Farm Labor

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Wintry March Increases Livestock Care
Field Work Delayed; Working Force Low

During the survey week of March 21-27 winter was the big boss on most of the Nation's farms, directing what could or must be done. Heavy blankets or drifts of snow in many northern sections and continued cold weather added to time required for feeding and other livestock chores. Wet soils throughout extensive southern and eastern areas also delayed the upsurge of field activity expected in late March. The result: A definite delay in farm work. The working force utilized in meeting the March work requirements totaled 4,677,000 workers, 12 percent less than in March of last year and a new record low for the period.

With field work impossible, farm operators were able to do almost all work on many farms, even those with livestock and dairy cows. The number of family workers in the March survey week at 3,706,000 persons was 12 percent less than in March 1964. However, even though the hours of assistance required from wives and children have been lessened by new equipment and livestock management methods, some stockmen in the Northern States during late March put in long and watchful hours helping save new-born calves, lambs, and pigs. They count on this care being repaid in a few weeks by seeing young livestock reveling in spring sunshine while tractors roar across the fields.

The number of hired workers in the March survey week totaled 971,000 or 10 percent less than in March 1964. With the prevailing seasonal field conditions, labor shortages were minimized even for specialty crops. In California, some rainy and cool weather in the principal asparagus area slowed growth and aided in the orderly harvest of fresh asparagus by a force of domestic farm workers considerably less numerous than required during the comparable period last year. Citrus harvest made good progress in California and Florida, and harvest of Florida sugarcane was completed.

April Farm Wage Rates 4 percent Above Last Year

Despite the slowness of the spring work season the upward push of farm wage rates shows clearly in reports from all areas. The level of farm wage rates reported by farm operators on April 1, 1965 was 26 percent above the 1957-59 average, and 4 percent over a year earlier. The average cash rate per hour, without board or room, increased 4 percent over April 1, 1964, to $1.18 per hour. Monthly and daily rates also showed gains of 4 and 3 percent, respectively. Comparisons of April 1 State averages for 1964 and 1965 on pages 6

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and 7 show the generally consistent trend in States and regions of wage increases for different hiring arrangements. Alaska reports topped averages for all other States with hourly rates without board or housing at $2.05 per hour. The rates published represent crop and livestock reporters' farms and localities and thus reflect rates paid in many typical situations. Only cash payments are included.

Hours Worked During Survey Week Still at Winter Levels

The data on hours worked per week by different classes of farm workers during the week of March 21-27, shown on page 5, are based on the actual operations of about 23,000 farms representing many different kinds of farming throughout the Nation. The operators of these farms averaged 38.4 hours of farm work, a gain of over an hour, or about 4 percent over the February survey week. These averages include all farms reporting on hours worked even though the operator did little or no farm work in the survey week. Reports representing Alaska farm operators (not shown in table) averaged 43.3 hours per week, comparable with many other States.

Other family workers averaged 29.9 hours, up 2 percent from the previous month. The working hours for many hired workers were reduced by cool or rainy weather and averaged 34.3 hours per week, 2 percent less than in February.

The average of 35.5 hours per week for all workers was only a half hour longer than in the February survey week.

Other notable aspects of farm work in late March affecting future market supplies can be cited. Planting of Florida-Georgia shade tobacco was active. Much corn was being planted in Florida and Southern Alabama. In Texas, cotton planting moved ahead slowly in southern sections, sheep shearing was under way, and goat shearing neared completion in the main mohair producing center of the Edwards Plateau. Planting sugar beets continued in producing areas of Pacific States, and the Texas High Plains. California field plantings of a wide range of crops continued, and alfalfa harvest increased. Strawberry picking increased in Southern areas and started in the Santa Clara Valley near the central coast.

