Farm Labor

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MARCH FARM EMPLOYMENT MATCHES LAST YEAR'S; APRIL 1 FARM WAGE RATES SHOW LITTLE CHANGE

Farm employment in late March totaled 6.0 million workers - approximately the same as a year earlier. Family workers during the survey week of March 19-25 were estimated at 4.7 million, about 1 percent less than a year earlier. Hired workers reached a total of 1.3 million or nearly 4 percent more than in the comparable week of March 1960. Since last year's weather at this period was distinctly unfavorable for farm work, the matching of the 1960 level does not signal a change from the general downtrend of farm employment which has persisted over a long period. Compared with the 5-year (1955-59) average for March, the estimated level of total farm employment for March 1961 is down 11 percent, family workers down 12 percent, and hired workers down 3 percent.

The promise of earliness for crop field work which was quite general in late February faded in March over much of the country under continued wet weather. By the week of March 19-25, significant advances in farm employment over a year earlier were mainly limited to South Atlantic and East South Central regions. The South Central region had 2 percent more workers than in March 1960 and 8 percent more hired workers. In the East South Central region, total workers exceeded last year by 2 percent and hired workers by 15 percent.

Farm Wage Rates Show Only Slight Advance

Farm wage rates Nation-wide on April 1, 1961 averaged very close to the levels of a year earlier. The composite rate per hour of $0.757 compares with $0.751 on April 1, 1960. For most hiring arrangements the rates averaged about 1 percent higher than a year earlier. Seasonally adjusted however, the index of the U.S. average of composite wage rates is 647 percent of the 1910-14 average or virtually the same as April 1, 1960. This is the smallest annual change between April 1 rates since 1954.

This halt in the upward climb in wage rates as compared with a year ago is by no means even or uniform between States or areas and may not be characteristic of the entire season. Recently, farm labor has been in fully adequate supply for most needs at this time of year. Good demand exists for qualified regular help. As the season develops wage trends will continue to reflect the pressures of seasonal jobs and the growing capabilities of machines and new methods to meet them.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Statistical Reporting Service
La 1 (4-61)
Crop Reporting Board
Washington, D.C.

March Wet and Slow but Could Favor Later Work

March this year was outstandingly wet in many parts of the Nation. The soggy fields stalled an early rush of spring work and by the end of the month the prospect for spring field work changed from earliness to near normal progress. Time remains for advantageous planting of most spring crops and earliness in spring seeding still is likely in western parts of the Northern Plains. Although rainfall appeared excessive over extensive Central and Eastern areas many reporters see in the filled soil moisture bank a probable advantage to production and work efficiency during the summer growing months. In many Western irrigation areas, the March moisture additions, while most welcome, were too small to dispel the danger of summer water shortage. Comments from these sections mention the March job of lining irrigation ditches to reduce losses of precious water.

Peach and other fruit crops received only minor cold damage during the past month and retain their early prospects for a good harvest. Growers in the Southeastern peach areas report that thinning the heavy set to produce good fruit sizes will be an important job.

Applying fertilizer was a common March job on many farms. Barn and feedlot manure was cleared out and spread as fields permitted.

Livestock work and chores continued to bulk large in the daily routine on many farms during the past month. Conditions generally favored young livestock and prospects brightened for good spring and early summer pasturage and easy times for livestock as the rains fell. Goat shearing in Texas was almost completed by the end of March, spring lambing was about over on the Edwards Plateau and Trans-Pecos, and sheep shearing was widespread over the State. Wyoming range lambing and shearing had not started but lambing of farm flocks both here and in Montana was well along.

Citrus harvest continued with California navel harvest well along and Valencia harvest starting in the eastern San Joaquin area. Lemon picking continued. Florida orange conditions were favorable as the beginning of picking neared for the Valencia crop.

Early spring vegetable work was active in Florida with harvest of most major crops heavy during the survey week. Arizona lettuce harvest moved rapidly and reached peak volume in the Salt River Valley. California land preparation, planting, and vegetable harvest followed the usual spring pattern of amazing variety.

