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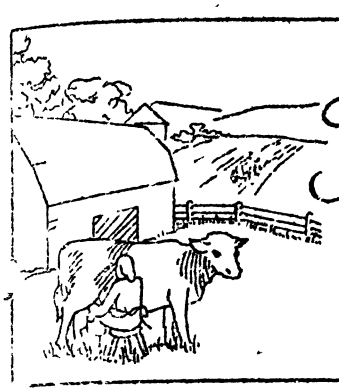

Farm Labor

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Washington, D. C. BAE May 11, 1945

F A R M E M P L O Y M E N T
S T I L L A T L O W L E V E L

Fewer persons were working on farms on May 1 than the previous record low for that date a year ago, the United States Department of Agriculture reported today. About 10,000,000 persons were employed on farms on May 1 of this year, a decrease of a little more than 50,000 from the same date in 1944. The index of employment was 83 this month, 75 for last month and 84 on May 1, 1944.

Hired workers numbered only 1,864,000 as compared with 1,989,000 on May 1, 1944. This reflects less than the usual seasonal increase during April. Decreases from a year ago were registered in all sections of the country except Middle Atlantic and Pacific Coast States. Farm operators generally continued to report difficulties in securing adequate supplies of farm labor. Many are already trying to make arrangements for the extra help needed when harvest begins. Farmers are again counting upon imported labor and prisoners of war to bear part of the peak harvest load, although these sources have supplied only a very small proportion of the total farm work force.

The early season has permitted considerable progress in spring planting preparations but this advantage is being lost because of wet cold weather in many areas in late April and early May. Work is beginning to pile up. Numbers of family workers have increased a little over a year ago, partially compensating for the scarcity of hired help. Family workers on the first of the month totaled 8,153,000 persons in comparison to 8,079,000 on May 1 a year ago. However, present numbers of family workers are 8 percent below the 1935-39 average. The Middle Atlantic, West North Central and Mountain areas show slight decreases in family workers when compared with a year ago. All other regions are using larger numbers of family workers, with the largest increases in South Central States.

In New England, total farm employment was about 1 percent higher than on May 1, 1944. Seven thousand (4.2%) more workers were employed in this region on the first of this month than a year earlier. This increase more than offset the numerical decline in hired workers, which was off 4,000 or 5 percent from a year ago. Farmers in New England have been able to spread out their field work this spring because of an early season, although frequent rains during the last week in April and the first week in May have hampered operations to a considerable extent. Precipitation during the week ended May 1 checked spring planting in Souther New England. Practically no planting was accomplished during the week in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

In the Middle Atlantic States, total farm employment was estimated to be 583,000 on May 1 compared with 580,000 a year earlier. Rains checked field operations rather generally during the week ended May 1, but, fortunately, an early season allowed farmers to begin planting operations sooner this year than last. However, imported workers and school children already are being called upon to help with the spring work load. Rains delayed field work in some areas. High winds in some New York much areas blew out substantial onion acreage, causing an additional need for labor to reseed the crop. Despite the cool spell which followed the unseasonably warm weather of early April, snap beans had been planted by May 1 in New Jersey and tomato setting was well advanced. Potato planting was just about completed during the third week of April; oats had been seeded, and by the first of this month, were well advanced in growth.

Total farm employment in the East North Central States added up to 1,399,000 persons compared with 1,414,000 as of May 1 last year. The decrease of 27,000 in the number of hired hands was partially offset by an increase of 12,000 in the number of family workers employed. Field work was retarded by heavy rainfall in many sections of this region in late April. Indiana and Illinois farmers were rather busy preparing ground for corn and soybeans, in areas where the land was dry enough. In northern Michigan, some farmers had planted potatoes by May 1. Considerable progress was reported in seeding oats in Central Wisconsin, but outside of Wisconsin, above-normal precipitation rather generally slowed spring farm operations.

Cool wet weather also impeded farm activity in many parts of the West North Central region. Only in Iowa, northern Nebraska, and the Dakotas, was substantial progress made during the last week of April and the first week of May with spring planting operations. Farmers were able to rush plowing for corn in Iowa and northeastern Nebraska. Considerable headway was made on this job in the Dakotas, and at the same time, seeding of spring wheat was nearing completion.

Reports from the South Atlantic region show a decline of 17,000 persons from a year ago in total farm employment. Although there have been some reports of farm work lagging because of labor scarcities, favorable weather in this region has enabled farmers to use the available supply of workers to good advantage. Heavy rainfall during the last week of April brought most cultivation and preparation of land to a standstill. Transplanting of tobacco was almost completed in the Carolinas and corn planting had begun as far north as Maryland.