Farm employment and indexes, March 1965, with comparisons, United States

	Annual average 1959-63 1/	Annual average 1963	Annual average 1964	March average 1959-63 1/	March 22-28, 1964	March 21-27, 1965
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands)						
Total	6,907	6,518	6,110	5,926	5,301	4,677
Family labor	5,040	4,738	4,506	4,656	4,224	3,706
Hired labor	1,867	1,780	1,604	1,270	1,077	971
INDEXES 2/ (1910-14=100)						
Total	51	48	45	52	46	41
Family labor	50	47	44	50	46	40
Hired labor	55	52	47	56	47	43
(1957-59=100)						
Total	91	86	81	94	84	74
Family labor	91	86	82	93	84	74
Hired labor	95	91	82	97	82	74

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, 1965, United States

	Annual average 1964	April average 1959-63	April 1, 1964	April 1, 1965
FARM WAGE RATES				
Composite rate per hour 1/	$ 0.904	$ 0.761	$ 0.827	$ 0.860
Per month with house	212	189	206	215
Per month with board and room	162	147	158	164
Per week with board and room	38.50	35.30	38.00	38.75
Per week without board and room	49.50	46.20	49.25	50.75
Per day with house	5.90	5.30	5.90	6.00
Per day with board and room	7.10	6.00	6.50	6.70
Per day without board or room	7.30	6.50	7.10	7.30
Per hour with house	.97	.79	.86	.93
Per hour without board or room	1.08	1.05	1.14	1.18
INDEXES 2/				
(1910-14=100)	695	653	703	731
(1957-59=100)	120	112	121	126

1/ Weighted average of all rates on a per hour basis.
2/ Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Workers on Farms, March 1965
(Thousands of persons)

State and Region	March average 1959-63 1/			March 1964 Week of 22-28			March 1965 Week of 21-27		
	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired	Total	Family	Hired
Maine	26	19	7	25	19	6	24	19	5
N. H.	10	8	2	9	7	2	9	7	2
Vt.	27	21	6	21	17	4	21	17	4
Mass.	30	20	10	22	16	6	21	15	6
R. I.	4	3	1	2	1	1	3	2	1
Conn.	21	16	5	17	13	4	16	12	4
N. Eng.	118	87	31	96	73	23	94	72	22
N. Y.	140	99	41	112	80	32	101	74	27
N. J.	33	23	10	28	19	9	23	15	8
Pa.	168	145	23	145	126	19	126	112	14
M. Atl.	341	267	74	285	225	60	250	201	49
Ohio	224	199	25	200	178	22	173	158	15
Ind.	199	184	15	179	167	12	154	142	12
Ill.	214	174	40	190	158	32	166	141	25
Mich.	187	164	23	176	154	22	150	131	19
Wis.	265	241	24	237	218	19	214	195	19
E. N. Cent.	1089	962	127	982	875	107	857	767	90
Minn.	227	205	22	202	186	16	180	165	15
Iowa	252	233	19	234	220	14	211	196	15
Mo.	230	209	21	207	191	16	191	179	12
N. Dak.	78	69	9	66	60	6	60	55	5
S. Dak.	86	80	6	77	73	4	68	64	4
Nebr.	135	119	16	117	108	9	104	94	10
Kans.	141	128	13	136	125	11	113	104	9
W. N. Cent.	1149	1043	106	1039	963	76	927	857	70
Del.	10	7	3	7	5	2	7	5	2
Md.	50	36	14	43	33	10	38	29	9
Va.	160	127	33	146	120	26	121	99	22
W. Va.	58	48	10	50	42	8	43	37	6
N. C.	277	235	42	252	215	37	218	182	36
S. C.	139	94	45	109	78	31	84	63	21
Ga.	155	117	38	123	92	31	111	85	26
Fla.	148	51	97	145	49	96	146	47	99
S. Atl.	997	715	282	875	634	241	768	547	221
Ky.	198	166	32	193	158	35	166	140	26
Tenn.	192	155	37	181	149	32	154	129	25
Ala.	110	86	24	101	81	20	90	74	16
Miss.	192	149	43	172	132	40	147	110	37
E. S. Cent.	692	556	136	647	520	127	557	453	104
Ark.	174	113	61	142	93	49	125	78	47
La.	132	84	48	110	72	38	102	66	36
Okla.	142	126	16	129	117	12	105	94	11
Tex.	337	239	98	311	227	84	241	176	65
W. S. Cent.	785	562	223	692	509	183	573	414	159
Mont.	45	37	8	41	35	6	39	33	6
Idaho	52	43	9	49	41	8	45	38	7
Wyo.	16	12	4	16	12	4	14	10	4
Colo.	52	43	9	46	39	7	36	31	5
N. Mex.	30	19	11	28	19	9	23	15	8
Ariz.	40	9	31	37	9	28	36	7	29
Utah	26	20	6	21	17	4	21	16	5
Nev.	4	3	1	4	3	1	5	3	2
Mount.	265	186	79	242	175	67	219	153	66
Wash.	98	70	28	90	67	23	81	58	23
Oreg.	85	68	17	81	64	17	82	65	17
Calif.	307	140	167	272	119	153	269	119	150
Pac.	490	278	212	443	250	193	432	242	190
U. S.	5926	4656	1270	5301	4224	1077	4677	3706	971

