



NASS

FACT FINDERS FOR AGRICULTURE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Farm Labor

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Hired Workers Down 4 Percent, Wage Rates Up 5 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 956,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 9-15, 2006, down 4 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 718,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 238,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.79 per hour during the April 2006 reference week, up 44 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.96 per hour, up 40 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$9.30 per hour compared with \$9.14 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.07 per hour, was up 35 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 40.8 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 2 percent from a year ago.

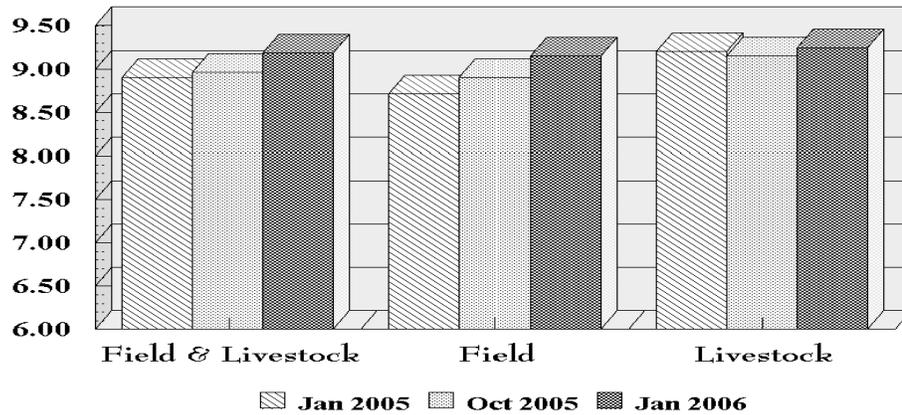
The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in California and in the Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina) and Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia) regions. In California, eight consecutive weeks of rain and unseasonably cool weather caused major delays in fieldwork across the northern two-thirds of the State. These factors, along with the ongoing worker shortages due to the continued tight security at the Mexican border and the controversy over immigration, have combined to keep the number of hired workers much lower than last year. Persistent dryness over the Southeast region has kept soil moisture levels inadequate for field preparation and planting, reducing the need for field workers. Pasture growth in the region has been severely curtailed by the lack of rain, delaying movement of cattle to grazing and decreasing the demand for livestock workers. In the Appalachian II region, late thunderstorms just prior to the reference week left soils too wet to work and caused delays in field activity. Therefore, fewer hired workers were needed.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), and Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio) regions, and in Florida. In the Delta region, a return to more normal weather patterns compared to last year's cool, wet reference week caused hired worker numbers to be higher. Continued dry conditions in the Appalachian I region kept pastures from greening up, necessitating more supplemental feeding and heightening the demand for livestock workers. In the Corn Belt I region, cold, damp weather just prior to the reference week had put many field activities on hold. Considerably warmer, drier conditions during the reference week allowed fieldwork to gain momentum, increasing the need for hired workers. Strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industries in Florida caused more field workers to be required.

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), Northeast I (New England and New York), Corn Belt I and Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming) regions. In the Northeast I and II regions, the higher wages were due to a larger than normal percentage of nursery and greenhouse workers in the work force. The higher wages in the Corn Belt I region were due to a lower proportion of part time workers in the work force, strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industries, and the increasing need for highly skilled machine operators on grain farms. In the Mountain I region, the higher wages were due to more salaried workers putting in fewer hours and a high percentage of nursery and greenhouse workers.