Despite one of the largest regional increased in family workers, total farm employment in the East South Central region showed a slight decrease from a year ago. The 1,482,000 family workers were 2 percent greater than the number for last May, while a 16 percent decrease left the number of hired workers at 173,000. Field operations on May 1 were generally retarded by heavy rainfall in the preceding week.

Total farm employment in the West South Central region was 1,690,000 persons on May 1, an increase of 13,000 over the preceding year. Family labor increased 36,000 to 1,395,000. This was more than sufficient to balance a decrease of 23,000 hired workers during the year. Wet, cool weather had slowed farm work which was behind schedule in most parts of the region. Strawberries in Arkansas and commercial vegetables in Southern Texas were being harvested.

Family and hired labor on May 1 both show decreases from the same period a year ago in the Mountain region. Family workers dropped from 300,000 to 295,000 and hired workers from 111,000 to 108,000. Demand for labor was light during most of April. Montana beet growers, however, were having some difficulty locating sufficient out-of-State labor to handle the 1945 crop.

Total employment in the Pacific region was 524,000 workers, an increase of 6,000 over the preceding May 1. Numbers of family workers increased from 311,000 on May 1, 1944 to 313,000 on the first of this month. Hired workers totaled 211,000 compared to 207,000 a year earlier. Farm work was progressing rapidly, except for some delay in pea seeding in Washington. Harvest of the Kern County potato crop in California was underway by May 1.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL
Bureau of Agriculture Economics

Farm employment indexes and related data, United States, May 1, 1945
with comparisons

	Annual average 1910-14	April 1 1944	May 1, 1944	April 1, 1945	May 1, 1945
FARM EMPLOYMENT (thousands of persons):	12,052	9,080	10,068	8,982	10,017
Family labor	9,160	7,401	8,079	7,322	8,153
Hired labor	2,892	1,679	1,989	1,660	1,864
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES:					
Total -					
Unadjusted	100	75	84	75	83
Adjusted for seasonal variation	100	82	81	81	80
Family labor -					
Unadjusted	100	81	88	80	89
Adjusted for seasonal variation	100	84	83	83	84
Hired labor -					
Unadjusted	100	58	69	57	64
Adjusted for seasonal variation	100	74	74	73	69

Foreign Workers Employed in or Available for Agricultural work by Country of Origin and State of Employment as of March 31, 1945

MEXICANS	36,509	JAMAICANS	3,211	BAHAMIANS	5,466
Ohio	1	Maine	12	Delware	14
Indiana	10	New Hampshire	3	Maryland	65
Illinois	3	Connecticut	703	Virginia	25
Wisconsin	1	New York	53	Florida	5,362
Minnesota	6	New Jersey	76		
Nebraska	134	Pennsylvania	16	NEWFOUNDLANDERS	695
Kansas	3	Ohio	128	Maine	60
Montana	18	Indiana	3	New Hampshire	44
Idaho	24	Illinois	5	Vermont	86
Wyoming	7	Michigan	63	Mass.	51
Colorado	87	Wisconsin	5	Rhode Island	6
Arizona	1,961	Delaware	49	Connecticut	64
Utah	14	Maryland	23	New York	261
Nevada	260	Florida	1,960	New Jersey	50
Washington	750	Arizona	112	Pennsylvania	66
Oregon	740			Delaware	7
California	32,490				

Source: Requirements & Certifications Division
Pr gram Branch - Office of Labor, WFA
April 20, 1945

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm employment, United States and geographic division.
May 1, 1945 with comparisons

TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT

Geographic division	May 1 Average 1935-39	April 1 1944	May 1 1944	April 1 1945	May 1 1945
	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's
United States	11,465	9,080	10,068	8,982	10,017
New England	250	217	232	216	235
Middle Atlantic	631	544	580	553	583
East North Central	1,557	1,313	1,414	1,326	1,399
West North Central	1,694	1,467	1,564	1,446	1,531
South Atlantic	2,338	1,723	2,002	1,692	1,989
East South Central	2,025	1,466	1,662	1,394	1,655
West South Central	1,973	1,470	1,685	1,488	1,698
Mountain	448	390	411	378	403
Pacific	547	490	518	489	524
FAMILY WORKERS 1/					
United States	8,870	7,401	8,079	7,322	8,153
New England	162	158	159	157	166
Middle Atlantic	418	400	407	406	406
East North Central	1,204	1,118	1,167	1,143	1,179
West North Central	1,367	1,279	1,336	1,269	1,332
South Atlantic	1,759	1,357	1,583	1,334	1,585
East South Central	1,746	1,283	1,457	1,234	1,482
West South Central	1,584	1,203	1,359	1,193	1,395
Mountain	299	298	300	285	295
Pacific	329	305	311	301	313
HIRED WORKERS					
United States	2,595	1,679	1,989	1,660	1,864
New England	88	59	73	59	69
Middle Atlantic	213	144	173	147	177
East North Central	353	195	247	183	220
West North Central	327	188	228	177	199
South Atlantic	579	366	419	358	404
East South Central	279	183	205	160	173
West South Central	389	267	326	295	303
Mountain	149	92	111	93	108
Pacific	218	185	207	188	211

