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Hired Workers Down 1 Percent, Wage Rates Up Fractionally From a Year Ago

There were 1,141,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 9-15, 2011, down 1 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 828,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 313,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$11.15 per hour during the October 2011 reference week, up 2 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.54 per hour, up 5 cents from last October, while livestock workers earned \$10.67 per hour compared with \$10.28 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.57 per hour, was up 14 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 41.6 for hired workers during the survey week, down fractionally from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California and in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), and Pacific (Oregon and Washington) regions. In California and in the Pacific region, the wet spring and cooler than normal growing season delayed crop development, lessening the need for hired workers. Wetter conditions compared with last year's reference week kept the demand for hired workers lower in the Corn Belt I region. In the Southern Plains, prolonged drought conditions led to considerable culling of livestock throughout the summer. Therefore, fewer hired workers were needed during the October reference week.

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), and Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri) regions. In the Lake, Mountain I, and Corn Belt II regions, above normal temperatures and windy conditions were more than enough to offset minor rain delays, and field activities progressed rapidly. This resulted in a stronger demand for hired workers. In spite of rain in the Southeast region, most fields remained workable due to prolonged earlier dryness. Therefore, harvest and planting activities kept worker demand higher. In the Appalachian I region, increased activity on vegetable operations led to a greater need for hired workers.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Northeast I (New England and New York), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), Pacific, and Southern Plains regions. In the Northeast I and Pacific regions, the higher wages were due to strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industry. The higher wages in the Delta region were due to a lower proportion of part time workers. In the Southern Plains region, there were more salaried workers working fewer hours which pushed the average wage up.

The 2011 U.S. all hired worker annual average wage rate was \$11.07 per hour, up 1 percent from the 2010 annual average wage rate of \$10.95 per hour. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was \$10.33 per hour, up 14 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock combined annual average wage rate at the U.S. level was \$10.36, up 1 percent from last year's annual average wage rate of \$10.22.

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Hired Workers and Wage Rates - United States

[Excludes Alaska]

Farm employment	October 10-16, 2010	July 10-16, 2011	October 9-15, 2011
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Hired workers			
150 days or more	589	603	590
149 days or less	238	231	238
Total	827	834	828
Agricultural services			
Workers working on farms	330	350	313
Hired farm and service workers	1,157	1,184	1,141
	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)
Hours worked by hired workers	41.7	41.2	41.6
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Wage rate			
Field and livestock combined	10.43	10.28	10.57
Field	10.49	10.27	10.54
Livestock	10.28	10.29	10.67
All hired workers ^{1 2}	11.13	10.93	11.15

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 - Regions and United States: October 9-15, 2011

[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	40	30	10	41.8
Northeast II	36	26	10	39.0
Appalachian I	39	28	11	41.3
Appalachian II	20	11	9	35.7
Southeast	29	19	10	33.8
Florida	41	34	7	37.3
Lake	77	46	31	40.8
Corbelt I	50	31	19	39.5
Corbelt II	33	20	13	38.3
Delta	31	22	9	44.7
Northern Plains	39	30	9	43.8
Southern Plains	45	37	8	41.0
Mountain I	29	21	8	50.7
Mountain II	18	14	4	41.1
Mountain III	19	16	3	49.1
Pacific	90	49	41	41.4
California	185	150	35	43.6
Hawaii	7	6	1	38.0
United States ²	828	590	238	41.6

¹ Region map on page 17.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker - Regions and United States: October 9-15, 2011

[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	11.36	11.18	11.30	11.84
Northeast II	10.04	10.43	10.15	11.16
Appalachian I	9.54	10.50	9.70	10.10
Appalachian II	9.44	9.58	9.50	10.43
Southeast	9.87	9.09	9.65	10.10
Florida	9.25	10.20	9.35	10.56
Lake	11.59	10.71	11.30	11.83
Cornbelt I	11.15	11.01	11.10	11.38
Cornbelt II	12.07	10.60	11.50	11.66
Delta	9.12	9.68	9.20	9.64
Northern Plains	12.58	10.61	11.85	12.13
Southern Plains	9.53	11.03	10.10	10.78
Mountain I	10.38	10.08	10.25	10.45
Mountain II	10.90	10.22	10.60	11.36
Mountain III	8.77	10.55	9.50	10.10
Pacific	11.42	11.78	11.45	12.04
California	10.15	11.20	10.30	10.96
Hawaii	12.55	13.60	12.65	14.83
United States ²	10.54	10.67	10.57	11.15

¹ Region map on page 17.