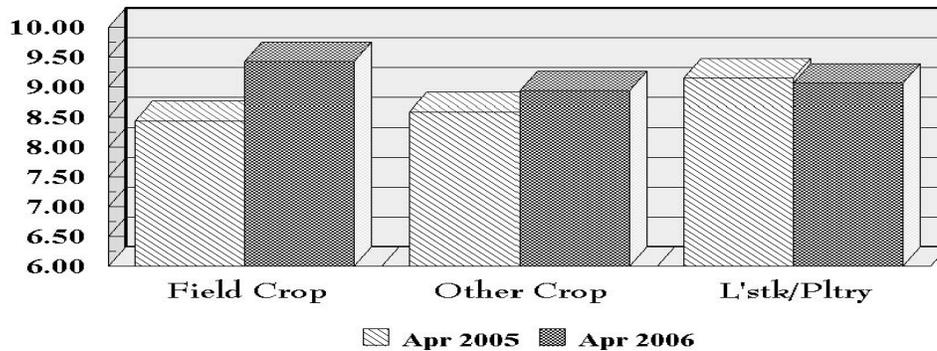
U.S. Wage Rates by Type of Worker

Dollars/Hour



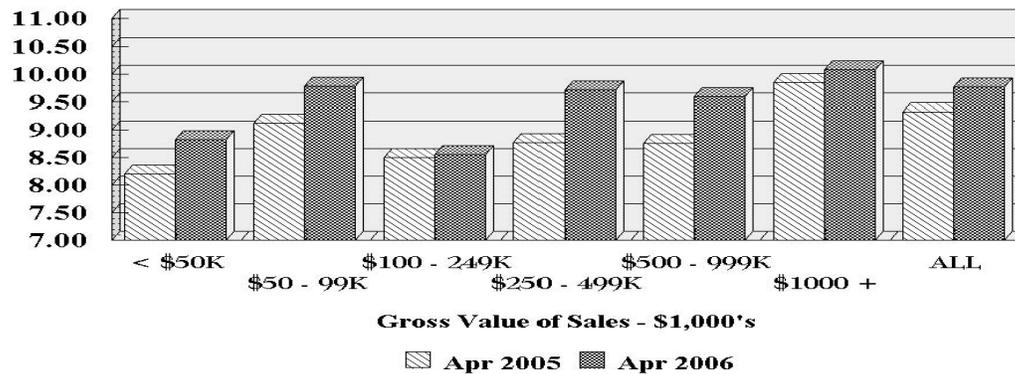
Wage Rate of Field & Livestock Workers By Type of Farm

Dollars/Hour



Wage Rates of All Hired Workers by Economic Class of Farm

Dollars/Hour



**Farm Labor: Employment and Wage Rates, United States,
April 9-15, 2006, with Comparisons ¹**

Farm Employment	April 10-16, 2005	January 8-14, 2006	April 9-15, 2006
	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>
Hired Workers	753	*614	718
150 Days or More	600	*512	580
149 Days or Less	153	*102	138
Agricultural Services Workers Working on Farms	247	180	238
Hired Farm & Service Workers	1,000	*794	956
	<i>Hours per Week</i>	<i>Hours per Week</i>	<i>Hours per Week</i>
Hours Worked Hired	39.9	38.2	40.8
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
Wage Rate for All Hired Workers ^{2 3}	9.35	*10.10	9.79
Field & Livestock Combined	8.72	*9.17	9.07
Field	8.56	*9.11	8.96
Livestock	9.14	*9.26	9.30

* Revised.

¹ Excludes AK.

² Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

³ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

**Hired Workers: Number and Hours Worked by Region
and United States, April 9-15, 2006 ¹**

U.S. and Region ²	Hired			
	Number of Workers	Expected to be Employed		Number of Hours Worked
		150 Days or More	149 Days or Less	
	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>Hours per Week</i>
Northeast I	34	28	6	43.1
Northeast II	25	20	5	40.2
Appalachian I	34	27	7	39.9
Appalachian II	29	20	9	37.3
Southeast	31	24	7	36.5
FL	52	44	8	40.4
Lake	57	40	17	38.0
Cornbelt I	45	38	7	42.4
Cornbelt II	27	23	4	38.3
Delta	34	26	8	40.6
Northern Plains	27	21	6	39.4
Southern Plains	55	42	13	39.2
Mountain I	23	19	4	44.1
Mountain II	19	17	2	50.6
Mountain III	17	16	1	48.7
Pacific	65	52	13	37.5
CA	137	117	20	43.1
HI	7	6	1	36.6
US ³	718	580	138	40.8

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

² Region map on page 14.

