



# Farm Labor

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## **Hired Workers Down 10 Percent, Wage Rates Up 1 Percent From a Year Ago**

There were 978,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 10-16, 2005, down 10 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 746,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 232,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.34 per hour during the April 2005 reference week, up 11 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.55 per hour, up 8 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$9.23 per hour compared with \$8.95 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$8.73 per hour, was up 14 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.

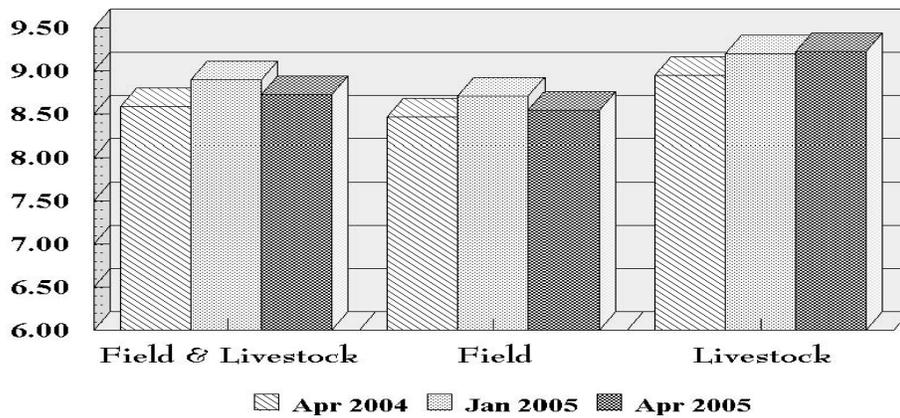
The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in California, Florida, and in the Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), and Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) regions. In California, a weak El Nino weather pattern brought unseasonably cool temperatures and record rainfall to the southern half of the State from January through March, affecting quality and interrupting planting, harvesting, and crop development. The wet weather had the largest impact on vegetable crops and nursery and floriculture production, which kept the demand for hired workers well behind the previous year. Field work in Florida was hampered by wet soils in northern areas, and estimated citrus production was down considerably from 2004. These factors combined to reduce the need for hired workers. In the Mountain II region, heavy snowfall and rains in Colorado slowed field activities, so fewer workers were required. The cool, wet spring and below normal soil temperatures in the Northeast II region delayed planting of field and vegetable crops and slowed the development of hay and pastures. Thus, the demand for hired workers was lower. In the Northern Plains region, wet conditions limited field activities and lessened the need for hired workers.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), and Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia) regions. Ideal weather conditions in the Southern Plains region allowed land preparation and planting to progress rapidly, increasing the need for field workers. In the Delta region, Louisiana's warm, dry weather more than offset the wet conditions experienced in Arkansas and Mississippi, which led to greater demand for hired workers. In the Mountain III region, continued expansion in the dairy, vegetable, nursery, and greenhouse industries necessitated more hired workers. Strong demand from vegetable, tobacco, and Christmas tree operations in the Appalachian I region kept worker numbers above last year.

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Southern Plains, Mountain III, Northern Plains, and Florida regions. The higher wages in the Southern Plains were due to a larger concentration of full time workers. In the Mountain III and Florida regions, wages were up due to a higher percentage of skilled vegetable, nursery, and greenhouse workers. Wages in the Northern Plains region were higher because of more salaried workers putting in fewer hours, which pushed their hourly wage higher.