In the Northeast, the maple-sirup flow had an intermittent run which averaged longer than usual with reports of high quality.

Farm employment and indexes, March 1961, with comparisons, United States

	Annual average 1960	Annual average 1959	Annual average 1955-59	March average 1955-59 1/	March 20-26, 1960	March 19-25, 1961
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands)						
Total	7,118	7,384	7,734	6,683	5,994	5,970
Family labor	5,249	5,459	5,791	5,365	4,763	4,695
Hired labor	1,869	1,925	1,943	1,318	1,231	1,275
INDEXES 2/ (1910-14=100)						
Total	52	54	57	57	51	51
Family labor	52	54	57	57	51	50
Hired labor	55	57	57	56	52	54

1/ Employment during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.
2/ Monthly indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

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Farm Wage Rates and Indexes, April 1, 1961, United States

	Annual average 1960	April average 1955-59	April 1, 1960	April 1, 1961
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	$ 0.818	$ 0.645	$ 0.751	$ 0.757
Per month with house	$192.00	$160.00	$186.00	$188.00
Per month with board and room	149.00	128.00	145.00	148.00
Per week with board and room	35.50	31.50	34.75	35.00
Per week without board or room	45.75	40.75	45.75	46.25
Per day with house	5.30	4.50	5.20	5.20
Per day with board and room	6.50	5.20	5.90	6.00
Per day without board or room	6.60	5.60	6.40	6.50
Per hour with house	.88	.67	.77	.80
Per hour without board or room	.97	.92	1.03	1.04
INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Farm wage rates (Adjusted for seasonal variation)	629	561	649	647
Prices received by farmers 2/	238	239	240	243

1/ Weighted average of all rates on a per hour basis.
2/ Index for 15th of previous month.

Workers on Farms, March 1961

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	March average 1955-59 1/			March 1960 Week of 20-26			March 1961 Week of 19-25		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	155	105	50	130	87	43	130	86	44
New York	162	115	47	144	101	43	139	99	40
New Jersey	42	30	12	35	26	9	36	27	9
Pennsylvania	203	173	30	174	153	21	170	146	24
Middle Atlantic	407	318	89	353	280	73	345	272	73
Ohio	266	236	30	240	216	24	233	208	25
Indiana	231	213	18	201	187	14	197	183	14
Illinois	253	205	48	208	175	33	221	180	41
Michigan	206	184	22	191	168	23	190	165	25
Wisconsin	294	266	28	273	249	24	264	239	25
East North Central.	1,250	1,104	146	1,113	995	118	1,105	975	130
Minnesota	258	232	26	227	208	19	227	207	20
Iowa	268	247	21	253	234	19	249	230	19
Missouri	256	232	24	228	209	19	230	209	21
North Dakota	89	79	10	75	66	9	78	69	9
South Dakota	94	87	7	85	79	6	87	81	6
Nebraska	143	128	15	139	123	16	139	121	18
Kansas	156	143	13	137	124	13	135	123	12
West North Central.	1,264	1,148	116	1,144	1,043	101	1,145	1,040	105
Del.-Md.	64	46	18	59	41	18	58	42	16
Virginia	193	158	35	170	138	32	175	144	31
West Virginia	70	58	12	61	52	9	59	49	10
North Carolina	322	281	41	259	222	37	261	224	37
South Carolina	159	111	48	144	96	48	143	95	48
Georgia	185	144	41	159	122	37	156	114	42
Florida	141	60	81	118	49	69	137	50	87
South Atlantic	1,134	858	276	970	720	250	989	718	271
Kentucky	215	183	32	193	164	29	198	168	30
Tennessee	197	165	32	187	158	29	181	150	31
Alabama	128	107	21	111	90	21	109	86	23
Mississippi	224	178	46	183	147	36	198	150	48
East South Central.	764	633	131	674	559	115	686	554	132
Arkansas	209	145	64	176	118	58	170	111	59
Louisiana	150	101	49	139	85	54	139	84	55
Oklahoma	188	170	18	163	148	15	169	150	19
Texas	381	285	96	353	242	111	342	236	106
West South Central.	928	701	227	831	593	238	820	581	239
Montana	48	40	8	48	38	10	45	37	8
Idaho	53	43	10	52	43	9	52	43	9
Colorado	62	55	7	59	52	7	60	51	9
N.Mex.-Ariz.	68	31	37	68	29	39	66	28	38
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	49	38	11	46	34	12	46	34	12
Mountain	280	207	73	273	196	77	269	193	76
Washington	97	76	21	97	71	26	92	68	24
Oregon	88	68	20	86	70	16	84	69	15
California	316	147	169	323	149	174	305	139	166
Pacific	501	291	210	506	290	216	481	276	205
UNITED STATES	6,683	5,365	1,318	5,994	4,763	1,231	5,970	4,695	1,275