³ Excludes AK.

**Hired Workers: Wage Rates for Type of Worker and All Hired Workers
by Region and United States, April 9-15, 2006 ¹**

U.S. and Region ²	Type of Worker			Wage Rates for All Hired Workers
	Field	Livestock	Field & Lvstk Combined	
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
Northeast I	9.71	9.54	9.65	10.49
Northeast II	10.54	8.80	10.10	10.75
Appalachian I	8.84	8.34	8.70	9.48
Appalachian II	8.20	7.75	8.00	8.85
Southeast	8.49	8.68	8.55	9.19
FL	8.37	8.50	8.39	9.19
Lake	9.32	9.94	9.63	10.30
Cornbelt I	10.18	9.52	10.00	10.49
Cornbelt II	8.45	10.38	9.46	10.12
Delta	7.64	8.15	7.75	8.00
Northern Plains	9.67	8.64	9.25	9.84
Southern Plains	8.24	9.06	8.64	9.37
Mountain I	9.20	8.57	8.81	9.22
Mountain II	8.39	8.98	8.65	9.08
Mountain III	8.14	9.13	8.60	9.17
Pacific	9.24	10.13	9.45	10.10
CA	8.95	10.85	9.22	10.19
HI ⁴	9.79		9.93	11.96
US ³	8.96	9.30	9.07	9.79

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

² Region map on page 14.

³ Excludes AK.

⁴ Insufficient data for livestock.

**Hired Workers: Number and Hours Worked by Region
and United States, January 8-14, 2006¹**

U.S. and Region ²	Hired			
	Number of Workers	Expected to be Employed		Number of Hours Worked
		150 Days or More	149 Days or Less	
	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>Hours per Week</i>
Northeast I	23	22	1	38.1
Northeast II	24	21	3	38.1
Appalachian I	26	23	3	33.9
Appalachian II	24	15	9	32.1
Southeast	28	23	5	34.5
FL	49	38	11	39.2
Lake	43	37	6	37.8
Cornbelt I	37	32	5	36.1
Cornbelt II	25	23	2	36.5
Delta	25	18	7	31.2
Northern Plains	23	19	4	39.5
Southern Plains	43	37	6	39.2
Mountain I	17	16	1	35.9
Mountain II	22	20	2	43.2
Mountain III	21	16	5	46.9
Pacific	52	43	9	35.8
CA	*125	*103	*22	*41.6
HI	7	6	1	37.5
US ³	*614	*512	*102	38.2

* Revised.

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

² Region map on page 14.

³ Excludes AK.

**Hired Workers: Wage Rates for Type of Worker and All Hired Workers
by Region and United States, January 8-14, 2006 ¹**

U.S. and Region ²	Type of Worker			Wage Rates for All Hired Workers
	Field	Livestock	Field & Lvstk Combined	
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
Northeast I	10.42	8.80	9.56	11.04
Northeast II	9.89	7.79	9.29	10.56
Appalachian I	9.35	9.61	9.48	10.29
Appalachian II	8.17	9.73	8.78	9.61
Southeast	8.74	8.77	8.75	9.45
FL	8.80	8.80	8.80	9.55
Lake	10.33	9.30	9.69	10.73
Cornbelt I	11.79	9.51	10.55	11.33
Cornbelt II	9.61	10.69	10.52	11.50
Delta	7.90	8.40	8.12	8.68
Northern Plains	10.59	9.25	9.75	10.31
Southern Plains	7.53	8.74	8.17	8.89
Mountain I	8.68	8.17	8.27	8.99
Mountain II	8.12	8.64	8.42	9.32
Mountain III	8.02	9.12	8.40	9.35
Pacific	9.36	10.47	9.48	10.25
CA	*8.99	*10.50	*9.20	*10.30
HI ⁴	10.14		10.27	11.95
US ³	*9.11	*9.26	*9.17	*10.10

* Revised.

