Farm Labor

HD
1525
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Release:
April 10, 1958
3:00 P.M.(E.S.T.)

FARM EMPLOYMENT RISES SEASONALLY
TOTAL WORKERS STILL LESS THAN YEAR AGO
WAGE RATES STEADY

Farm employment in late March was 13 percent higher than a month earlier, the Crop Reporting Board announced today. This increase was just slightly less than the usual seasonal rise from February. Number of farm workers was the snallest March estimate on record.

A total of 6,161,000 persons were working on farms during the week of March 23-29, 1958. Compared with a year earlier, there were 4 percent or 239,000 fewer total workers, 3 percent fewer family workers, and 5 percent less hired laborers. Most of this decline was due to a continuation of the downward trend in number of persons working on farms, but wet soils and cold rainy weather kept many workers out of the fields throughout much of the South and East.

Wage rates for hired farm workers about April 1 averaged 1 percent higher than a year earlier. The seasonally adjusted wage rate index was 567 percent of the 1910-14 average compared with 562 last April. There was no change in the index compared with January 1, 1958.

Every individual rate was higher than a year earlier, though changes were very small for some rates. All rates of pay, except those by the week, declined seasonally from January to April. Weekly rates, important only in the Northeast, rose slightly during the last three months. The decline in average wage rates since January was largely a seasonal change, but probably was due in part to a more abundant supply of laborers who are having trouble finding jobs in nonfarm activities. A number of areas reported a more favorable supply-demand relationship for farm labor than at any time in recent years.

With the new crop season nearly at hand, field work was delayed over a large section of the country during the week of March 23-29. Rains, wet soils and abnormally low temperatures held activity to a minimum throughout the southern and eastern parts of the country. Precipitation for the survey week totaled over an inch in most of the South and along the Pacific Coast. Southern Florida, western California and South Carolina were in the heaviest rainfall areas. Cloudy skies with frequent precipitation kept soils too wet to allow farm machinery in the fields. Very little planting had been done and reports indicate farmers are 2 to 3 weeks behind schedule in much of the Southeast. Temperatures for the week averaged above normal along the Canadian border, but below normal elsewhere. Freezing temperatures occurred as far South as southern Oklahoma and northern portions of Mississippi.

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Agricultural Marketing Service — Crop Reporting Board
La 1 (4-58) — Washington, D. C.

Cotton planting was active in parts of Texas, southern Arizona and was starting in the southern edge of the eastern Gulf States, when weather permitted. Corn planting was progressing slowly in the Gulf States with cool temperatures retarding germination. Planting of corn and sorghum was being rushed throughout the eastern third of Texas as soils dried. Most planting has been completed in the Coastal Bend and central areas of that State.

Cool, wet weather has retarded growth of tobacco plants in the South Atlantic and Gulf Coastal States and transplanting is getting underway later than usual. Many beds still remain to be sown in the Kentucky-Tennessee area.

Oat seeding was active across Iowa, the northern halves of Illinois and Indiana and as far north as Minnesota. Elsewhere in the Ohio, middle Mississippi and Missouri River Basins, planting was generally delayed by wet soils.

Harvest of winter vegetables was active in southern Texas. In California, conditions in the Imperial Valley were favorable for work with vegetables, but rains and wet ground hampered activities in other areas. Spring harvest of vegetables in Florida was very late and a slow-down in movement of citrus has led to some unemployment. Progress of farm work in the Pacific Northwest is still well ahead of schedule. Fruit growers are busy pruning, spraying, fertilizing, and cleaning up orchards. Considerable spring planting has been done in eastern Oregon and in the Columbia Basin. Conditions were generally favorable for maple sap running in the Northeast, but some operations were still hampered by deep snow.