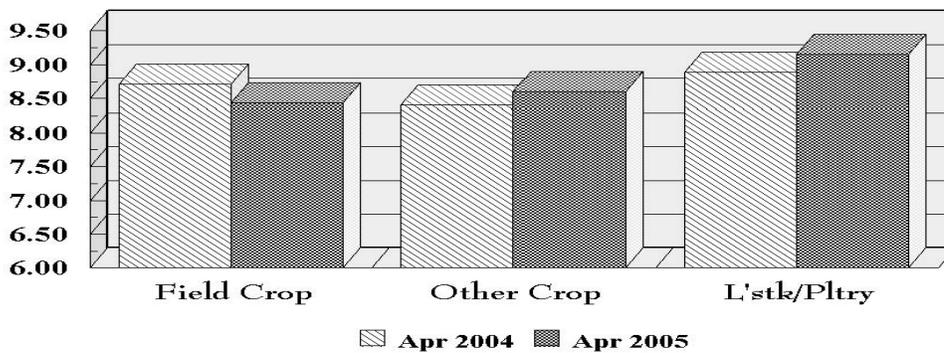
## U.S. Wage Rates by Type of Worker

Dollars/Hour



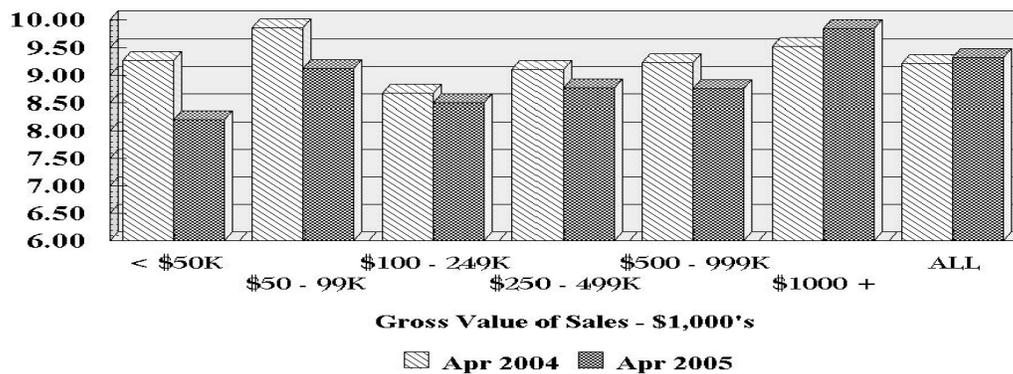
## Wage Rate of Field & Livestock Workers By Type of Farm

Dollars/Hour



## Wage Rates of All Hired Workers by Economic Class of Farm

Dollars/Hour



**Farm Labor: Employment and Wage Rates, United States,  
April 10-16, 2005, with Comparisons <sup>1</sup>**

Farm Employment	April 11-17, 2004	January 9-15, 2005	April 10-16, 2005
	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>
Hired Workers	827	*589	746
150 Days or More	651	*494	596
149 Days or Less	176	*95	150
Agricultural Services Workers Working on Farms	257	*185	232
Hired Farm & Service Workers	1,084	*774	978
	<i>Hours per Week</i>	<i>Hours per Week</i>	<i>Hours per Week</i>
Hours Worked Hired	40.6	*37.0	39.8
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>
Wage Rate for All Hired Workers <sup>2 3</sup>	9.23	*9.78	9.34
Field & Livestock Combined	8.59	*8.90	8.73
Field	8.47	*8.71	8.55
Livestock	8.95	*9.20	9.23

\* Revised.

<sup>1</sup> Excludes AK.

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

<sup>3</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

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

U.S. and Region <sup>2</sup>	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	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	175	143	32	44.2
HI	7	6	1	39.6
US <sup>3</sup>	746	596	150	39.8

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2</sup> Region map on page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes AK.

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

U.S. and Region <sup>2</sup>	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	8.59	10.34	8.82	9.48
HI <sup>4</sup>	9.67		9.79	11.33
US <sup>3</sup>	8.55	9.23	8.73	9.34

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2</sup> Region map on page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes AK.

<sup>4</sup> Insufficient data for livestock.

**Hired Workers: Number and Hours Worked by Region  
and United States, January 9-15, 2005 <sup>1</sup>**

U.S. and Region <sup>2</sup>	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	20	3	36.6
Northeast II	18	14	4	33.7
Appalachian I	25	22	3	33.4
Appalachian II	28	19	9	30.0
Southeast	24	20	4	35.3
FL	48	37	11	38.7
Lake	43	37	6	34.0
Cornbelt I	28	24	4	33.2
Cornbelt II	21	18	3	35.1
Delta	18	16	2	30.7
Northern Plains	27	25	2	36.7
Southern Plains	50	41	9	37.0
Mountain I	12	11	1	38.1
Mountain II	17	15	2	43.4
Mountain III	19	17	2	45.2
Pacific	38	33	5	35.9
CA	*143	*119	*24	*40.1
HI	7	6	1	36.3
US <sup>3</sup>	*589	*494	*95	*37.0

\* Revised.