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

² Region map on page 14.

³ Excludes AK.

⁴ Insufficient data for livestock.

**Hired Workers: Number and Hours Worked by Region
and United States, April 10-16, 2005 ¹**

U.S. and Region ²	Hired			
	Number of Workers	Expected to be Employed		Number of Hours Worked
		150 Days or More ³	149 Days or Less ³	
	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>Hours per Week</i>
Northeast I	34	28	6	38.6
Northeast II	26	22	4	39.8
Appalachian I	28	24	4	34.3
Appalachian II	32	24	8	34.7
Southeast	36	26	10	32.0
FL	49	41	8	38.7
Lake	55	38	17	34.8
Cornbelt I	41	30	11	37.7
Cornbelt II	27	20	7	34.2
Delta	28	24	4	39.4
Northern Plains	27	22	5	40.3
Southern Plains	55	47	8	42.3
Mountain I	24	20	4	44.5
Mountain II	20	17	3	41.6
Mountain III	18	17	1	44.8
Pacific	64	47	17	40.2
CA	182	147	35	45.0
HI	7	6	1	39.6
US ³	753	600	153	39.9

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

² Region map on page 14.

³ Excludes AK.

**Hired Workers: Wage Rates for Type of Worker and All Hired Workers
by Region and United States, April 10-16, 2005 ¹**

U.S. and Region ²	Type of Worker			Wage Rates for All Hired Workers
	Field	Livestock	Field & Lvstk Combined	
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
Northeast I	9.01	8.51	8.83	9.47
Northeast II	9.24	8.62	9.05	9.65
Appalachian I	8.38	8.85	8.50	9.07
Appalachian II	8.38	7.69	8.08	8.59
Southeast	8.41	8.30	8.38	8.83
FL	8.20	9.90	8.37	9.31
Lake	8.99	10.05	9.45	9.95
Cornbelt I	8.84	9.17	8.91	9.51
Cornbelt II	8.85	9.27	9.06	9.38
Delta	7.37	7.18	7.34	7.64
Northern Plains	9.33	9.69	9.46	9.70
Southern Plains	8.13	9.15	8.53	9.28
Mountain I	7.89	8.49	8.23	8.43
Mountain II	7.70	8.41	8.02	8.50
Mountain III	7.95	9.40	8.51	9.18
Pacific	8.87	10.78	9.23	9.95
CA	8.62	9.60	8.76	9.48
HI ⁴	9.67		9.79	11.33
US ³	8.56	9.14	8.72	9.35

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

² Region map on page 14.

³ Excludes AK.

⁴ Insufficient data for livestock.

**Field and Livestock Workers Combined: Wage Rates, by Type
of Farm, by Region and 48 States ¹**

Region ²	April 10-16, 2005			
	Field Crops	Other Crops	Livestock & Poultry	All Farms
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
Northeast	8.57	9.48	8.23	8.93
Appalachian	7.95	8.52	8.06	8.26
Southeast	7.54	8.28	8.87	8.37
Lake	9.33	9.06	9.96	9.45
Cornbelt	8.67	8.74	9.47	8.97
Delta	7.28	7.09	7.12	7.34
Northern Plains	9.76	8.39	9.64	9.46
Southern Plains	7.93	8.87	8.87	8.53
Mountain	8.36	8.08	8.44	8.26
Pacific	9.43	8.55	(³)	8.92
48 States	8.44	8.59	9.15	8.73

**Field and Livestock Workers Combined: Wage Rates, by Type
of Farm, by Region and 48 States ¹**

Region ²	April 9-15, 2006			
	Field Crops	Other Crops	Livestock & Poultry	All Farms
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
Northeast	9.63	10.18	9.20	9.84
Appalachian	7.81	8.70	8.26	8.39
Southeast	8.26	8.39	8.49	8.45
Lake	(³)	9.65	9.78	9.63
Cornbelt	(³)	8.47	9.07	9.82
Delta	7.62	7.88	8.12	7.75
Northern Plains	9.76	9.84	8.63	9.25
Southern Plains	8.10	8.34	9.35	8.64
Mountain	8.71	8.80	8.77	8.68
Pacific	9.56	9.00	10.32	9.28
48 States	9.42	8.93	9.14	9.07

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

² Regions consist of the following States:

Northeast: CT, DE, MD, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT.