1/ Including farm operators and members of their families working without wages.

Based on reports from 21,310 farmers who reported for their own farms the number of family and hired workers doing 2 or more days of work during the week of inquiry.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Ecomonics

Farm Employment by Type of Farming Areas 1/: Total Number of Persons Employed on the First of Each Month and Index Numbers January 1944 to Date 2/

Year and month	Corn Area			Index 3/			Eastern Dairy Area			Index 3/		
	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total
1944	000	000	000				000	000	000			
Jan.	892	152	1,044	79	38	68	456	145	601	71	43	61
Feb.	885	158	1,043	78	39	68	455	167	622	71	49	64
Mar.	909	147	1,056	80	37	69	458	166	624	72	49	64
Apr.	945	163	1,108	84	41	72	482	174	656	75	51	67
May	982 4/	204	1,186	87	51	77	484	209	693	76	62	71
June	1,038	233	1,271	92	58	83	495	227	722	77	67	74
July	1,014	264	1,278	90	66	83	530	302	832	83	89	85
Aug.	1,015	250	1,265	90	62	83	547	334	881	86	98	90
Sept.	1,014	237	1,251	90	59	82	536	292	828	84	86	85
Oct.	1,001	210	1,211	89	52	79	509	290	799	80	85	82
Nov.	1,019	217	1,236	90	54	81	489	227	716	77	67	73
Dec.	942	196	1,138	83	49	74	473	207	680	74	61	70
1945												
Jan.	889	130	1,019	79	32	66	444	150	594	69	44	61
Feb.	862	138	1,000	76	34	65	444	138	582	70	44	59
Mar.	918	132	1,050	81	33	68	454	158	612	71	47	63
Apr.	959	156	1,115	85	39	73	486	174	660	76	51	67
May	992	177	1,169	88	44	76	488	205	693	76	60	71

	Western Dairy Area						Middle Eastern Area					
1944												
Jan.	605	116	721	84	52	77	1,195	207	1,402	73	49	68
Feb.	607	128	735	84	58	78	1,223	227	1,450	74	53	70
Mar.	619	115	734	86	52	78	1,240	225	1,465	75	53	71
Apr.	653	120	773	91	54	82	1,302	210	1,512	79	49	73
May	690	144	834	96	65	89	1,435	245	1,680	87	58	81
June	722	154	876	100	69	93	1,625	263	1,888	99	62	91
July	751	179	930	104	80	99	1,609	277	1,886	98	65	91
Aug.	719	181	900	100	81	96	1,463	259	1,722	89	61	83
Sept.	692	174	866	96	78	92	1,493	310	1,803	91	73	87
Oct.	690	179	869	96	80	92	1,600	328	1,928	97	77	93
Nov.	686	150	836	95	67	89	1,457	269	1,726	89	63	83
Dec.	669	124	793	93	56	84	1,316	246	1,562	80	58	76
1945												
Jan.	609	103	712	85	46	76	1,175	198	1,373	72	47	66
Feb.	595	110	705	83	46	75	1,173	187	1,360	71	44	66
Mar.	631	103	734	88	46	78	1,245	187	1,432	76	44	69
Apr.	653	112	765	91	50	81	1,279	209	1,488	78	49	72
May	682	128	810	95	58	86	1,434	221	1,655	87	52	80

Continued -

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm Employment by Type of Farming Areas 1/: Total Number of Persons Employed on the First of Each Month and Index Numbers January 1944 to Date 2/-Continued

