.06
Southeast	10.15	8.23	10.38	8.58	9.54	10.18	9.86
Lake	(D)	7.12	9.45	10.02	9.53	12.22	11.04
Cornbelt	9.16	9.96	11.79	9.61	11.24	10.91	10.53
Delta	9.77	(D)	9.68	9.55	9.30	8.92	9.42
Northern Plains	(D)	9.57	9.64	11.19	10.43	11.12	10.73
Southern Plains	9.52	10.10	10.49	9.19	10.29	9.84	9.88
Mountain	11.40	8.48	8.45	10.05	10.47	10.69	10.41
Pacific	10.65	10.76	11.58	11.42	10.98	11.18	11.15
48 States	10.13	9.69	10.16	10.26	10.31	11.03	10.62

¹ Regions consist of the following States:

Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

Appalachian: Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.

Southeast: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina.

Lake: Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin.

Cornbelt: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio.

Delta: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi.

Northern Plains: Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.

Southern Plains: Oklahoma, Texas.

Mountain: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming.

Pacific: California, Oregon, Washington.

48 States: All States, excluding Alaska and Hawaii.

Field and Livestock Workers by Type of Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers.]

Type of farm	July 6-12, 2008	April 12-18, 2009	July 12-18, 2009
	(percent of field and livestock workers)	(percent of field and livestock workers)	(percent of field and livestock workers)
Field crops	13	11	16
Other crops	56	51	54
Livestock, dairy, and poultry	31	38	30

Hired Workers by Economic Class of Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Gross value of sales	July 6-12, 2008	April 12-18, 2009	July 12-18, 2009
	(percent of hired workers)	(percent of hired workers)	(percent of hired workers)
Less than \$50,000	11	11	12
\$50,000-\$99,999	5	4	5
\$100,000-\$249,999	10	10	10
\$250,000-\$499,999	11	9	11
\$500,000-\$999,999	13	12	12
\$1,000,000 and over	50	54	50

Hired Workers by Number of Workers on Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Number of workers on farm	July 6-12, 2008	April 12-18, 2009	July 12-18, 2009
	(percent of hired workers)	(percent of hired workers)	(percent of hired workers)
Employed on farms hiring			
1 worker	10	11	10
2 workers	9	10	9
3-6 workers	19	18	19
7-10 workers	9	8	9
11-20 workers	11	11	11
21-50 workers	14	13	13
51 or more workers	28	29	29

Agricultural Services

Agricultural service operations provided 363,000 workers for the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 12-18, 2009. Agricultural service workers in California numbered 117,000 this July, up 4 percent from last year. Florida's number of agricultural service workers was 2,000, unchanged from last year.

The average wages received by agricultural service workers in California and Florida were \$10.35 and \$10.65 per hour, respectively. Comparable wages in July 2008 were \$10.00 per hour in California and \$9.85 per hour in Florida.