Appalachian: KY, NC, TN, VA, WV.

Southeast: AL, FL, GA, SC.

Lake: MI, MN, WI.

Cornbelt: IA, IL, IN, MO, OH.

Delta: AR, LA, MS.

Northern Plains: KS, NE, ND, SD.

Southern Plains: OK, TX.

Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY.

Pacific: CA, OR, WA.

48 States: All States, excluding AK and HI.

³ Insufficient data.

**All Hired Workers: Wage Rates, by Economic Class of Farm
by Region and 48 States ¹**

Region ²	April 10-16, 2005						
	Gross Value Sales-\$1,000's						All Farms
	<50	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000+	
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
N. East	9.41	9.10	8.04	8.85	9.54	10.36	9.55
Appal.	8.17	9.17	7.61	8.99	8.57	9.81	8.81
S. East	6.40	(³)	9.45	9.21	8.16	9.44	9.13
Lake	9.06	9.35	9.46	9.12	9.45	10.80	9.95
Cornbelt	9.20	8.10	8.74	8.40	9.19	10.33	9.46
Delta	6.15	7.95	7.20	8.44	6.95	8.23	7.64
N. Plains	7.60	6.84	9.61	9.21	8.49	10.93	9.70
S. Plains	8.22	8.32	8.91	8.82	7.92	10.13	9.28
Mountain	6.78	(³)	7.59	7.42	9.60	9.07	8.67
Pacific	8.62	8.54	9.31	9.22	9.28	9.75	9.60
48 States	8.20	9.12	8.50	8.77	8.76	9.85	9.32

**All Hired Workers: Wage Rates, by Economic Class of Farm
by Region and 48 States ¹**

Region ²	April 9-15, 2006						
	Gross Value Sales-\$1,000's						All Farms
	<50	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000+	
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
N. East	10.61	9.46	7.90	9.89	9.36	11.61	10.60
Appal.	7.84	9.65	7.32	8.13	9.48	10.16	9.20
S. East	7.31	7.35	7.77	9.38	9.87	9.34	9.19
Lake	7.77	11.88	11.52	(³)	9.72	10.26	10.30
Cornbelt	10.70	9.36	7.02	9.28	9.15	10.04	10.36
Delta	8.08	8.68	8.71	7.95	8.86	7.74	8.00
N. Plains	9.63	(³)	8.86	8.54	9.60	10.79	9.84
S. Plains	8.12	9.62	8.99	11.49	7.89	9.83	9.37
Mountain	7.84	8.96	9.14	7.30	9.95	9.74	9.16
Pacific	11.15	10.18	9.67	10.53	10.04	10.12	10.16
48 States	8.83	9.78	8.56	9.71	9.59	10.08	9.77

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

² Regions consist of the following States:

Northeast: CT, DE, MD, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT.

Appalachian: KY, NC, TN, VA, WV.

Southeast: AL, FL, GA, SC.

Lake: MI, MN, WI.

Cornbelt: IA, IL, IN, MO, OH.

Delta: AR, LA, MS.

Northern Plains: KS, NE, ND, SD.

Southern Plains: OK, TX.

Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY.

Pacific: CA, OR, WA.

48 States: All States, excluding AK and HI.

³ Insufficient data.