For the country as a whole, the total number of persons working on farms the latter part of March was about one-eighth greater than a month earlier. Increases ranged from a low of 7 percent in the Northeast and Mountain States to 18 percent in the West South Central States. Most areas, except the South Atlantic and Mountain States, registered gains about the same as average for recent years. Adverse weather held employment down in the former region, whereas favorable winter weather in most of the Mountain States allowed farmers to get an early jump on their spring work this year.

Compared with a year earlier, there were fewer persons at work on farms in all regions except the West North Central States. Decreases ranged from only 1 percent in the East North Central and Mountain regions to a 10-percent decline in the South Atlantic States. While appearing unusual, the increase in the West North Central States was simply due to agricultural activity picking up momentum quite fast during March in Iowa, Minnesota and the Dakotas. Weather during the survey week was more favorable for outdoor activities in the northern portion of this region than almost anywhere else in the country. Both family and hired workers shared in the increase for the West North Central States. Hired workers also showed a small increase over a year earlier in the East North Central States, due to a fair amount of activity in Michigan and all across the northern portions of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. All other regions had fewer hired workers than during March 1957.

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Farm employment: Persons employed during week of March 23-29, 1958, United States, with comparisons

	March average 1953-57 1/	March 24-30, 1957	February 16-22, 1958	March 23-29, 1958
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons):				
Total	6,931	6,400	5,439	6,161
Family labor	5,644	5,148	4,482	4,972
Hired labor	1,287	1,252	957	1,189
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES (Adjusted for seasonal variation, 1910-14=100)				
Total	61	57	55	55
Family labor	62	57	56	55
Hired labor	57	56	51	53

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

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Farm wage rates: Wage rates, indexes, and related data, April 1, 1958, United States, with comparisons 1/

	January 1, 1957	April 1, 1957	January 1, 1958	April 1, 1958
FARM WAGE RATES				
Per month with house	$165.00	$159.00	$172.00	165.00
Per month with board and room	133.00	129.00	138.00	132.00
Per week with board and room	31.75	32.25	32.50	33.00
Per week without board or room	39.75	40.75	41.00	41.25
Per day with house	4.75	4.50	4.85	4.65
Per day with board and room	5.60	5.20	5.80	5.40
Per day without board or room	5.80	5.60	6.00	5.80
Per hour with house	.72	.67	.73	.68
Per hour without board or room	.95	.92	.97	.94
Composite rate per hour 2/	.785	.643	.804	.657
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Adjusted for seasonal variation	554	562	567	567
RELATED INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Prices received by farmers 3/	238	239	244	263*
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	43	43	43	46

1/ Wage rates on the average refer to a date two or three days before the first of the month.
2/ Weighted average of all rates on a per hour basis.
3/ Average of the 15th of the given and the 15th of the previous month.
* March 15, 1958.

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Farm employment: Persons employed during week of March 23-29, 1958, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons

Geographic division	March average 1953-57 1/	February 17-23, 1957	March 24-30, 1957	February 16-22, 1958	March 23-29, 1958
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
	TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT				
United States	6,931	5,633	6,400	5,439	6,161
New England	147	140	153	135	145
Middle Atlantic	461	403	444	392	421
East North Central	1,178	978	1,127	973	1,118
West North Central	1,308	1,072	1,201	1,064	1,223
South Atlantic	1,138	920	1,036	853	933
East South Central	997	740	871	685	803
West South Central	927	712	812	662	780
Mountain	287	246	276	254	273
Pacific	488	422	480	421	465
	FAMILY WORKERS 2/				
United States	5,644	4,652	5,148	4,482	4,972
New England	102	94	101	94	99
Middle Atlantic	356	315	346	308	329
East North Central	1,031	874	983	874	970
West North Central	1,192	991	1,096	977	1,111
South Atlantic	859	713	769	651	695
East South Central	841	643	729	594	672
West South Central	751	585	634	537	612
Mountain	211	172	196	174	194
Pacific	301	265	294	273	290
	HIRED WORKERS 3/				
United States	1,287	981	1,252	957	1,189
New England	45	46	52	41	46
Middle Atlantic	105	88	98	84	92
East North Central	147	104	144	99	148
West North Central	116	81	105	87	112
South Atlantic	279	207	267	202	238
East South Central	156	97	142	91	131
West South Central	176	127	178	125	168
Mountain	76	74	80	80	79
Pacific	187	157	186	148	175

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

2/ Includes farm operators doing one or more hours of farm work and members of their families working 15 hours or more during the survey week without cash wages.