1/ Persons employed during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month. Alaska not included above: Family, 500 persons; hired, 200.

Farm Work: Weekly Hours Worked Per Worker

State and division	Average for reporting farms - week of March 21-27, 1965				
	Farm Operator	Other family members 1/	All Family 1/	Hired Workers	All Workers 1/
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours
Maine	46.9	34.2	42.9	39.2	41.5
N. H.	55.8	32.2	49.1	35.3	44.5
Vt.	60.4	47.5	56.4	44.3	52.0
Mass.	57.7	31.3	49.1	40.2	45.8
R. I.	53.5	2/	51.7	43.9	48.2
Conn.	53.5	43.5	51.0	41.3	46.8
N. Eng.	54.0	37.8	49.1	40.6	46.2
N. Y.	54.3	31.7	49.0	42.7	46.9
N. J.	41.0	33.9	39.3	25.8	33.9
Pa.	49.4	30.3	43.3	35.6	41.7
M. Atl.	50.8	31.1	45.4	37.9	43.1
Ohio	40.8	29.5	37.7	32.0	36.8
Ind.	36.2	31.0	35.3	30.2	34.2
Ill.	35.8	33.9	35.5	33.9	35.2
Mich.	45.0	34.6	41.8	34.1	40.1
Wis.	54.9	29.5	45.3	36.5	43.8
E.N. Cent.	42.3	31.7	39.0	33.7	38.3
Minn.	45.3	29.4	40.5	35.6	39.9
Iowa	44.2	28.8	40.3	31.8	38.7
Mo.	36.4	28.6	34.7	31.2	34.3
N.Dak.	37.9	31.0	35.9	37.4	36.0
S.Dak.	41.5	29.1	38.4	35.5	38.0
Nebr.	38.7	31.0	37.1	33.4	36.6
Kans.	36.1	30.6	34.9	31.5	34.4
W.N.Cent.	40.5	29.5	37.7	33.3	37.0
Del.	34.3	33.2	34.1	16.9	28.7
Md.	42.1	31.3	39.5	36.6	38.4
Va.	36.4	34.2	35.9	30.7	34.0
W. Va.	35.1	27.3	33.2	26.0	31.7
N. C.	28.7	30.2	29.0	24.4	27.3
S. C.	32.5	24.7	30.9	23.0	27.3
Ga.	33.0	31.8	32.7	31.9	32.3
Fla.	35.4	29.6	34.1	28.9	30.7
S. Atl.	32.7	30.3	32.1	27.9	30.5
Ky.	32.2	27.2	31.2	25.3	29.2
Tenn.	27.0	25.2	26.7	21.6	25.2
Ala.	27.2	27.1	27.2	27.1	27.2
Miss.	32.8	23.6	31.1	23.7	26.8
E. S. Cent.	29.8	25.8	29.0	24.1	27.1
Ark.	28.8	28.7	28.8	27.4	28.3
La.	31.7	32.4	31.8	31.2	31.6
Okla.	33.7	25.7	32.2	26.5	30.9
Tex.	39.6	31.2	42.0	34.2	38.9
W. S. Cent.	35.3	29.8	36.1	31.0	33.8
Mont.	39.1	34.9	37.9	36.1	37.5
Idaho	45.8	25.8	39.8	39.4	39.8
Wyo.	46.8	29.9	42.4	39.7	41.4
Colo.	37.7	25.5	34.9	40.6	36.1
N. Mex.	44.2	34.2	42.0	41.2	41.7
Ariz.	49.7	42.1	48.2	44.2	45.5
Utah	40.2	29.3	36.4	34.9	36.1
Nev.	48.3	25.7	40.3	50.8	43.9
Mount.	42.2	29.8	38.8	41.5	39.8
Wash.	40.2	26.9	37.0	32.7	35.4
Oreg.	42.8	31.3	38.9	34.0	37.5
Calif.	49.2	36.1	45.6	46.8	46.5
Pac.	45.2	32.5	41.7	43.9	42.7
U. S.	38.4	29.9	36.4	34.3	35.9