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2</sup> Region map on page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes AK.

**Hired Workers: Wage Rates for Type of Worker and All Hired Workers  
by Region and United States, January 9-15, 2005 <sup>1</sup>**

U.S. and Region <sup>2</sup>	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	9.47	9.17	9.32	10.37
Northeast II	8.47	8.76	8.62	9.66
Appalachian I	8.65	9.03	8.82	9.64
Appalachian II	8.46	8.04	8.25	9.02
Southeast	7.96	7.25	7.71	8.41
FL	8.50	8.60	8.51	9.52
Lake	9.65	9.67	9.66	10.61
Cornbelt I	9.40	8.95	9.18	10.06
Cornbelt II	9.16	10.28	10.07	10.63
Delta	9.52	7.63	8.97	9.29
Northern Plains	10.26	8.60	9.20	9.82
Southern Plains	8.01	9.35	8.75	9.56
Mountain I	9.42	8.82	8.95	9.76
Mountain II	7.37	9.65	8.83	9.93
Mountain III	7.70	8.41	8.02	8.61
Pacific	9.32	9.90	9.39	10.33
CA	*8.56	*9.93	*8.86	*9.82
HI <sup>4</sup>	9.94		9.98	11.52
US <sup>3</sup>	*8.71	*9.20	*8.90	*9.78

\* Revised.

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2</sup> Region map on page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes AK.

<sup>4</sup> Insufficient data for livestock.

**Hired Workers: Number and Hours Worked by Region  
and United States, April 11-17, 2004 <sup>1</sup>**

U.S. and Region <sup>2</sup>	Hired			
	Number of Workers	Expected to be Employed		Number of Hours Worked
		150 Days or More <sup>3</sup>	149 Days or Less <sup>3</sup>	
	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>Hours per Week</i>
Northeast I	37	29	8	39.1
Northeast II	31	25	6	39.3
Appalachian I	27	20	7	36.6
Appalachian II	35	23	12	36.2
Southeast	37	27	10	37.1
FL	57	53	4	38.3
Lake	57	43	14	35.5
Cornbelt I	44	32	12	40.6
Cornbelt II	28	22	6	33.7
Delta	25	19	6	39.8
Northern Plains	31	24	7	42.3
Southern Plains	46	38	8	41.0
Mountain I	24	21	3	42.8
Mountain II	26	20	6	40.8
Mountain III	17	16	1	45.7
Pacific	64	43	21	36.8
CA	234	190	44	45.9
HI	7	6	1	37.7
US <sup>3</sup>	827	651	176	40.6

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2</sup> Region map on page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes AK.

**Hired Workers: Wage Rates for Type of Worker and All Hired Workers  
by Region and United States, April 11-17, 2004 <sup>1</sup>**

U.S. and Region <sup>2</sup>	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	9.47	8.81	9.18	10.35
Northeast II	8.68	8.87	8.73	9.25
Appalachian I	8.01	8.38	8.14	8.82
Appalachian II	8.48	8.62	8.55	9.06
Southeast	7.88	8.71	8.12	8.42
FL	7.85	8.60	7.94	8.79
Lake	9.20	9.95	9.60	10.10
Cornbelt I	9.04	8.87	9.00	9.74
Cornbelt II	9.04	9.03	9.04	9.48
Delta	7.75	7.47	7.70	7.86
Northern Plains	8.87	8.51	8.73	8.95
Southern Plains	7.50	7.93	7.62	8.13
Mountain I	8.14	8.41	8.31	8.57
Mountain II	9.66	8.83	9.29	9.84
Mountain III	7.55	8.20	7.81	8.37
Pacific	9.02	10.16	9.16	9.91
CA	8.42	9.83	8.56	9.30
HI <sup>4</sup>	9.51		9.66	11.26
US <sup>3</sup>	8.47	8.95	8.59	9.23

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2</sup> Region map on page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes AK.

<sup>4</sup> Insufficient data for livestock.