1/ Persons employed during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

Workers on farms: Comparative estimates, annual average 1960, January and February 1961

(Thousands of persons)

Region and State	Annual average 1960			January 1961 Week of 22-28			February 1961 Week of 19-25		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
New England	150	91	59	102	77	25	112	78	34
New York	163	107	56	126	95	31	134	97	37
New Jersey	47	28	19	30	22	8	35	26	9
Pennsylvania	194	159	35	144	124	20	162	141	21
Middle Atlantic	404	294	110	300	241	59	331	264	67
Ohio	250	214	36	179	166	13	215	197	18
Indiana	219	192	27	163	155	8	181	169	12
Illinois	249	201	48	181	151	30	188	158	30
Michigan	220	178	42	166	142	24	189	169	20
Wisconsin	282	253	29	234	219	15	253	232	21
East North Central	1,220	1,038	182	923	833	90	1,026	925	101
Minnesota	266	228	38	191	180	11	206	188	18
Iowa	289	252	37	213	198	15	229	214	15
Missouri	276	237	39	210	195	15	217	202	15
North Dakota	92	71	21	56	49	7	60	53	7
South Dakota	92	81	11	66	62	4	71	65	6
Nebraska	160	135	25	122	113	9	128	117	11
Kansas	159	134	25	115	107	8	122	112	10
West North Central	1,334	1,138	196	973	904	69	1,033	951	82
Delaware-Maryland	70	45	25	46	35	11	48	36	12
Virginia	203	149	54	138	115	23	151	126	25
West Virginia	73	60	13	50	43	7	54	45	9
North Carolina	416	317	99	206	184	22	245	212	33
South Carolina	195	133	62	111	86	25	119	85	34
Georgia	185	135	50	106	87	19	129	96	33
Florida	98	46	52	103	40	63	130	45	85
South Atlantic	1,240	885	355	760	590	170	876	645	231
Kentucky	235	188	47	161	149	12	179	160	19
Tennessee	246	195	51	159	141	18	157	134	23
Alabama	149	116	33	79	66	13	82	69	13
Mississippi	252	195	57	127	109	18	132	106	26
East South Central	882	694	188	526	465	61	550	469	81
Arkansas	212	126	86	114	92	22	137	98	39
Louisiana	153	95	58	95	75	20	98	70	28
Oklahoma	165	131	34	129	121	8	148	136	12
Texas	442	261	181	278	206	72	270	196	74
West South Central	972	613	359	616	494	122	653	500	153
Montana	49	37	12	33	30	3	37	33	4
Idaho	67	47	20	39	35	4	45	38	7
Colorado	69	51	18	39	34	5	45	40	5
N. Mex.-Arizona	90	32	58	71	25	46	69	27	42
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	59	41	18	37	30	7	40	32	8
Mountain	334	208	126	219	154	65	236	170	66
Washington	113	76	37	74	62	12	84	65	19
Oregon	92	66	26	61	54	7	67	56	11
California	377	146	231	311	132	179	301	129	172
Pacific	582	288	294	446	248	198	452	250	202
UNITED STATES	7,118	5,249	1,869	4,865	4,006	859	5,269	4,252	1,017