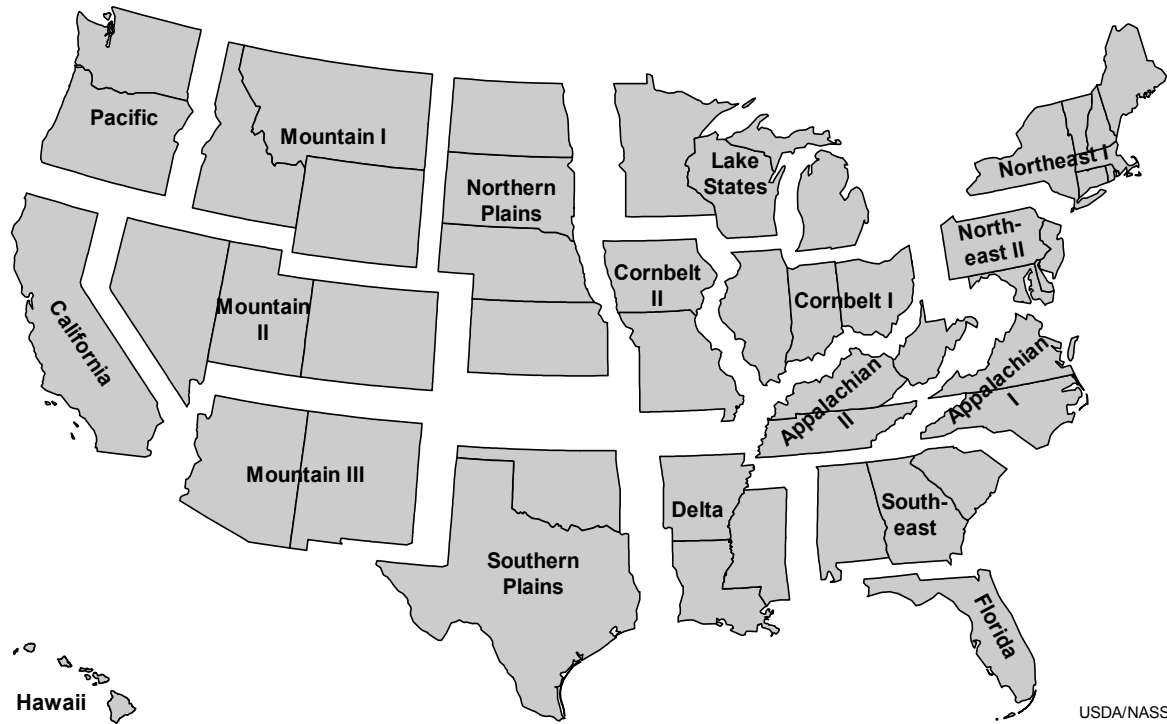
Number of Agricultural Service Workers, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates, for California, Florida, and United States

[Data are for agricultural services performed on the farm by custom service units. These statistics are not included in the State-Regional tables.]

State	Number of workers working on farms			Hours worked			Wage rates ¹		
	July 2008	April 2009	July 2009	July 2008	April 2009	July 2009	July 2008	April 2009	July 2009
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours)	(hours)	(hours)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
California	113.0	98.0	117.0	38.0	37.0	37.1	10.00	10.85	10.35
Florida	2.0	7.0	2.0	43.0	33.0	43.0	9.85	10.30	10.65
United States	345.0	223.0	363.0	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

¹ Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided to some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

Farm Labor Regions



USDA/NASS

Region

States

Northeast I	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont.
Northeast II	Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania.
Appalachian I	North Carolina, Virginia.
Appalachian II	Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia.
Southeast	Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina.
Lake	Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin.
Cornbelt I	Illinois, Indiana, Ohio.
Cornbelt II	Iowa, Missouri.
Delta	Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi.
Northern Plains	Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.
Southern Plains	Oklahoma, Texas.
Mountain I	Idaho, Montana, Wyoming.
Mountain II	Colorado, Nevada, Utah.
Mountain III	Arizona, New Mexico.
Pacific	Oregon, Washington.

Farm Labor Definitions

The following definitions are provided to assist in interpreting statistics published in quarterly Farm Labor reports. To ensure consistency in data collection, the questionnaires and instruction manual used by the interviewers provide more in-depth explanations of these terms.

Farm or Ranch: A place that sells, or would normally sell, at least \$1,000 worth of agricultural products during the year.

Agricultural Work: Work done on a farm or ranch in connection with the production of agricultural products, including nursery and greenhouse products and animal specialties such as fur farms or apiaries. Also included is work done off the farm to handle farm related business, such as trips to buy feed or deliver products to local market.

Hired Worker: Anyone, other than an agricultural service worker, who was paid for at least one hour of agricultural work on a farm or ranch. Worker type is determined by what the employee was primarily hired to do, not necessarily what work was done during the survey week. Type of workers include:

Field Workers: Employees engaged in planting, tending and harvesting crops including operation of farm machinery on crop farms.

Livestock Workers: Employees tending livestock, milking cows or caring for poultry, including operation of farm machinery on livestock or poultry operations.

Supervisors: Hired managers, range foremen, crew leaders, etc.