3/ Includes all persons doing one or more hours of farm work during the survey week for pay.

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Farm wage rates: Wage rates by geographic divisions
April 1, 1958, with comparisons

Geographic division	January 1, 1957	April 1, 1957	January 1, 1958	April 1, 1958
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
PER MONTH WITH HOUSE				
New England	189.00	190.00	194.00	198.00
Middle Atlantic	182.00	186.00	187.00	191.00
East North Central	172.00	177.00	178.00	180.00
West North Central	158.00	166.00	170.00	173.00
Mountain	214.00	213.00 1/	212.00	215.00
Pacific	252.00	255.00	264.00	257.00
PER MONTH WITH BOARD AND ROOM				
New England	144.00	144.00	146.00	148.00
Middle Atlantic	128.00	131.00	134.00	136.00
East North Central	127.00	131.00	132.00	132.00
West North Central	122.00	130.00	130.00	135.00
Mountain	158.00	161.00 1/	157.00	164.00
Pacific	194.00	194.00	206.00	198.00
PER WEEK WITH BOARD AND ROOM				
New England	38.75	38.75	39.25	40.50
Middle Atlantic	34.50	35.00	34.75	35.50
PER WEEK WITHOUT BOARD OR ROOM				
New England	51.75	52.75	52.50	54.00
Middle Atlantic	47.50	48.25	48.00	48.00
PER DAY WITH HOUSE				
South Atlantic	4.70	4.60	4.65	4.80
East South Central	3.65	3.70	3.65	3.70
West South Central	5.10	5.00	5.30	5.20
PER DAY WITH BOARD AND ROOM				
East North Central	6.40	6.50	6.60	6.50
West North Central	6.20	6.60	6.60	6.80
PER DAY WITHOUT BOARD OR ROOM				
New England	8.80	9.00	9.10	9.30
Middle Atlantic	8.20	8.30	8.40	8.50
East North Central	8.10	8.20	8.10	8.10
West North Central	7.80	8.20	8.30	8.50
South Atlantic	5.50	5.40	5.50	5.50
East South Central	4.30	4.30	4.35	4.30
West South Central	5.70	5.60	6.00	5.90
Mountain	8.00	8.20	7.90	8.30
PER HOUR WITH HOUSE				
South Atlantic	.60	.59	.60	.58
East South Central	.50	.50	.51	.48
West South Central	.62	.59	.64	.62
Pacific	1.06	1.07	1.05	1.08
PER HOUR WITHOUT BOARD OR ROOM				
New England	1.10	1.11	1.12	1.14
Middle Atlantic	1.03	1.05	1.07	1.07
East North Central	1.04	1.05	1.06	1.04
West North Central	.99	1.00	1.02	1.03
South Atlantic	.72	.70	.72	.72
East South Central	.59	.59	.61	.58
West South Central	.73	.70	.75	.73
Mountain	.92	.97	.94	1.00
Pacific	1.14	1.15	1.15	1.16

1/ Revised.