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

2/ None reported.

Farm Wage Rates, April 1, 1964 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	Without board and room	Without board or room	With house	Without board or room		
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	
Maine	218	157	40.00	56.00	—	—	10.00	—	1.18	.969	621
N.H.	240	172	46.00	65.00	—	—	10.40	—	1.26	1.06	743
Vt.	212	162	43.50	59.00	—	—	9.90	—	1.23	1.00	694
Mass.	255	172	49.00	70.00	—	—	11.50	—	1.35	1.14	787
R.I.	250	172	49.00	70.00	—	—	11.50	—	1.40	1.16	836
Conn.	250	172	49.00	70.00	—	—	12.00	—	1.42	1.17	853
N.Eng.	237	167	45.75	64.50	—	—	10.90	—	1.30	1.08	744
N.Y.	226	164	42.50	57.50	—	—	9.60	—	1.22	.876	598
N.J.	242	165	46.50	62.00	—	—	10.50	—	1.24	.920	722
Pa.	204	147	38.00	51.00	—	—	8.80	—	1.13	.794	711
M.Atl.	222	159	41.75	56.25	—	—	9.50	—	1.20	.857	658
Ohio	193	132	—	—	—	6.50	8.50	—	1.12	.708	623
Ind.	201	144	—	—	—	7.00	9.00	—	1.14	.746	683
Ill.	220	170	—	—	—	8.20	9.90	—	1.19	.826	695
Mich.	233	165	—	—	—	7.40	9.30	—	1.12	.793	656
Wis.	212	156	—	—	—	7.40	9.30	—	1.17	.782	616
E.N.Cent.	214	156	—	—	—	7.40	9.30	—	1.15	.781	660
Minn.	206	159	—	—	—	8.20	10.20	—	1.18	.845	601
Iowa	225	179	—	—	—	8.70	10.50	—	1.22	.899	616
Mo.	180	130	—	—	—	6.60	8.30	—	1.08	.723	726
N.Dak.	204	169	—	—	—	7.70	9.30	—	1.09	.812	513
S.Dak.	208	163	—	—	—	7.30	9.10	—	1.11	.806	536
Nebr.	237	176	—	—	—	8.50	10.40	—	1.19	.892	661
Kans.	223	164	—	—	—	8.10	10.10	—	1.20	.863	784
W.N.Cent.	211	161	—	—	—	7.90	9.80	—	1.16	.836	641
Del.	185	—	—	—	—	—	8.60	—	1.07	.888	896
Md.	190	140	39.00	48.00	—	—	8.40	—	1.09	.886	984
Va.	—	—	—	—	5.80	—	6.90	.72	.90	.689	833
W.Va.	—	—	—	—	5.40	—	6.20	.70	.83	.635	554
N.C.	—	—	—	—	5.50	—	6.50	.66	.80	.637	796
S.C.	—	—	—	—	4.25	—	4.75	.51	.60	.478	695
Ga.	—	—	—	—	4.65	—	5.30	.61	.75	.554	685
Fla.	—	—	—	—	6.20	—	7.00	.80	.93	.720	799
S.Atl.	—	—	—	—	5.60	—	6.50	.71	.84	.655	800
Ky.	—	—	—	—	4.80	—	5.80	.69	.84	.572	643
Tenn.	—	—	—	—	4.45	—	5.30	.57	.72	.520	603
Ala.	—	—	—	—	4.45	—	5.00	.58	.70	.504	616
Miss.	—	—	—	—	4.50	—	4.80	.53	.59	.484	571
E.S.Cent.	—	—	—	—	4.55	—	5.20	.59	.71	.519	608
Ark.	—	—	—	—	6.30	—	6.80	.73	.83	.697	715
La.	—	—	—	—	5.50	—	5.90	.67	.75	.616	704
Okla.	—	—	—	—	7.50	—	8.60	.94	1.07	.872	740
Texas	—	—	—	—	7.00	—	7.60	.79	.91	.772	701
W.S.Cent.	—	—	—	—	6.50	—	7.10	.76	.86	.723	703
Mont.	237	181	—	—	—	—	9.30	—	1.19	.915	504
Idaho	280	220	—	—	—	—	11.20	—	1.27	1.06	655
Wyo.	244	177	—	—	—	—	9.60	—	1.17	.920	518
Colo.	248	171	—	—	—	—	10.10	—	1.18	.931	673
N.Mex.	207	152	—	—	—	—	8.10	—	.94	.768	698
Ariz.	280	177	—	—	—	—	9.60	—	1.05	.914	648
Utah	250	210	—	—	—	—	10.30	—	1.32	1.02	682
Nev.	260	190	—	—	—	—	10.30	—	1.30	.997	583
Mountain	258	182	—	—	—	—	9.70	—	1.12	.925	616
Wash.	292	235	—	—	—	—	12.00	1.32	1.43	1.37	683
Oreg.	273	203	—	—	—	—	11.50	1.25	1.32	1.27	637
Calif.	320	240	—	—	—	—	—	1.26	1.34	1.31	623
Pac.	312	236	—	—	—	—	11.50	1.27	1.35	1.31	628
U. S.	206	158	38.00	49.25	5.90	6.50	7.10	.86	1.14	.827	703