Year and Month	Eastern Cotton Area			Index 3/			Delta Cotton Area			Index 3/		
	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total
1944	000	000	000				000	000	000			
Jan.	650	188	838	46	60	48	744	108	852	68	43	63
Feb.	685	226	911	49	72	53	779	133	912	71	53	68
Mar.	732	225	957	52	72	56	801	127	928	73	50	69
Apr.	829	203	1,032	59	65	60	877	130	1,007	80	52	75
May	1,037	257	1,294	74	82	75	1,020	142	1,162	94	56	87
June	1,184	363	1,547	84	115	90	1,168	212	1,380	107	84	103
July	1,063	295	1,358	75	94	79	1,090	235	1,325	100	93	99
Aug.	827	286	1,113	59	91	65	910	200	1,110	84	79	83
Sept	971	326	1,297	69	104	75	972	174	1,146	89	69	85
Oct.	1,303	406	1,709	93	129	99	1,288	402	1,690	118	159	126
Nov.	1,045	363	1,408	74	115	82	1,060	309	1,369	97	122	102
Dec.	742	197	939	53	63	54	893	246	1,139	82	97	85
1945												
Jan.	625	159	784	44	51	46	745	97	842	68	38	63
Feb.	622	173	795	44	55	46	752	128	880	69	51	66
Mar.	698	199	897	50	63	52	749	105	854	69	41	64
Apr.	820	215	1,035	58	68	60	843	128	971	77	51	72
May	1,038	258	1,296	74	82	75	1,056	136	1,192	97	54	89

Year and Month	Western Cotton Area			Index 3/			Small Grain Area			Index 3/		
	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total
1944												
Jan.	660	224	884	68	89	73	519	75	594	85	41	75
Feb.	632	190	822	66	76	68	515	78	593	84	43	75
Mar.	688	171	859	71	68	71	537	69	606	88	38	76
Apr.	740	175	915	77	70	75	564	74	638	92	41	80
May	809	230	1,039	84	92	86	586	105	691	96	58	87
June	898	274	1,172	93	109	97	627	134	761	102	74	96
July	890	340	1,230	92	136	101	633	164	797	103	91	100
Aug.	768	278	1,046	80	111	86	634	189	823	103	104	104
Sept	819	289	1,108	85	115	91	627	222	849	102	123	107
Oct.	909	264	1,173	94	105	97	593	165	758	97	106	95
Nov.	830	303	1,133	86	121	93	581	129	710	95	71	89
Dec.	745	293	1,038	77	117	85	550	98	648	90	54	82
1945												
Jan.	639	155	794	66	62	65	528	71	599	86	39	75
Feb.	665	178	843	69	71	69	527	67	594	86	37	75
Mar.	688	198	886	71	79	73	553	65	618	90	36	78
Apr.	730	205	935	76	82	77	573	70	643	93	39	81
May	831	205	1,036	86	82	85	592	91	683	97	50	86

Continued -

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Ecomonics

Farm Employment by Type of Farming Areas 1/: Total Number of Persons Employed on the First of Each Month and Index Numbers January 1944 to Date 2/-Continued

Year and month	Range Area			Index 3/			Northwestern Area			Index 3/		
	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total
1944	000	000	000				000	000	000			
Jan.	167	64	231	110	63	92	186	45	231	117	58	97
Feb.	175	56	231	116	55	92	194	43	237	122	55	100
Mar.	180	65	245	119	64	97	194	44	238	122	56	100
Apr.	190	60	250	126	59	99	203	48	251	128	62	106
May	192	76	272	127	75	108	207	59	266	130	76	112
June	213	104	317	141	103	126	218	87	305	137	112	129
July	184	107	291	122	106	115	206	159	365	130	204	154
Aug.	199	116	315	132	115	125	218	199	417	137	255	176
Sept.	208	120	328	138	119	130	242	201	443	152	258	187
Oct.	194	105	299	128	104	118	202	138	340	127	177	143
Nov.	189	86	275	125	85	109	199	117	316	125	150	133
Dec.	182	71	253	120	70	100	197	70	267	124	90	113
1945												
Jan.	168	63	231	111	62	92	186	40	226	117	51	95
Feb.	172	53	225	114	52	89	197	39	236	124	50	100
Mar.	179	72	251	118	71	99	198	37	235	125	47	99
Apr.	182	69	251	120	68	99	204	46	250	128	59	105
May	188	76	264	124	75	105	216	57	273	136	73	115

1/ Corn Area: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa; Eastern Dairy Area: New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania; Western Dairy Area: Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota; Middle Eastern Area; Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky and Tennessee; Eastern Cotton Area: South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama; Delta Cotton Area: Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana; Western Cotton Area: Oklahoma and Texas; Small Grains Area: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Montana: Range Area: Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Nevada; Northwestern Area: Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

2/ Includes farm operators and members of their families doing farm work without wages.

3/ 1910-14 = 100.