² Excludes Alaska.

Number of Workers and Hours Worked - Regions and United States: July 10-16, 2011

[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	38	28	10	41.3
Northeast II	33	21	12	39.2
Appalachian I	41	31	10	42.8
Appalachian II	32	19	13	34.0
Southeast	31	22	9	39.4
Florida	40	37	3	40.3
Lake	74	50	24	36.7
Cornbelt I	41	29	12	34.4
Cornbelt II	33	25	8	37.1
Delta	25	18	7	39.5
Northern Plains	37	27	10	45.2
Southern Plains	51	40	11	40.0
Mountain I	28	21	7	44.5
Mountain II	19	16	3	46.0
Mountain III	16	15	1	46.8
Pacific	111	56	55	42.5
California	177	142	35	44.7
Hawaii	7	6	1	38.0
United States ²	834	603	231	41.2

¹ Region map on page 17.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker - Regions and United States: July 10-16, 2011

[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	10.63	9.83	10.35	11.00
Northeast II	9.93	10.46	10.05	10.95
Appalachian I	9.20	9.89	9.35	9.85
Appalachian II	9.49	9.51	9.50	10.50
Southeast	9.18	8.72	9.05	9.70
Florida	9.90	10.20	9.95	12.15
Lake	10.33	10.24	10.30	10.75
Cornbelt I	10.66	10.63	10.65	11.15
Cornbelt II	12.25	11.43	12.00	12.15
Delta	9.24	10.27	9.50	9.85
Northern Plains	11.04	10.96	11.00	11.20
Southern Plains	10.14	10.25	10.20	10.60
Mountain I	10.18	9.91	10.05	10.25
Mountain II	9.77	9.19	9.55	10.55
Mountain III	9.89	10.65	10.20	11.10
Pacific	10.82	10.56	10.80	11.28
California	10.10	10.90	10.20	10.90
Hawaii	12.70	13.25	12.76	14.91
United States ²	10.27	10.29	10.28	10.93

¹ Region map on page 17.

² Excludes Alaska.

Number of Workers and Hours Worked - Regions and United States: October 10-16, 2010

[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	39	27	12	44.3
Northeast II	37	28	9	41.9
Appalachian I	35	23	12	39.9
Appalachian II	22	14	8	39.1
Southeast	24	16	8	38.0
Florida	43	37	6	39.0
Lake	67	46	21	37.5
Cornbelt I	56	29	27	38.3
Cornbelt II	29	20	9	37.8
Delta	33	20	13	43.4
Northern Plains	38	27	11	44.8
Southern Plains	52	43	9	42.0
Mountain I	22	17	5	45.2
Mountain II	19	15	4	42.0
Mountain III	17	15	2	47.1
Pacific	94	49	45	41.2
California	193	157	36	44.7
Hawaii	7	6	1	37.0
United States ²	827	589	238	41.7

¹ Region map on page 17.

² Excludes Alaska.

Wage Rates by Type of Worker - Regions and United States: October 10-16, 2010

[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	10.95	10.10	10.65	11.17
Northeast II	11.84	10.17	11.30	12.05
Appalachian I	9.01	9.99	9.24	9.70
Appalachian II	9.87	9.72	9.80	10.60
Southeast	8.72	9.75	9.05	9.78
Florida	9.79	9.05	9.65	11.00
Lake	11.58	10.06	11.05	11.88
Cornbelt I	11.19	10.48	10.95	11.54
Cornbelt II	11.62	11.02	11.40	11.60
Delta	8.55	8.85	8.64	9.07
Northern Plains	12.26	10.79	11.70	11.93
Southern Plains	9.68	10.01	9.85	10.30
Mountain I	10.11	9.66	9.90	10.60
Mountain II	10.91	11.01	10.95	11.95
Mountain III	9.43	10.07	9.75	10.45
Pacific	10.95	10.97	10.95	11.59
California	10.20	11.25	10.35	11.20
Hawaii	12.00	14.30	12.16	14.38
United States ²	10.49	10.28	10.43	11.13

¹ Region map on page 17.

² Excludes Alaska.

Combined Field and Livestock Worker Wage Rates by Type of Farm - Regions and 48 States: October 10-16, 2010

[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	10.43	10.95	(D)	10.95
Appalachian	9.07	9.48	9.87	9.45
Southeast	(D)	9.63	9.27	9.43
Lake	(D)	10.94	10.03	11.05
Cornbelt	11.80	10.51	10.38	11.11
Delta	8.91	8.70	9.18	8.64
Northern Plains	11.94	(D)	11.26	11.70
Southern Plains	9.19	10.18	10.03	9.85
Mountain	9.57	10.53	10.04	10.17
Pacific	11.56	10.35	11.50	10.53
48 States	10.72	10.34	10.53	10.43

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

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.