Farm Wage Rates, April 1, 1960 1/

State and Region	Per month		Per week		Per day			Per hour		Composite rate per hour	Indexes of composite rates 1910-14=100 2/
	With house	With board and room	With board and room	Without board or room	With house	With board and room	Without board or room	With house	Without board or room		
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	
Maine	204.00	146.00	39.00	54.00	-	-	8.70	-	1.06	.890	564
N. H.	212.00	154.00	43.00	59.00	-	-	9.40	-	1.15	.966	662
Vt.	196.00	156.00	38.00	52.00	-	-	9.10	-	1.14	.911	631
Mass.	228.00	162.00	46.00	59.00	-	-	10.00	-	1.22	1.010	680
R. I.	228.00	162.00	46.00	61.00	-	-	10.20	-	1.22	1.025	742
Conn.	228.00	162.00	45.00	61.00	-	-	10.60	-	1.33	1.060	754
N. Eng.	214.00	156.00	42.00	56.75	-	-	9.50	-	1.17	.963	655
N. Y.	210.00	148.00	38.50	55.50	-	-	9.00	-	1.12	.812	560
N. J.	210.00	151.00	37.00	54.00	-	-	9.70	-	1.16	.821	651
Pa.	189.00	133.00	35.25	47.00	-	-	8.40	-	1.05	.735	659
Mid. Atl.	204.00	144.00	37.50	52.75	-	-	8.90	-	1.10	.791	614
Ohio	173.00	129.00	-	-	-	6.70	8.50	-	1.08	.685	611
Ind.	175.00	135.00	-	-	-	6.30	8.10	-	1.05	.681	631
Ill.	200.00	154.00	-	-	-	7.40	9.20	-	1.09	.754	650
Mich.	210.00	136.00	-	-	-	6.80	8.70	-	1.08	.721	611
Wis.	197.00	144.00	-	-	-	6.70	8.50	-	1.08	.722	576
E.N.Cent.	193.00	141.00	-	-	-	6.90	8.70	-	1.08	.718	621
Minn.	183.00	145.00	-	-	-	7.40	9.30	-	1.10	.772	549
Iowa	203.00	162.00	-	-	-	8.10	10.00	-	1.13	.830	569
Mo.	158.00	119.00	-	-	-	5.90	7.30	-	.97	.646	663
N.Dak.	182.00	150.00	-	-	-	6.70	8.60	-	1.03	.742	473
S.Dak.	183.00	147.00	-	-	-	6.80	8.60	-	1.03	.740	509
Nebr.	210.00	159.00	-	-	-	7.60	9.60	-	1.09	.811	608
Kans.	191.00	143.00	-	-	-	7.20	9.10	-	1.07	.763	701
W.N.Cent.	187.00	146.00	-	-	-	7.20	9.00	-	1.06	.760	595
Del.	-	-	-	-	6.80	-	8.10	.95	1.00	.838	827
Md.	-	-	-	-	6.60	-	8.10	.94	1.04	.838	930
Va.	-	-	-	-	5.20	-	6.30	.64	.80	.621	767
W.Va.	-	-	-	-	5.00	-	5.60	.65	.74	.578	504
N. C.	-	-	-	-	4.85	-	5.70	.57	.71	.561	709
S. C.	-	-	-	-	3.65	-	4.10	.46	.52	.416	611
Ga.	-	-	-	-	4.05	-	4.65	.55	.68	.492	608
Fla.	-	-	-	-	5.40	-	6.20	.68	.83	.632	701
So. Atl.	-	-	-	-	4.85	-	5.60	.61	.74	.569	695
Ky.	-	-	-	-	4.20	-	5.20	.60	.76	.509	571
Tenn.	-	-	-	-	3.80	-	4.70	.48	.62	.453	533
Ala.	-	-	-	-	3.95	-	4.50	.51	.60	.447	558
Miss.	-	-	-	-	3.80	-	4.25	.51	.57	.426	520
E.S.Cent.	-	-	-	-	3.95	-	4.65	.52	.64	.457	541
Ark.	-	-	-	-	5.40	-	5.80	.63	.73	.602	619
La.	-	-	-	-	4.70	-	5.10	.54	.66	.530	627
Okla.	-	-	-	-	6.70	-	7.60	.83	.96	.776	665
Texas	-	-	-	-	5.90	-	6.60	.69	.80	.667	605
W.S.Cent.	-	-	-	-	5.60	-	6.10	.65	.76	.626	616
Mont.	222.00	178.00	-	-	-	-	8.90	-	1.16	.884	487
Idaho	246.00	190.00	-	-	-	-	9.80	-	1.16	.939	578
Wyo.	230.00	163.00	-	-	-	-	9.30	-	1.09	.865	493
Colo.	218.00	162.00	-	-	-	-	9.30	-	1.05	.847	611
N.Mex.	183.00	130.00	-	-	-	-	6.80	-	.83	.663	603
Ariz.	249.00	186.00	-	-	-	-	8.70	-	.97	.860	616
Utah	242.00	201.00	-	-	-	-	9.30	-	1.17	.937	635
Nev.	250.00	170.00	-	-	-	-	9.20	-	1.20	.911	538
Mountain	230.00	174.00	-	-	-	-	8.70	-	1.03	.847	564
Wash.	263.00	208.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.19	1.25	1.206	594
Oreg.	238.00	181.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.13	1.20	1.148	577
Calif.	280.00	210.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.13	1.21	1.175	560
Pacific	275.00	208.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.14	1.21	1.177	569
U. S.	186.00	145.00	34.75	45.75	5.20	5.90	6.40	.77	1.03	.751	649