1/ Average rates paid on crop and livestock reporters' farms or in their localities for arrangements specified above. U.S. averages and State composite rates include estimates for unpublished State rates of small importance. 2/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.

Farm Wage Rates, April 1, 1965 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	220	165	41.00	60.00	—	—	10.00	—	1.23	1.00	644
N.H.	240	178	46.00	61.00	—	—	10.30	—	1.26	1.04	730
Vt.	222	172	44.00	61.00	—	—	10.10	—	1.27	1.03	714
Mass.	260	181	48.00	68.00	—	—	11.00	—	1.38	1.13	778
R.I.	255	181	47.00	70.00	—	—	11.00	—	1.38	1.14	822
Conn.	255	181	47.00	70.00	—	—	11.90	—	1.42	1.17	848
N.Eng.	240	175	45.00	64.50	—	—	10.70	—	1.32	1.08	742
N.Y.	230	161	43.25	60.75	—	—	9.80	—	1.24	.894	610
N.J.	242	170	46.00	61.00	—	—	11.00	—	1.30	.938	736
Pa.	212	150	39.25	53.25	—	—	8.90	—	1.15	.815	730
M. Atl.	226	159	42.50	58.50	—	—	9.70	—	1.22	.875	673
Ohio	197	140	—	—	—	6.70	8.60	—	1.16	.733	645
Ind.	208	148	—	—	—	7.20	9.00	—	1.15	.759	695
Ill.	233	180	—	—	—	8.50	10.40	—	1.24	.868	731
Mich.	250	175	—	—	—	7.90	9.90	—	1.18	.842	697
Wis.	219	164	—	—	—	7.40	9.40	—	1.20	.807	636
E. N.Cent.	224	164	—	—	—	7.70	9.60	—	1.19	.812	686
Minn.	215	164	—	—	—	8.40	10.40	—	1.19	.864	615
Iowa	232	183	—	—	—	9.00	10.90	—	1.26	.927	635
Mo.	192	140	—	—	—	6.90	8.80	—	1.10	.758	761
N.Dak.	214	170	—	—	—	7.50	9.30	—	1.12	.825	521
S.Dak.	210	163	—	—	—	7.70	9.50	—	1.14	.825	549
Nebr.	243	179	—	—	—	8.50	10.40	—	1.22	.906	671
Kans.	234	180	—	—	—	8.40	10.50	—	1.24	.908	825
W.N.Cent.	219	167	—	—	—	8.10	10.00	—	1.19	.860	659
Del.	195	—	—	—	—	—	8.80	—	1.10	.916	923
Md.	205	155	41.00	53.00	—	—	8.60	—	1.10	.911	1011