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

Region <sup>2</sup>	April 11-17, 2004			
	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	( <sup>3</sup> )	8.82	8.96	8.97
Appalachian	8.38	8.25	8.44	8.38
Southeast	6.85	7.80	8.65	8.01
Lake	8.88	9.29	9.95	9.60
Cornbelt	9.71	8.50	9.05	9.01
Delta	7.72	7.79	7.55	7.70
Northern Plains	8.96	9.04	8.39	8.73
Southern Plains	7.81	7.56	7.61	7.62
Mountain	7.99	9.12	8.16	8.44
Pacific	9.78	8.48	9.88	8.64
48 States	8.71	8.41	8.89	8.58

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

Region <sup>2</sup>	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	( <sup>3</sup> )	8.92
48 States	8.44	8.59	9.15	8.73

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Insufficient data.

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

Region <sup>2</sup>	April 11-17, 2004						
	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	10.56	9.79	9.53	9.04	9.46	10.23	9.85
Appal.	7.28	7.59	8.53	7.78	8.77	9.86	8.95
S. East	8.32	7.90	9.39	8.49	8.25	8.73	8.65
Lake	8.63	9.40	9.33	9.70	9.62	10.87	10.10
Cornbelt	8.70	9.58	8.43	9.18	9.90	10.40	9.65
Delta	7.38	7.48	7.42	8.39	7.96	7.92	7.86
N. Plains	7.54	6.35	7.83	9.60	8.18	10.33	8.95
S. Plains	8.39	7.09	7.16	8.88	7.92	8.38	8.13
Mountain	( <sup>3</sup> )	( <sup>3</sup> )	7.22	8.90	9.64	9.30	8.99
Pacific	10.88	10.23	8.89	9.46	9.58	9.33	9.38
48 States	9.26	9.86	8.67	9.11	9.23	9.52	9.21

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

Region <sup>2</sup>	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	( <sup>3</sup> )	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	( <sup>3</sup> )	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

<sup>1</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Insufficient data.

**Field and Livestock Workers: Distribution  
by Type of Farm, 48 States<sup>1 2 3</sup>**

Type of Farm	April 11-17, 2004	January 9-15, 2005	April 10-16, 2005
	<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	12	11	14
Other Crops	57	50	56
Livestock, Dairy, & Poultry	31	39	30

**Hired Workers: Distribution by Economic  
Class of Farm, 48 States<sup>1 3</sup>**

Gross Value of Sales	April 11-17, 2004	January 9-15, 2005	April 10-16, 2005
	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>
Less than \$50,000	11	10	11
\$50,000-\$99,999	7	5	6
\$100,000-\$249,999	22	12	11
\$250,000-\$499,999	10	11	11
\$500,000-\$999,999	11	11	12
\$1,000,000 and over	39	51	49

**Hired Workers: Distribution by Category, United States,<sup>1 3</sup>**

Category	April 11-17, 2004	January 9-15, 2005	April 10-16, 2005
	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>	<i>Percent of Hired Workers</i>
Employed on Farms Hiring			
1 Worker	9	13	11
2 Workers	10	9	10
3-6 Workers	18	18	16
7-10 Workers	7	9	8
11-20 Workers	11	13	12
21-50 Workers	11	12	13
51 or more Workers	34	26	30

<sup>1</sup> 48 States, excluding AK and HI.

<sup>2</sup> Field and Livestock Workers combined.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

## Agricultural Services

Agricultural service operations provided 232,000 workers for the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 10-16, 2005. Agricultural service workers in California numbered 82,000 this April, down 27 percent from last year. Florida's number of agricultural service workers was 10,000, up 11 percent from last year.

The average wages received by agricultural service workers in California and Florida were \$9.26 and \$9.10 per hour, respectively. Comparable wages in April 2004 were \$8.70 in California and \$9.25 in Florida.