4/ Corrected

Farm Wage Rate Enumerations Show Wide Range in Hourly Earnings

Regional differences in average farm wage rates of more than 100 percent were shown by a survey made for the week ended March 24. This was the first of a series of special nationwide[1] farm wage rate surveys by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics to secure detailed information on the wage rates and earnings of farm labor during specified weeks. Nearly 20,000 farm operators were interviewed in a representative sample of counties over the entire United States. Of the farm operators interviewed, only about 2,800 reported using hired labor during the survey week. Inquiry was made into wage rates paid, hours worked, cash earnings and perquisites received by workers in their employ.

Averages of various types of cash wage rates, average earnings and hours worked derived from the survey data are included in this report. The material on perquisites has not been analysed except to classify workers into two groups, those receiving and those not receiving two or more meals a day in addition to cash wages. The data presented here are preliminary, and more detailed analysis, including the general nature of perquisites received by hired farm workers, is in progress and will be published later.

The wage rates obtained from this survey are based on actual rates paid by farmers to about 5,000 hired workers, and are not comparable with the regular quarterly series published by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The regular series is based on returns received by mail from voluntary correspondents who report on average rates prevailing in their localities.

Cash earnings of all hired labor on United States farms averaged 34.1 cents per hour during the week ended March 24. Earnings for the week averaged $16.00 per worker, with a 9.4 hour day and 5.0 days worked. Weekly earnings data are wages received for work done on the reporting farm only, and do not include other wages the worker may have received. Cash returns per hour for workers receiving meals[2] were 12.6 cents lower than the 38.7 cents paid workers not receiving meals. However, a longer average day and more days worked brought weekly cash returns of hired labor receiving meals within $1.00 of the average for the group receiving no meals.

Of the total number of persons hired by farmers 41 percent were employed at day rates. This group contained a large proportion of field hands and sharecroppers hired by the day in the Southern region, for soil preparation and planting of crops. In other regions, day rates are generally used for short time peak jobs, of which there very few in March.

Monthly rates of payment covered 27 percent of the hired hands working on farms. Year-round workers are generally paid by the month in all regions. The North Central showed the highest percentage of monthly hands. Hourly rates, ordinarily used for hiring for short jobs, were fairly important in the Western region, but accounted for only 17 percent of total United States farm employment. Weekly wage rates were important primarily in the Northeast region. For the United States, 11 percent of the total number of hired workers were employed at weekly wage rates. Piece-work rates were paid to less than 5 percent of the workers, as such rates are generally used for types of work that come later in season.

1/ Results obtained from surveys of wage rates and earnings of citrus fruit, strawberry, and vegetable harvesters in selected areas in Florida and Texas have already appeared in the March and April issues of Farm Labor. 2/ Includes the few workers receiving only one meal.

Almost three-fourths of the hired farm labor did not receive meals in addition to cash wages. In the Southern Region, 86 percent of the total hired workers were in this group. In the Northeast and North Central Regions, slightly more than half the workers were given meals. Over half of the workers receiving meals in these two regions were employed by the month.

The Northeast: Cash earnings of hired farm labor during the week ended March 24 in the Northeast 1/ averaged 32.4 cents per hour for a 9.8 hour day and a 6.0 day week. Of the workers employed, 73 percent were hired on a monthly or weekly basis. Most of these were doing chores, maintenance and repair jobs on dairy and livestock farms. Little field work was performed during the week, except in the southern part of the region.

Payment on a daily or hourly basis was usually confined to workers on specific short time jobs. About a fifth of the few hands paid daily and hourly wage rates were served meals by farmers. Practically no workers were being paid piece work rates in this region.

Almost half of the workers received meals in addition to cash wages, and their wages were much below those for workers not receiving meals. Average hourly earnings were 21.0 cents with meals and 44.5 cents without meals. On the average, workers receiving meals worked longer hours per day and more days per week than those not receiving meals.

The North Central States: Hired labor employed during the week received an average cash wage of 30.1 cents per hour in North Central States 2/. The work day averaged 10.1 hours during the week in this region, longer than that reported for any other part of the country. Working time during the week averaged 5.7 days. About half the workers employed were month hands; only 8 percent were hired by the week. These groups of laborers were generally hired for the season, but during the latter part of March were mostly employed at odd jobs and livestock care. Some preparation for spring planting was under way in most States, although heavy rainfall delayed field work in Kansas, Missouri, and southern Illinois.

About 40 percent of the hired hands were paid at a daily or hourly rate. Most of the workers in these two groups were employed for specific jobs of short duration. Almost half of the day hands received meals in addition to cash wages.