**Field and Livestock Workers: Distribution
by Type of Farm, 48 States^{1 2 3}**

Type of Farm	April 10-16, 2005	January 8-14, 2006	April 9-15, 2006
	<i>Percent of Field and Livestock Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Field and Livestock Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Field and Livestock Workers</i>
Field Crops	14	9	10
Other Crops	56	49	54
Livestock, Dairy, & Poultry	30	42	36

**Hired Workers: Distribution by Economic
Class of Farm, 48 States^{1 3}**

Gross Value of Sales	April 10-16, 2005	January 8-14, 2006	April 9-15, 2006
	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>
Less than \$50,000	11	12	10
\$50,000-\$99,999	6	5	5
\$100,000-\$249,999	11	11	10
\$250,000-\$499,999	11	10	11
\$500,000-\$999,999	12	9	11
\$1,000,000 and over	49	53	53

Hired Workers: Distribution by Category, United States,^{1 3}

Category	April 10-16, 2005	January 8-14, 2006	April 9-15, 2006
	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>
Employed on Farms Hiring			
1 Worker	11	13	10
2 Workers	10	9	10
3-6 Workers	16	17	17
7-10 Workers	8	9	9
11-20 Workers	12	10	12
21-50 Workers	13	12	14
51 or more Workers	30	30	28

¹ 48 States, excluding AK and HI.

² Field and Livestock Workers combined.

³ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

Agricultural Services

Agricultural service operations provided 238,000 workers for the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 9-15, 2006. Agricultural service workers in California numbered 83,000 this April, down 4 percent from last year. Florida's number of agricultural service workers was 8,000, down 20 percent from last year.

The average wages received by agricultural service workers in California and Florida were \$9.81 and \$9.60 per hour, respectively. Comparable wages in April 2005 were \$9.35 in California and \$9.10 in Florida.

**Agricultural Service Workers: Number, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates,
for California, Florida, and United States ¹**

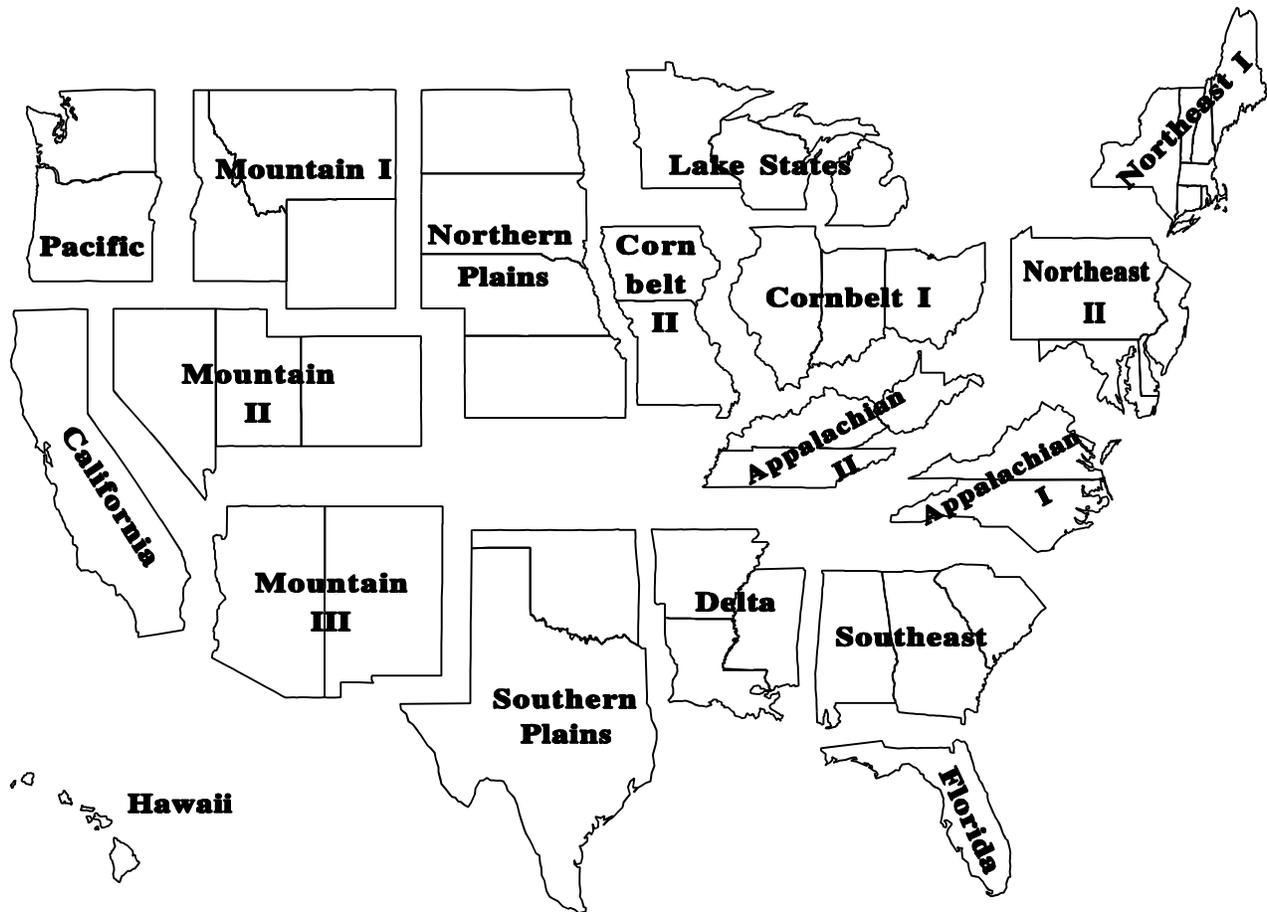
State	Number of Workers Working on Farms			Hours Worked ²			Wage Rates ^{2 3}		
	Apr 2005	Jan 2006	Apr 2006	Apr 2005	Jan 2006	Apr 2006	Apr 2005	Jan 2006	Apr 2006
	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
CA	97.0	82.0	83.0	37.3	32.5	33.4	9.35	9.28	9.81
FL	10.0	9.0	8.0	39.0	40.0	40.0	9.10	9.20	9.60
US	247.0	180.0	238.0						