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Farm wage rates: Wage rates by States and regions, April 1, 1957 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	180.00	138.00	36.50	51.00	-	-	8.20	-	1.02	.843	540
N. H.	190.00	141.00	38.00	53.00	-	-	8.90	-	1.08	.891	617
Vt.	174.00	138.00	34.50	47.50	-	-	8.50	-	1.05	.837	580
Mass.	202.00	148.00	43.00	56.00	-	-	9.70	-	1.18	.966	664
R. I.	208.00	151.00	43.00	58.00	-	-	9.80	-	1.18	.979	716
Conn.	210.00	157.00	43.00	58.00	-	-	9.80	-	1.24	.995	722
New Eng.	190.00	144.00	38.75	52.75	-	-	9.00	-	1.11	.900	612
N. Y.	193.00	135.00	36.00	51.00	-	-	8.70	-	1.09	.764	546
N. J.	210.00	147.00	38.00	51.00	-	-	8.90	-	1.08	.785	638
Penna.	170.00	121.00	32.50	44.00	-	-	7.70	-	1.00	.683	619
Mid. Atl.	186.00	131.00	35.00	48.25	-	-	8.30	-	1.05	.735	584
Ohio	164.00	120.00	-	-	-	6.40	8.10	-	1.06	.655	590
Ind.	164.00	122.00	-	-	-	6.10	7.60	-	1.06	.648	607
Ill.	185.00	145.00	-	-	-	7.00	8.50	-	1.06	.713	621
Mich.	194.00	136.00	-	-	-	7.00	8.70	-	1.06	.708	606
Wis.	178.00	132.00	-	-	-	6.20	8.00	-	1.02	.670	540
E.N.Cent.	177.00	131.00	-	-	-	6.50	8.20	-	1.05	.679	587
Minn.	171.00	135.00	-	-	-	6.90	8.80	-	1.05	.730	537
Iowa	175.00	143.00	-	-	-	7.40	9.00	-	1.06	.751	526
Mo.	141.00	107.00	-	-	-	5.50	6.80	-	.91	.596	611
N.Dak.	174.00	144.00	-	-	-	6.30	7.90	-	1.00	.707	472
S.Dak.	168.00	132.00	-	-	-	6.30	8.00	-	.99	.690	475
Nebr.	182.00	139.00	-	-	-	6.90	8.60	-	1.01	.728	557
Kans.	171.00	128.00	-	-	-	6.60	8.50	-	1.03	.709	675
W.N.Cent.	166.00	130.00	-	-	-	6.60	8.20	-	1.00	.697	553
Del.	-	-	-	-	6.20	-	8.00	.89	.97	.803	819
Md.	-	-	-	-	5.80	-	7.20	.85	.95	.745	837
Va.	-	-	-	-	4.85	-	5.90	.59	.75	.580	708
W.Va.	-	-	-	-	4.30	-	5.20	.65	.70	.548	478
N.C.	-	-	-	-	4.60	-	5.70	.55	.70	.552	689
S.C.	-	-	-	-	3.40	-	4.00	.42	.50	.397	576
Ga.	-	-	-	-	3.75	-	4.40	.51	.62	.459	567
Fla.	-	-	-	-	5.20	-	5.80	.64	.76	.593	665
S. Atl.	-	-	-	-	4.60	-	5.40	.59	.70	.544	657
Ky.	-	-	-	-	4.00	-	4.85	.56	.70	.478	543
Tenn.	-	-	-	-	3.50	-	4.25	.45	.57	.413	479
Ala.	-	-	-	-	3.65	-	4.20	.50	.57	.417	520
Miss.	-	-	-	-	3.65	-	4.10	.48	.57	.413	505
E.S.Cent.	-	-	-	-	3.70	-	4.30	.50	.59	.426	505
Ark.	-	-	-	-	4.85	-	5.20	.55	.66	.540	549
La.	-	-	-	-	4.15	-	4.55	.50	.63	.482	563
Okla.	-	-	-	-	5.90	-	6.90	.76	.85	.695	610
Texas	-	-	-	-	5.40	-	6.10	.63	.75	.617	560
W.S.Cent.	-	-	-	-	5.00	-	5.60	.59	.70	.571	574
Mont.	204.00	169.00	-	-	-	-	8.60	-	1.06	.830	468
Idaho	230.00	184.00	-	-	-	-	9.30	-	1.10	.894	551
Wyo.	200.00	148.00	-	-	-	-	7.80	-	1.01	.768	442
Colo.	194.00	140.00	-	-	-	-	8.20	-	1.00	.764	559
N.Mex.	174.00	120.00	-	-	-	-	6.20	-	.76	.612	556
Ariz.	240.00	170.00	-	-	-	-	8.30	-	.86	.797	565
Utah 3/	221.00	191.00	-	-	-	-	8.60	-	1.10	.877	595
Nev. 3/	210.00	160.00	-	-	-	-	8.50	-	1.10	.830	496
Mountain 3/	213.00	161.00	-	-	-	-	8.20	-	.97	.793	528
Wash.	253.00	200.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.17	1.26	1.207	595
Oreg.	235.00	182.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.09	1.16	1.113	560
Calif.	259.00	195.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.05	1.13	1.096	522
Pacific	255.00	194.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.07	1.15	1.111	538
U. S. 3/	159.00	129.00	32.25	40.75	4.50	5.20	5.60	.67	.92	.643	562