Va.	—	—	—	—	6.00	—	7.20	.76	.93	.718	867
W.Va.	—	—	—	—	—	—	6.30	—	.86	.658	574
N.C.	—	—	—	—	5.80	—	6.70	.70	.84	.666	833
S.C.	—	—	—	—	4.35	—	5.00	.53	.62	.497	723
Ga.	—	—	—	—	4.90	—	5.60	.67	.81	.592	732
Fla.	—	—	—	—	6.40	—	7.20	.89	.97	.754	836
S.Atl.	—	—	—	—	5.80	—	6.70	.80	.88	.691	843
Ky.	—	—	—	—	4.95	—	6.10	.70	.91	.600	674
Tenn.	—	—	—	—	4.65	—	5.60	.60	.76	.547	636
Ala.	—	—	—	—	4.70	—	5.20	.62	.74	.528	644
Miss.	—	—	—	—	4.60	—	5.00	.58	.66	.505	597
E.S.Cent.	—	—	—	—	4.70	—	5.50	.62	.77	.546	640
Ark.	—	—	—	—	6.60	—	7.10	.77	.88	.733	753
La.	—	—	—	—	5.50	—	6.00	.69	.81	.634	725
Okla.	—	—	—	—	7.70	—	8.90	.96	1.10	.898	761
Tex.	—	—	—	—	7.10	—	7.80	.83	.95	.795	722
W.S.Cent.	—	—	—	—	6.70	—	7.30	.79	.91	.752	731
Mont.	240	188	—	—	—	—	9.80	—	1.23	.950	523
Idaho	289	222	—	—	—	—	11.40	—	1.32	1.09	671
Wyo.	245	177	—	—	—	—	9.60	—	1.19	.925	521
Colo.	249	176	—	—	—	—	10.50	—	1.25	.967	700
N.Mex.	225	170	—	—	—	—	8.40	—	.98	.819	745
Ariz.	284	184	—	—	—	—	10.10	—	1.11	.953	675
Utah	260	220	—	—	—	—	10.80	—	1.34	1.06	707
Nev.	280	195	—	—	—	—	10.50	—	1.34	1.03	602
Mount.	265	188	—	—	—	—	10.00	—	1.16	.957	638
Wash.	300	236	—	—	—	—	—	1.32	1.38	1.34	666
Oreg.	290	202	—	—	—	—	—	1.28	1.29	1.25	628
Calif.	330	245	—	—	—	—	—	1.32	1.39	1.36	647
Pac.	323	240	—	—	—	—	—	1.32	1.38	1.34	643
U. S.	215	164	38.75	50.75	6.00	6.70	7.30	.93	1.18	.860	731

1/ Average rates paid on crop and livestock reporters' farms or in their localities for arrangements specified above. U.S. averages and State composite rates include estimates for unpublished State rates of small importance.

2/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.

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