Combined Field and Livestock Worker Wage Rates by Type of Farm - Regions and 48 States: October 9-15, 2011

[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	9.75	10.85	10.92	10.79
Appalachian	9.64	9.24	10.26	9.64
Southeast	(D)	9.31	9.67	9.47
Lake	12.56	10.91	11.15	11.30
Cornbelt	12.35	10.01	10.84	11.26
Delta	9.35	8.84	9.54	9.20
Northern Plains	13.23	10.76	10.51	11.85
Southern Plains	10.04	8.86	11.12	10.10
Mountain	10.18	9.57	10.33	10.09
Pacific	12.45	10.50	11.10	10.66
48 States	11.34	10.22	10.71	10.57

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

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 - Regions and 48 States: October 10-16, 2010

[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	(D)	9.83	9.26	10.22	10.16	12.34	11.59
Appalachian	9.68	9.57	8.64	9.48	10.42	10.89	10.04
Southeast	8.45	9.49	10.39	9.58	10.63	10.96	10.57
Lake	10.03	(D)	11.96	12.01	12.44	11.88	11.88
Cornbelt	8.65	11.58	12.53	10.49	11.29	12.60	11.56
Delta	7.14	8.59	9.03	10.45	10.56	9.44	9.07
Northern Plains	(D)	10.63	10.26	12.40	11.01	12.76	11.93
Southern Plains	9.40	8.03	10.04	9.40	10.50	11.15	10.30
Mountain	11.55	9.47	10.56	10.50	12.30	11.10	10.97
Pacific	11.48	12.51	10.96	11.17	11.79	11.27	11.31
48 States	11.20	10.43	10.82	10.60	11.35	11.47	11.11

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

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 - Regions and 48 States: October 9-15, 2011

[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	(D)	9.62	12.16	11.54	12.47	11.44	11.53
Appalachian	8.20	9.98	9.31	9.96	10.68	10.70	10.20
Southeast	8.71	9.85	9.62	12.62	9.80	10.83	10.38
Lake	11.05	10.32	10.52	10.81	11.59	12.47	11.83
Cornbelt	11.59	10.18	12.72	10.35	11.08	12.45	11.49
Delta	(D)	9.53	8.88	8.91	9.40	10.01	9.64
Northern Plains	9.85	(D)	10.34	10.92	12.28	12.78	12.13
Southern Plains	9.60	(D)	10.30	10.96	9.97	10.77	10.78
Mountain	8.54	10.68	10.63	13.70	11.00	10.97	10.56
Pacific	10.71	12.10	11.28	11.91	11.72	11.17	11.30
48 States	9.81	10.41	10.89	11.27	11.38	11.37	11.12

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

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	October 10-16, 2010	July 10-16, 2011	October 9-15, 2011
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Field crops	17	13	16
Other crops	53	58	56
Livestock, dairy, and poultry	30	29	28

Hired Workers by Economic Class of Farm

[Excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Gross value of sales	October 10-16, 2010	July 10-16, 2011	October 9-15, 2011
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Less than \$50,000	9	12	8
\$50,000-\$99,999	4	5	5
\$100,000-\$249,999	10	10	9
\$250,000-\$499,999	12	10	11
\$500,000-\$999,999	13	13	13
\$1,000,000 and over	52	50	54

Hired Workers by Number of Workers on Farm

[Excluding Alaska. Excludes agricultural service workers]

Number of workers on farm	October 10-16, 2010	July 10-16, 2011	October 9-15, 2011
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Employed on farms hiring			
1 worker	9	9	8
2 workers	9	9	9
3-6 workers	16	19	16
7-10 workers	8	8	9
11-20 workers	12	11	13
21-50 workers	13	14	15
51 or more workers	33	30	30

Annual Average Number of Hired Workers and Hours Worked - Regions and United States: 2010 and 2011

[Excludes agricultural service workers]