Hourly earnings of all workers receiving meals averaged 21.7 cents, compared to 40.3 cents per hour without meals. Farm laborers not furnished meals often received other perquisites such as a house, fuel, meat, fruit, use of a garden and other items. As in the Northeast, longer hours per day and a longer work week was reported for workers furnished meals.

The South: Cash earnings of hired farm labor in the South 3/ averaged 27.7 cents per hour. Hours worked per day averaged 8.9, but only 4.2 days were worked, on the average, during the week ended March 24. Rainy weather in the East and West South Central areas prevented full-time employment. In contrast to employment practices in the Northeast Region, 73 percent of the workers were hired on a daily or hourly basis. Many kinds of farm work were performed by hired farm labor during the survey week. Preparation of fields for planting, and actual planting of corn, cotton and other field crops were making good progress in many parts of the South. Livestock and poultry care also required some hired labor.

1/ New England and Middle Atlantic States.
2/ East North and West North Central States.
3/ South Atlantic, East South and West South Central States.

About 20 percent of the labor employed received payment on a monthly or weekly basis. Piece work rates were paid only about 7 percent of the hired workers. This type of payment was reported only for tung nut pickers in Florida and workers picking the remnants of last year's cotton crop in Arkansas.

Workers employed in the South generally received no meals in addition to cash wages. Of the workers reported, 86 percent received no meals. Rates with meals and without meals showed less difference than for any of the other regions. Hourly earnings with meals averaged 23.1 cents compared to 28.7 cents without meals. Workers receiving meals in the Southern region apparently were more highly skilled than the general run of field hands and share croppers, who received only a cash wage when working on the home farm of the plantation owner. In addition, workers from the low wage share-cropper area were more heavily represented in the without meals category than in the with meals classification. Hours worked per day and days worked per week were longer for workers receiving meals.

The West: Hourly cash earnings of hired farm labor in the West 1/ were 58.7 cents, the highest average, for the week ended March 24, in any of the four regions. Employment on an hourly basis was the most common form of hiring in that region. Hourly workers included 38 percent of the total number of hired workers and was almost entirely on a without meals basis. Daily rates were used in hiring 20 percent of the workers. Some of the hands hired to prune trees in Washington and Utah and sort seed potatoes in Idaho were paid on a daily or hourly basis.

Monthly wage hands made up 36 percent of the total number of hired farm laborers in this region. This was a common method of hiring sheep herders and cow punchers on ranches. Most of their work at the time of enumeration was routine feeding and preparations for calving, lambing, and sheep shearing. Laborers on dairy farms also were frequently hired by the month. About two-thirds of the hired farm labor in the West was not furnished meals in addition to cash wages. Cash earnings per hour averaged 46.9 cents with meals and 65.8 cents without meals. About two-thirds of the workers receiving meals in addition to cash wages were month hands.

1/ Mountain and Pacific States.

Average farm wage rates, United States and Major Regions, March, 1945 1/

Area	Rates Per Month		Rates Per Week		Rates Per day		Rates Per Hour	
	With 2 or more meals	Without meals	With 2 or more meals	Without meals	With 2 or more meals	Without meals	With 2 or more meals	Without meals
	dol.	dol.	dol.	dol.	dol.	dol.	dol.	dol.
United States	71.80	99.00	14.30	21.60	2.51	2.65	.445	.548
Northeast	56.10	97.50	14.30	26.90	2.97	5.26	2/	.51
North Central	62.80	102.00	2/	22.70	2.71	3.36	2/	.55
South	52.60	65.30	2/	16.10	2.38	2.37	2/	.38
West	120.00	160.00	2/	33.80	4.49	4.46	2/	.74

1/ Preliminary

2/ Too few reports to establish a reasonably reliable indication

Precentage distribution of hired farm workers by sex, United States and Major Regions, March 1945 1/

Item	United States	Northeast	North Central	South	West
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
All hired farm workers	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Males	94.7	96.1	97.7	92.1	98.2
Females	5.3	3.9	2.3	7.9	1.8

1/ Preliminary

Percentage distribution of hired farm workers by mode of payment, United States and Major Regions, March, 1945 1/

Mode of payment	United States	Northeast	North Central	South	West
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
All modes of payment	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
With 2 or more meals	29.0	47.1	49.1	14.2	33.8
Month	15.1	23.3	30.5	3.5	22.7
Week	4.2	17.9	3.7	2.4	1.7
Day	8.0	4.5	11.4	7.4	6.8
Hour	1.7	1.2	3.4	.9	2.5
Piece rate	.1	.2	.1	---	.1
Without meals	71.0	52.9	50.9	85.8	66.2
Month	11.6	11.3	19.9	7.4	13.1
Week	6.8	20.3	4.7	6.2	2.6
Day	32.9	7.3	12.9	53.3	13.6
Hour	15.3	11.8	12.9	11.4	36.2
Piece rate	4.3	2.2	.5	7.5	.7

1/ Preliminary.