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. 3/ Revised.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service

Farm wage rates: Wage rates by States and regions, April 1, 1958 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	190.00	141.00	36.50	52.50	-	--	8.70	-	1.02	.864	553
N.H.	198.00	142.00	39.00	54.00	-	-	9.10	-	1.10	.909	636
Vt.	182.00	144.00	36.00	48.50	-	-	8.60	-	1.09	.860	596
Mass.	209.00	156.00	45.50	57.50	-	-	10.00	-	1.24	1.005	684
R. I.	218.00	160.00	46.00	59.50	-	-	10.00	-	1.21	1.009	738
Conn.	220.00	157.00	46.00	59.50	-	-	10.10	-	1.28	1.028	739
New Eng.	198.00	148.00	40.50	54.00	-	-	9.30	-	1.14	.928	639
N. Y.	199.00	140.00	36.00	49.50	-	-	8.80	-	1.09	.766	529
N. J.	214.00	152.00	40.00	53.00	-	-	9.20	-	1.15	.820	658
Pa.	173.00	124.00	33.00	44.00	-	-	7.80	-	1.01	.691	626
Mid. Atl.	191.00	136.00	35.50	48.00	-	-	8.50	-	1.07	.745	585
Ohio	169.00	127.00	-	-	-	6.30	7.70	-	1.04	.656	585
Ind.	165.00	120.00	-	-	-	5.90	7.50	-	1.02	.634	580
Ill.	187.00	144.00	-	-	-	7.00	8.60	-	1.06	.714	608
Mich.	194.00	129.00	-	-	-	6.60	8.20	-	1.05	.686	574
Wis.	185.00	138.00	-	-	-	6.40	8.20	-	1.04	.690	550
E.N.Cent.	180.00	132.00	-	-	-	6.50	8.10	-	1.04	.677	579
Minn.	177.00	140.00	-	-	-	7.20	9.20	-	1.09	.758	545
Iowa	181.00	146.00	-	-	-	7.60	9.40	-	1.08	.771	528
Mo.	141.00	106.00	-	-	-	5.30	6.70	-	.93	.595	610
N.Dak.	182.00	146.00	-	-	-	6.70	8.50	-	1.01	.731	477
S.Dak.	171.00	139.00	-	-	-	6.50	8.10	-	1.00	.704	485
Nebr.	190.00	141.00	-	-	-	7.00	8.90	-	1.03	.746	558
Kans.	181.00	135.00	-	-	-	6.70	8.70	-	1.03	.727	677
W.N.Cent.	173.00	135.00	-	-	-	6.80	8.50	-	1.03	.718	556
Del.	-	-	-	-	6.70	-	8.60	.91	1.00	.830	818
Md.	-	-	-	-	6.00	-	7.40	.87	.95	.765	859
Va.	-	-	-	-	4.80	-	5.90	.60	.76	.582	711
W.Va.	-	-	-	-	4.15	-	5.40	.65	.74	.554	484
N.C.	-	-	-	-	4.55	-	5.50	.54	.68	.535	661
S.C.	-	-	-	-	3.35	-	3.90	.42	.48	.387	562
Ga.	-	-	-	-	3.90	-	4.40	.52	.62	.462	571
Fla.	-	-	-	-	5.60	-	6.10	.62	.80	.616	691
So. Atl.	-	-	-	-	4.80	-	5.50	.58	.72	.554	669
Ky.	-	-	-	-	4.00	-	4.95	.56	.70	.482	542
Tenn.	-	-	-	-	3.45	-	4.30	.47	.58	.414	475
Ala.	-	-	-	-	3.75	-	4.35	.48	.57	.428	534
Miss.	-	-	-	-	3.55	-	4.00	.45	.54	.400	478
E.S.Cent.	-	-	-	-	3.70	-	4.30	.48	.58	.425	498
Ark.	-	-	-	-	4.80	-	5.20	.55	.65	.536	545
La.	-	-	-	-	4.30	-	4.70	.53	.61	.490	580
Okla.	-	-	-	-	6.10	-	7.10	.76	.88	.715	613
Tex.	-	-	-	-	5.70	-	6.50	.66	.79	.652	592
W.S.Cent.	-	-	-	-	5.20	-	5.90	.62	.73	.597	593
Mont.	208.00	165.00	-	-	-	-	8.50	-	1.09	.831	458
Idaho	240.00	190.00	-	-	-	-	9.70	-	1.13	.925	569
Wyo.	209.00	152.00	-	-	-	-	8.40	-	1.08	.812	467
Colo.	203.00	148.00	-	-	-	-	8.40	-	1.00	.785	568
N.Mex.	165.00	122.00	-	-	-	-	6.40	-	.81	.626	569
Ariz.	240.00	172.00	-	-	-	-	8.00	-	.87	.794	562
Utah	215.00	194.00	-	-	-	-	9.00	-	1.15	.899	616
Nev.	230.00	160.00	-	-	-	-	8.60	-	1.15	.857	501
Mountain	215.00	164.00	-	-	-	-	8.30	-	1.00	.807	538
Wash.	257.00	202.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.19	1.31	1.248	615
Oreg.	231.00	180.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.08	1.15	1.101	554
Calif.	261.00	200.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.06	1.14	1.106	522
Pacific	257.00	198.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.08	1.16	1.122	537
U. S.	165.00	132.00	33.00	41.25	4.65	5.40	5.80	.68	.94	.657	567