1/ Certain wage rates are not published where they are relatively unimportant, but are estimated for use in computing U.S. averages. 2/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.

Farm Wage Rates by Regions and States, April 1, 1961 1/

State and Region	Per month		Per week		Per day		Per hour		Composite rate per hour	Indexes of composite rates 1910-14=100 2/
	With house	With board and room	With board and room	Without board or room	With board and room	Without board or room	With house	Without board or room		
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	
Maine	202.00	149.00	37.50	54.00	-	-	9.10	-	1.07	.900	571
N. H.	220.00	159.00	44.50	60.00	-	-	9.70	-	1.13	.979	671
Vt.	199.00	155.00	39.00	52.00	-	-	8.80	-	1.09	.892	611
Mass.	232.00	161.00	45.00	63.00	-	-	10.50	-	1.22	1.039	700
R. I.	233.00	161.00	45.00	64.00	-	-	10.60	-	1.20	1.042	754
Conn.	230.00	161.00	44.00	64.00	-	-	10.80	-	1.32	1.074	772
New Eng.	215.00	156.00	41.25	58.00	-	-	9.70	-	1.16	.969	659
N. Y.	208.00	148.00	37.75	53.50	-	-	9.10	-	1.12	.804	548
N. J.	221.00	155.00	40.00	55.00	-	-	9.30	-	1.16	.836	663
Pa.	188.00	134.00	36.00	48.00	-	-	8.20	-	1.05	.739	670
Mid. Atl.	203.00	144.00	37.50	51.75	-	-	8.80	-	1.10	.786	611
Ohio	176.00	131.00	-	-	-	6.40	8.20	-	1.07	.681	600
Ind.	174.00	131.00	-	-	-	6.40	8.10	-	1.05	.675	617
Ill.	203.00	155.00	-	-	-	7.50	9.40	-	1.10	.763	649
Mich.	208.00	140.00	-	-	-	6.80	8.80	-	1.07	.727	608
Wis.	199.00	146.00	-	-	-	6.80	8.80	-	1.07	.729	580
E.N.Cent.	195.00	143.00	-	-	-	6.90	8.80	-	1.08	.724	619
Minn.	191.00	147.00	-	-	-	7.80	9.70	-	1.11	.794	572
Iowa	205.00	163.00	-	-	-	8.20	10.00	-	1.12	.831	570
Mo.	160.00	118.00	-	-	-	5.90	7.50	-	1.01	.660	669
N.Dak.	189.00	160.00	-	-	-	7.10	8.90	-	1.04	.769	497
S.Dak.	192.00	152.00	-	-	-	7.00	8.90	-	1.04	.761	518
Nebr.	218.00	168.00	-	-	-	8.00	9.80	-	1.10	.835	619
Kans.	200.00	151.00	-	-	-	7.40	9.30	-	1.09	.788	724
W.N.Cent.	193.00	150.00	-	-	-	7.40	9.20	-	1.08	.776	601