Average cash earnings and time worked by hired farm workers, United States and Major Regions, March, 1945 1/

Area and mode of payment	Average cash earnings on reporting farm 2/ 3/			Average time worked on reporting farm		
	Hourly Dollars	Daily Dollars	Weekly Dollars	Hours per day Hours	Hours per week Hours	Days Per week Days
United States - total	.341	3.22	16.00	9.4	46.9	5.0
With 2 or more meals	.261	2.63	15.30	10.1	58.6	5.8
Without meals	.387	3.53	16.30	9.1	42.1	4.6
Northeast - total	.324	3.18	19.10	9.8	59.1	6.0
With 2 or more Meals	.210	2.14	13.60	10.2	64.6	6.3
Without meals	.445	4.20	24.10	9.4	54.2	5.7
North Central - total	.301	3.05	17.30	10.1	57.4	5.7
With 2 or more meals	.217	2.31	13.70	10.7	63.1	5.9
Without meals	.403	3.86	20.90	9.6	51.7	5.4
South - total	.277	2.48	10.40	8.9	37.5	4.2
With 2 or more meals	.231	2.21	10.80	9.6	46.6	4.9
Without meals	.287	2.53	10.30	8.8	36.0	4.1
West - total	.587	5.44	31.50	9.3	53.6	5.8
With 2 or more meals	.469	4.36	27.70	9.3	58.9	6.3
Without meals	.658	6.09	33.40	9.3	50.8	5.5

1/ Preliminary

2/ Excludes earnings of pieceworkers hired by contractors.

3/ Hourly, daily and weekly cash earnings on reporting farm differ from the wage rate figures shown in table of average wage rate since the earnings figures are derived from weekly earnings divided by the number of days and hours worked on reporting farms.

RESULTS FROM SURVEYS OF WAGE RATES AND WAGES OF SEASONAL FARM WORKERS IN SELECTED SPECIAL CROP AREAS OF CALIFORNIA AND LOUISIANA

Wage rates and earnings of vegetable and citrus harvesters in Imperial County, California, week ended March 3, 1945.--Farm workers harvesting vegetables and citrus in Imperial County, California, averaged 76 cents per hour and $5.90 per day in cash wages during the week ended March 3, 1945. These are results of a special survey made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics as part of an expanded program of collecting farm wage information. The survey obtained wage data on 786 laborers in field crews harvesting cabbage, carrots, citrus fruit, lettuce, and peas during an active week in the harvest of each of these crops. Over two-thirds of the workers enumerated were Mexican residents of the county, 16 percent were imported workers from Mexico, 13 percent were Filipinos, and only 3 percent were other American whites. Practically all of the harvesters were males.

In most of the operations, workers were paid on an hourly basis, which ordinarily was 60 or 65 cents per hour for common field labor and 75 to 85 cents for jobs requiring more skill. All workers paid by the hour averaged 65 cents an hour, while workers paid on a piece rate basis averaged 89 cents an hour. In jobs such as cutting cabbage and cutting and packing dry-pack lettuce, the expert Filipinos insisted on payment at piece rates, whereas slower cutters were content to work at hourly rates. Members of Filipino crews working at piece rates averaged $1.40 an hour.

Of all the workers included in the survey, 56 percent had hourly earnings between 60 and 70 cents, with 9 percent making less than 60 cents an hour and 35 percent making 70 cents or more. Differences in time worked per day led to greater variation among the workers in daily than in hourly earnings. Twenty-four percent of all workers had average daily earnings less than 5 dollars, 48 percent averaged between $5 and $7 per day, while 28 percent had average daily earnings of $7 or more.

Wage rates and earnings of strawberry pickers and packers in the major producing area of Louisiana, week ended April 14, 1945.- Strawberry pickers and packers in the major strawberry producing area of Louisiana averaged 29 cents an hour and $2 a day during the week ended April 14, 1945, according to a special survey made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The survey obtained wage data on 300 strawberry pickers and packers working on a sample of farms surveyed in Tangipahoa and Livingston Parishes. These two parishes include 85 to 90 percent of the total acreage in the major strawberry producing area of the State. The survey data relate to the week of the season in which the heaviest shipments of strawberries from the area occurred.