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

State	Number of Workers Working on Farms			Hours Worked <sup>2</sup>			Wage Rates <sup>2 3</sup>		
	Apr 2004	Jan 2005	Apr 2005	Apr 2004	Jan 2005	Apr 2005	Apr 2004	Jan 2005	Apr 2005
	<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	112.0	*75.0	82.0	36.9	*32.6	37.8	8.70	*9.27	9.26
FL	9.0	8.0	10.0	38.0	40.0	39.0	9.25	9.50	9.10
US	257.0	*185.0	232.0						

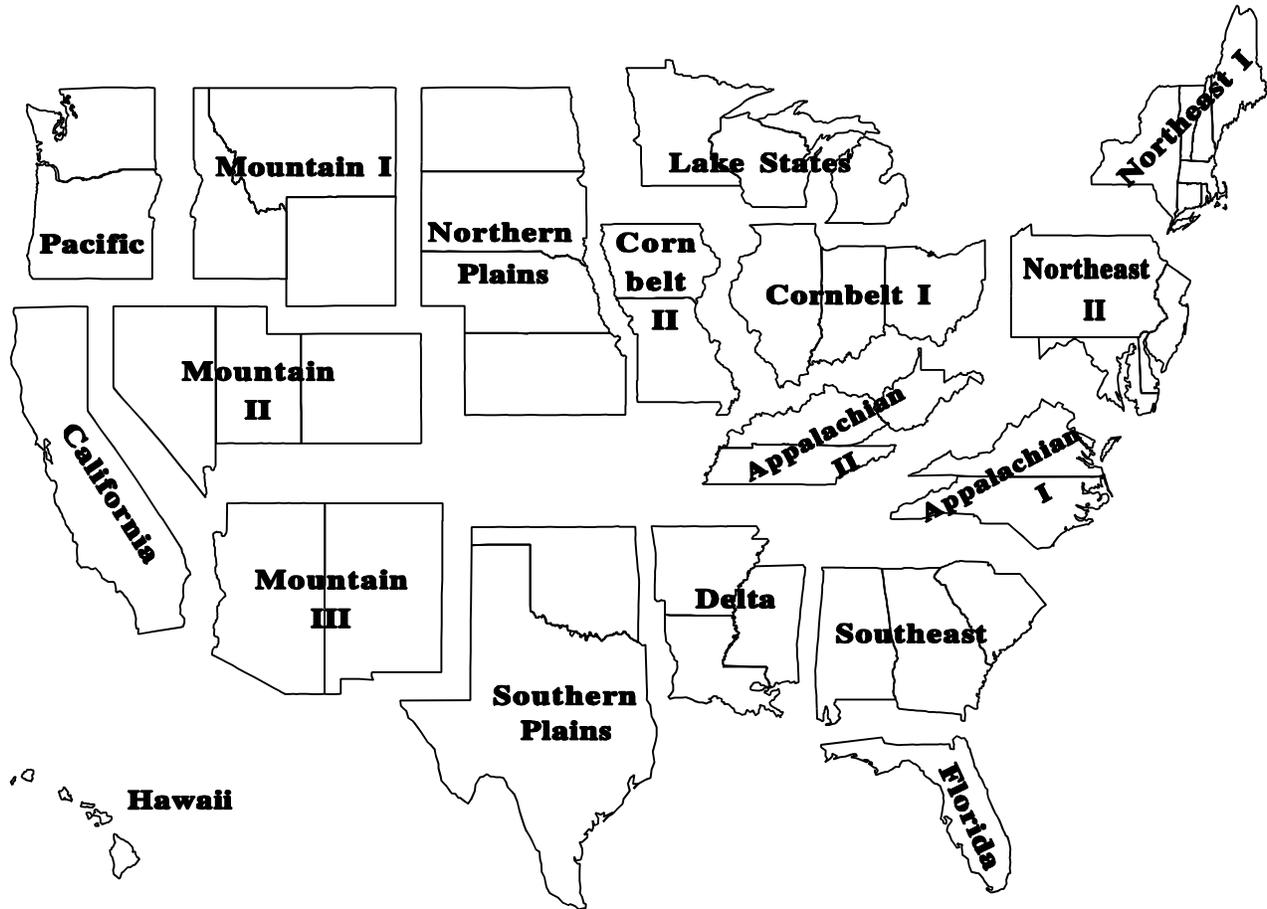
\* Revised.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> United States data not available.

<sup>3</sup> 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 \$1000 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, 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 10-16, 2005.

**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 5 and 28 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 0.9 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 7 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 18 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 2004 and January 2005 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 19, 2005.

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