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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EXPLANATIONS 1/

Farm employment estimates of the Agricultural Marketing Service cover persons doing farm work on all farms. Mailed questionnaires are received every month from 20,000 to 25,000 farmers who report the number of persons working on their farms during the last complete calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month. The Census of Agriculture and interview surveys of farmers are used to provide bench mark data on employment.

All farm operators spending any time during the survey week at farm work, chores, or in the transaction of farm business are counted as employed. Members of the operator's family or household doing unpaid farm work or chores are counted if they put in 15 hours or more during the week. Working operators plus unpaid members of their families or households who meet these criteria are called family workers. All persons doing one or more hours of farm work or chores for pay during the week are counted as hired workers.

The data on farm employment published by the Agricultural Marketing Service differ from those on agricultural employment of the Census in the Monthly Report on the Labor Force because of the differences in the method of approach, in concepts of employment, and in time of the month for which data are collected. The A.M.S. collects information from the farmer on all persons working on his farm during the week regardless of age, or other jobs held by these workers. The Census data are obtained from about 35,000 farm and nonfarm households on the labor force status of the household members 14 years of age and over for the week including the 12th of the month. In addition, both series are subject to sampling variation and may differ from the results of a complete census.

Wage rates are reported quarterly by the same sample of farm operators that reports employment. The farmer is asked to report average wage rates being paid "at this time" in his locality.

1/ Additional information available in January 1958 issue of Farm Labor.