Both pickers and packers were paid by piece rates; the average rate for picking a pint box of strawberries was 3.1 cents and the average rate for packing a crate of 24 pints of strawberries was 27.4 cents. Average hourly earnings of workers from these piece rates were about the same, but because the packers averaged slightly longer hours per day and per week, their daily and weekly wages were somewhat higher. The average weekly wage earned by packers was $13.70, compared with $11.70 for the pickers. These weekly wages represent earnings from an average of 43 hours work per week. Although the average number of hours worked by pickers per day was only 6.8 hours, since picking must stop in time for berries to be packed on the same day, pickers worked an average of 6.2 days per week.

Most of the strawberry pickers were women and teen-age boys and girls. This accounts in part for the low average earnings, although the 25 males

aged 18-44 included among the pickers averaged only $2.60 a day and $15.60 a week. Variation in weekly wages was great among the pickers. Thirty-five percent made less the $8 in cash wages during the week, 46 percent made between $8 and $ 16, while 19 percent made more than $16 during the week. Although these weekly figures relate only to wages earned by the worker on the reporting farm, they must be approximately equal to the total weekly earnings of the workers, since the average of 6.2 days of work on one farm indicates that there could have been very little shifting of workers from one farm to another during the week.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agriculture Economics

Average wages and time worked by harvesters of cabbage, carrots, citrus, lettuce and peas, Imperial County, California, week ended March 3, 1945 (Preliminary)

Crop	Number of workers in survey	Average cash wages earned on reporting crew: Hourly	Daily	Average time worked on reporting crew: Hours per day	Days per week
	Number	Dollars	Dollars	Number	Number
Cabbage	107	.87	6.80	7.8	5.7
Carrots	264	.76	5.10	6.8	5.0
Citrus	93	.63	5.70	8.5	5.1
Lettuce, dry pack	117	.94	7.60	8.1	6.1
Lettuce, icepack	175	.65	5.80	8.9	5.4
Peas	30	.64	4.90	7.2	---

Average wage rates, performance, and hourly earnings of piece rate workers harvesting carrots, cabbage and lettuce, Imperial County, California, week ended March 3, 1945 (Preliminary)

Crop, operation, and type of worker	Number of workers in survey	Average rate: Amount	Unit	Average units harvested per hour	Average hourly earnings
	Number	Dol.		Number	Dol.
Carrots - tie and bunch:					
Mexican domestic	222	.21	3 doz. bunches	3.5	.73
Filipino	20	.21	"	4.7	.99
Cabbage - cut and throw:					
Mexican domestic	51	3.10	Ton	.34	1.11
Lettuce, dry-pack - cut and pack:					
Filipino	40	.24	Crate	6.6	1.60
Peas - pick					
Other-American	30	.025	Pound	25.7	.64

Average wage rates, time worked, and wages of strawberry pickers and packers, major producing area of Louisiana, week ended April 14, 1945 (Preliminary)

Operation and classification of worker	Number of workers in survey	Average rate		Average cash wages earned			Average time worked		
		Amount	Unit	Hourly	Daily	Weekly	Hours per day	Days per week	Hours per week
	Number	Cents		Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Number	Number	Number
Strawberry pickers and packers 1/	300	--	--	.29	2.00	12.40	7.0	6.2	43
Strawberry picking only - total	259	3.1	Pint box	.28	1.90	11.70	6.8	6.2	42
Males aged 18-44	25	3.3	" "	.32	2.60	15.60	7.9	6.1	48
All others	234	3.1	" "	.27	1.80	11.30	6.7	6.2	42
Pickers not receiving meals	216	3.2	" "	.28	2.00	12.40	7.0	6.3	44
Pickers receiving meals	43	2.9	" "	.27	1.50	8.60	5.6	5.8	32
Strawberry packing only - total	29	27.4	24-pt.crate	.29	2.20	13.70	7.5	6.3	47

1/ Including 12 workers who did both picking and packing.

Distribution by weekly earnings of strawberry pickers, major producing area of Louisiana, week ended April 14, 1945 (Preliminary)

Race of worker	Number with weekly wages				Percentage with weekly wages			
	Total	$8.00 or less	$8.01 to $16.00	$16.01 and over	Total	$8.00 or less	$8.01 to $16.00	$16.01 and over
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Total	259	91	118	50	100	35	46	19
White	54	22	25	7	100	41	46	13
Negro	205	69	93	43	100	34	45	21