¹ Data are for Agricultural Services performed on the farm by custom service units such as crew leaders or custom crews. These statistics are not included in the State-Regional tables.

² United States data not available.

³ Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided to some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

Farm Labor Regions



Region	States
Northeast I	CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT.
Northeast II	DE, MD, NJ, PA.
Appalachian I	NC, VA.
Appalachian II	KY, TN, WV.
Southeast	AL, GA, SC.
Lake	MI, MN, WI.
Cornbelt I	IL, IN, OH.
Cornbelt II	IA, MO.
Delta	AR, LA, MS.
Northern Plains	KS, NE, ND, SD.
Southern Plains	OK, TX.
Mountain I	ID, MT, WY.
Mountain II	CO, NV, UT.
Mountain III	AZ, NM.
Pacific	OR, WA.

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: Places that sell, 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: Wage rates are calculated based on total wages and hours worked during the survey week.

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: Service on a contract or fee basis such as veterinarian work, artificial insemination, sheep shearing, milk testing, etc., performed on the farm or ranch. This also includes custom crews and crew leaders.

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 value of sales for its agricultural production.

The three types of farms are:

Field Crops: A farm producing wheat, rice, corn, soybeans, barley, dry beans, rye, sorghum, cotton, popcorn, tobacco, potatoes, sugar crops, hay, peanuts, hops, mint, 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.

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

Reliability of Farm Labor Estimates

Survey Procedures: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the last two weeks of April 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 April 9-15, 2006.

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 10 and 29 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 1.0 percent. The relative sampling error was 1.1 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 9 percent at the regional levels. Relative sampling errors for wage rates published by type of farm and economic class of farm generally ranged between 3 and 23 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 2005 and January 2006 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.

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The next *Farm Labor* report will be released at 3 p.m. ET on August 18, 2006.

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