United States and region ¹	Hired workers		Hours worked	
	2010 (1,000)	2011 (1,000)	2010 (hours per week)	2011 (hours per week)
Northeast I	33.5	35.3	42.0	41.0
Northeast II	32.5	31.3	39.8	39.1
Appalachian I	33.8	32.5	39.0	40.6
Appalachian II	22.8	24.3	34.9	34.9
Southeast	28.5	29.3	37.1	37.5
Florida	44.0	43.5	37.7	38.2
Lake	59.8	63.5	35.9	38.4
Cornbelt I	45.8	40.0	36.0	36.4
Cornbelt II	28.0	26.5	35.5	38.2
Delta	32.3	29.0	39.3	41.4
Northern Plains	33.3	36.0	43.0	42.5
Southern Plains	53.8	49.8	40.3	40.0
Mountain I	22.5	25.0	43.1	45.4
Mountain II	19.8	18.0	42.3	43.0
Mountain III	18.3	17.8	45.5	45.7
Pacific	82.8	79.8	41.1	40.8
California	170.3	160.5	43.1	43.9
Hawaii	6.3	7.0	36.7	37.9
United States ²	767.5	748.8	40.1	40.8

¹ Region map on page 17.

² Excludes Alaska.

Annual Average Wage Rates - Regions and United States: 2010 and 2011

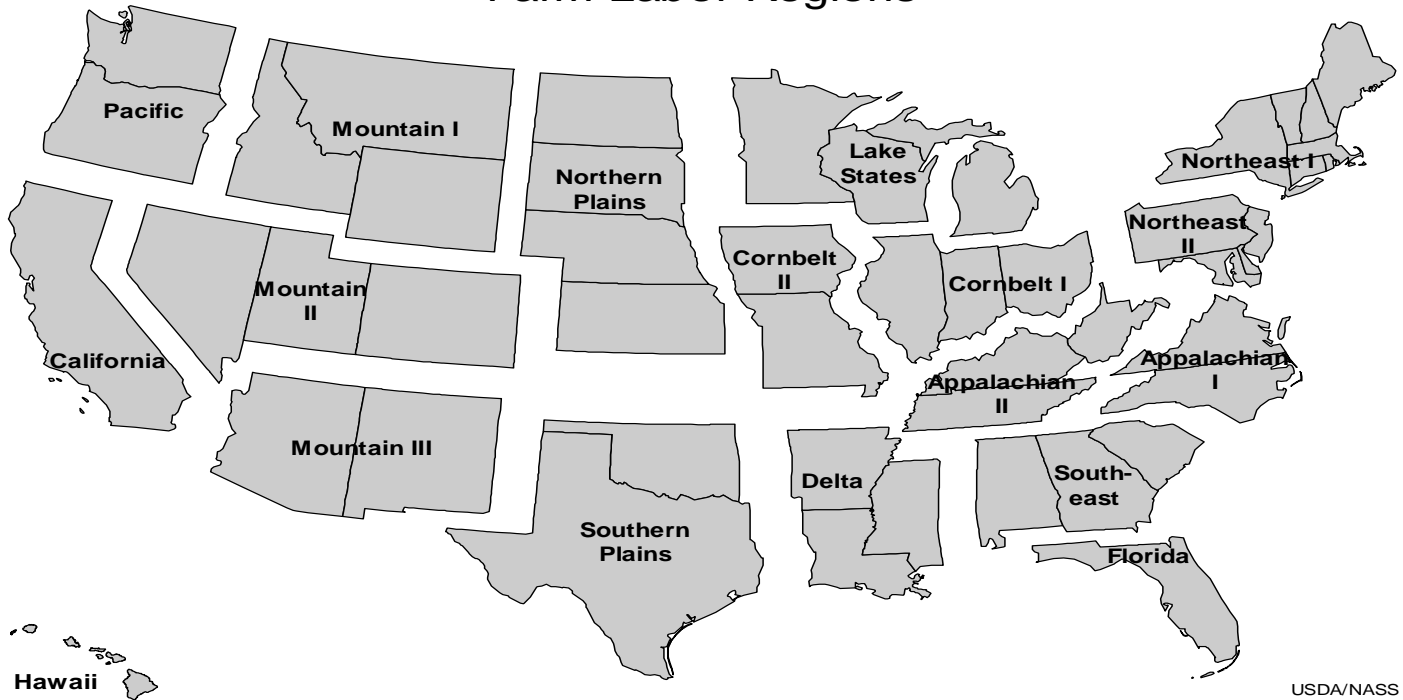
[Excludes agricultural service workers. Annual rates are averages of the published wage rates for each survey week weighted by the number of hours worked during the week]