Del.	-	-	-	-	6.80	-	8.80	.95	1.01	.866	873
Md.	-	-	-	-	6.60	-	8.10	.92	1.00	.830	911
Va.	-	-	-	-	5.40	-	6.50	.67	.83	.643	785
W.Va.	-	-	-	-	5.30	-	5.60	.65	.76	.591	515
N. C.	-	-	-	-	4.95	-	5.80	.60	.73	.575	718
S. C.	-	-	-	-	3.65	-	4.25	.45	.53	.422	606
Ga.	-	-	-	-	4.25	-	4.85	.56	.68	.506	625
Fla.	-	-	-	-	5.60	-	6.30	.84	.90	.680	754
So. Atl.	-	-	-	-	5.00	-	5.80	.67	.77	.593	724
Ky.	-	-	-	-	4.25	-	5.25	.59	.75	.512	582
Tenn.	-	-	-	-	4.00	-	4.75	.50	.64	.466	548
Ala.	-	-	-	-	4.10	-	4.60	.53	.62	.461	570
Miss.	-	-	-	-	3.85	-	4.30	.50	.58	.432	517
E.S.Cent.	-	-	-	-	4.00	-	4.70	.53	.64	.463	548
Ark.	-	-	-	-	5.40	-	5.90	.62	.72	.602	612
La.	-	-	-	-	4.65	-	5.20	.61	.69	.544	630
Okla.	-	-	-	-	6.80	-	7.90	.87	.98	.798	677
Tex.	-	-	-	-	6.10	-	6.70	.68	.79	.675	613
W.S.Cent.	-	-	-	-	5.60	-	6.30	.66	.76	.636	626
Mont.	225.00	178.00	-	-	-	-	9.30	-	1.15	.894	488
Idaho	255.00	200.00	-	-	-	-	10.20	-	1.17	.971	598
Wyo.	235.00	165.00	-	-	-	-	10.00	-	1.10	.894	503
Colo.	222.00	164.00	-	-	-	-	9.20	-	1.06	.853	611
N.Mex.	193.00	138.00	-	-	-	-	7.20	-	.88	.703	639
Ariz.	247.00	185.00	-	-	-	-	8.80	-	.96	.857	614
Utah	241.00	205.00	-	-	-	-	9.60	-	1.20	.957	649
Nev.	265.00	180.00	-	-	-	-	9.40	-	1.10	.913	539
Mountain	234.00	177.00	-	-	-	-	9.00	-	1.04	.864	576
Wash.	267.00	206.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.19	1.27	1.222	614
Oreg.	253.00	193.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.17	1.21	1.167	587
Calif.	295.00	236.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.18	1.25	1.222	583
Pacific	289.00	229.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.18	1.25	1.219	590
U. S.	188.00	148.00	35.00	46.25	5.20	6.00	6.50	.80	1.04	.757	647

1/ Certain wage rates are not published where they are relatively unimportant, but are estimated for use in computing U.S. averages. 2/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.

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