Other Workers: Employees engaged in agricultural work not included in the other three categories. Bookkeepers and pilots are examples.

Methods of Pay: All wage rates are calculated based on total wages paid and total hours worked during the survey reference week. Wages paid other than hourly (bi-weekly, monthly, etc.) are converted to an hourly basis prior to summarization. Wages paid by piece rate (per quantity of produce picked, etc.) are also converted to an hourly basis.

Perquisites: Benefits, such as cash bonuses, housing, or meals, provided to an employee in addition to pay are included in perquisites. Wage rates published in this release do not include the value of these benefits.

Term of Employment: The length of time during the year the farm operator expects to employ those workers who were on the payroll during the survey week.

Definitions - continued

Agricultural Service: Any farm-related service performed on a farm or ranch on a contract or fee basis. This primarily includes activities performed by contract workers on fruit, vegetable, or berry operations. It also includes custom work (see below), veterinarian work, artificial insemination, sheep shearing, milk testing, or any other farm-related activity performed on a farm or ranch on a “fee per service” basis rather than hourly.

Contract Labor: Contract workers are paid by a crew leader, contractor, buyer, processor, cooperative, or other person who has an oral or written agreement with a farmer/rancher. Pruning, thinning, weeding or harvesting of fruit, vegetable or berry crops are examples. A machine is not a part of the service activity provided by the contractor.

Custom Work: Work performed by machines and labor hired as a unit. Hay baling, combining, corn or cotton picking, spraying, fertilizing, and laser leveling are examples of custom work when the equipment is included in the service activity.

Type of Farm (or Ranch): An operation is classified in the farm type which accounts for the largest portion of the total gross value of sales for its agricultural production.

The three types of farms broken out in this publication are:

Field Crops: A farm producing wheat, rice, corn, soybeans, barley, dry beans, rye, sorghum, cotton, popcorn, tobacco, or other such crops.

Other Crops: A farm producing vegetables, melons, berry crops, grapes, tree nuts, citrus fruits, deciduous tree fruits, avocados, dates, figs, olives, nursery, or greenhouse crops. This category also includes farms producing potatoes, sugar crops, hay, peanuts, hops, mint, and maple syrup.

Livestock or Poultry: A farm producing cattle, hogs, sheep, goats, milk, chickens, eggs, turkeys, or animal specialties such as furs, fish, honey, etc.

Gross Value of Sales: This includes all income during a year from the sale of crops, livestock, dairy, poultry, or other related agricultural products, including the landlord's share and the value of products produced under contract. When commodities are placed under CCC loan, they are considered as sold.

Abbreviations and Symbols

(D): Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.

(NA): Not available.

Survey Methodology

Survey Procedures: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the last two weeks of July 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 an area sampling frame. 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 NASS list of farms; those not found on the list are included in the labor survey sample to represent all farms. 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 July 12-18, 2009.

Reliability: Two types of errors, sampling and non-sampling, are always present in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both types affect the "accuracy" 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 number of hired workers at the U.S. level is normally less than 5 percent. The relative sampling error for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 8 and 20 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 0.8 percent. The relative sampling error was 0.8 percent for the combined field and livestock worker wage rate. Relative sampling errors for the all hired farm worker wage rate generally ranged between 2 and 6 percent at the regional levels. Relative sampling errors for wage rates published by type of farm and economic class of farm generally ranged between 2 and 19 percent at the regional level.

Non-sampling errors can occur in a complete census 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 editing, coding or processing the data. Special efforts are taken at each step of the survey to minimize non-sampling 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 2009 and July 2008 were subject to revision with this report. If any revisions were made to previous data, they are reprinted in this report for your information, and they are identified as such.

Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity statisticians in the Environmental and Demographics Section of the Environmental, Economics, and Demographics Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to nass@nass.usda.gov.

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Jerry Campbell – Field Crops Chemical Usage(202) 720-5581

Liana Cuffman – Livestock Chemical Usage, Postharvest Chemical Usage.....(202) 690-0392

Doug Farmer – Fruit Chemical Usage, Vegetable Chemical Usage.....(202) 720-7492

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