United States and region ¹	All hired		Field		Field and livestock	
	2010 (dollars per hour)	2011 (dollars per hour)	2010 (dollars per hour)	2011 (dollars per hour)	2010 (dollars per hour)	2011 (dollars per hour)
Northeast I (CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT)	10.89	11.20	10.39	10.75	10.25	10.56
Northeast II (DE, MD, NJ, PA)	11.42	11.34	11.05	10.49	10.60	10.34
Appalachian I (NC, VA)	9.91	10.26	9.13	9.54	9.30	9.70
Appalachian II (KY, TN, WV)	10.32	10.24	9.19	9.32	9.48	9.38
Southeast (AL, GA, SC)	9.69	9.97	8.94	9.31	9.12	9.39
Florida	10.67	10.92	9.46	9.46	9.50	9.54
Lake (MI, MN, WI)	11.37	11.40	11.23	11.09	10.62	10.78
Cornbelt I (IL, IN, OH)	11.44	11.68	11.03	11.18	10.84	11.10
Cornbelt II (IA, MO)	11.18	11.67	10.96	11.84	11.03	11.50
Delta (AR, LA, MS)	9.52	9.80	8.96	9.27	8.97	9.30
Northern Plains (KS, NE, ND, SD)	11.83	11.97	12.01	12.04	11.52	11.61
Southern Plains (OK, TX)	10.12	10.43	9.30	9.57	9.65	9.88
Mountain I (ID, MT, WY)	10.49	10.55	10.03	10.26	9.90	10.19
Mountain II (CO, NV, UT)	11.30	11.46	10.41	10.50	10.48	10.43
Mountain III (AZ, NM)	10.32	10.71	9.15	9.45	9.60	9.94
Pacific (OR, WA)	11.31	11.58	10.52	10.87	10.60	10.92
California	11.24	11.04	10.14	10.10	10.31	10.24
Hawaii	14.24	14.36	11.85	12.14	12.01	12.26
United States ²	10.95	11.07	10.19	10.33	10.22	10.36

¹ Region map on page 17.

² Excludes Alaska.

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.

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.

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.

Survey Methodology

Survey Procedures: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the last two weeks of October 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. The survey reference week was October 9-15, 2011.

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 22 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 5 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 20 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 following quarter that the information is published and 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 October 2010 and July 2011 were subject to revision with this report.

Annual Average Estimate Methodology

The April 2011 Farm Labor Survey was not conducted due to Agency budget constraints. Since the data in all Farm Labor Surveys are tied to a specific reference week, it was not possible to conduct this survey at a later time. In lieu of survey data, April 2011 estimates were generated through modeling of historical data and time series analysis. Twenty-two years of U.S. and regional quarterly estimates from 1989 through 2010 were used to generate indications of April workers, hours worked, and wages. These indications were then used to set April estimates for the 15 Farm Labor regions, California, Florida, Hawaii, and the U.S. These April 2011 estimates were combined with the quarterly estimates from January, July, and October to calculate annual average estimates for 2011. The U.S. and regional annual averages published in this report are for All Hired Workers, All Hired Hours Worked, All Hired Wages, Field and Livestock (combined) Wages, and Field Wages.

For further information on the methodology which was used to generate the April 2011 estimates, please go to the NASS web site at www.nass.usda.gov. Under “Browse NASS by Subject”, click on “Research and Science”. At the bottom of the next screen, click on one of the links next to “Research Reports”. To search by date, click on the “by Date” link, then find the report listed with the “November 2011” grouping. To search by title, click on the “by Title” link, then scroll down to the report. The title of the report is “April 2011 Labor Estimates Methodology.”

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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Dale P. Hawks, Head, Environmental and Demographics Section..... (202) 720-0684

Mark Aitken – Farm Labor (202) 720-9525

Jerry Campbell – Energy, Census of Agriculture..... (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

Theresa Varner – Field Crops Chemical Usage (202) 690-2284

Access to NASS Reports

For your convenience, you may access NASS reports and products the following ways:

- All reports are available electronically, at no cost, on the NASS web site: <http://www.nass.usda.gov>
- Both national and state specific reports are available via a free e-mail subscription. To set-up this free subscription, visit <http://www.nass.usda.gov> and in the “Receive NASS Updates” box under “Receive reports by Email,” click on “National” or “State” to select the reports you would like to receive.
- Printed reports may be purchased from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) by calling toll-free (800) 999-6779, or (703) 605-6220 if calling from outside the United States or Canada. Accepted methods of payment are Visa, MasterCard, check, or money order.

For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, or e-mail: nass@nass.usda.gov.

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