Farm Labor

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FARM EMPLOYMENT SHOWS LESS THAN USUAL SEASONAL DROP

There were 8,723,000 persons employed on farms throughout the United States during the week of October 19-25, the Crop Reporting Board announced today. This was 660,000 fewer workers, or 7 percent less, than for the corresponding week in September. Last year between September and October there was an 11-percent drop in farm workers which is the usual seasonal decline during this period. This year's less-than-usual seasonal decline is readily explainable by the fact that the number of people employed during the survey week of the previous month was below average due to unfavorable weather. Because of the September delay in harvesting, some areas had more people employed on farms than usual in October. The estimated number of workers on the Nation's farms in October totaled 204,000 more persons than for the corresponding week in October a year ago.

Family workers accounted for 6,238,000 of the total persons employed on farms throughout the country during the survey week, compared with 2,485,000 hired workers. The number of family workers was down 4 percent from October 1957 and down 4 percent from September compared with the average decline of 7 percent for the date. From September to October this year there was a 14 percent drop in number of hired workers compared with 20 percent a year ago and the average of 21 percent. However, there were 248,000 more hired workers on farms this October than for the same date in 1957, an increase of 11 percent.

Agricultural Activities

Favorable harvesting weather prevailed over most of the Nation during the survey week, October 19-25. Temperatures were generally above normal with several fair sunny days. Rains fell during the week in some areas especially in the Northeast where several rainy days kept outside labor at a minimum. Heavy snows fell in the Adirondack and Pocono Mountains of New York and Pennsylvania and in the Big Horn Mountains and the Black Hills of the West. In contrast to these areas of adequate moisture, rain or snow is needed to replenish surface soil moisture in most of the Rocky Mountain States area, the Great Plains and the South.

Corn harvest moved along rapidly over the Corn Belt, although plants were too dry for efficient picking in some western portions and showers interrupted progress in parts of the northern and eastern sections. Generally speaking, corn harvest was ahead of last year but in a few localities harvesting was behind the average for the date.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service — Crop Reporting Board
La 1 (11-58) — Washington, D. C.

Cotton picking continued throughout the Cotton Belt during the survey week with weather favorable for rapid progress. Harvest of the cotton crop was virtually finished in Florida, South Carolina, and Georgia, 70 to 80 percent picked in North Carolina and Virginia and well along in Alabama. To the west rapid progress was also made with over half the cotton in Mississippi, Oklahoma and Missouri already harvested, and between 50 to 65 percent completed in Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee. Harvesting of cotton was well along in Texas and was in full swing in New Mexico, Arizona and California.

Harvesting of miscellaneous fall crops made generally rapid progress except in parts of the Middle and North Atlantic regions where showers caused some delay. Peanut digging was about completed in the southeast areas. Soybean harvesting throughout the major producing areas was nearing completion, well ahead of last year and average. Open weather allowed rapid progress in harvesting grain sorghums in the Great Plains. Rice harvesting was nearing completion in major producing areas.

Winter wheat seeding was completed in the Great Plains, well advanced in the Ohio and middle Mississippi River Valley, and increasing in the Pacific Northwest, but progress was slow in the southeastern parts of the country. Land preparation made headway in California and in Arizona. Spring lettuce was being planted in the Salt River Valley and thinning and planting were still in progress in the Yuma area. A small acreage of onions was planted in the Coastal Bend area of Texas but fields were generally too wet to work.

Employment by Geographic Region

Total number of persons employed on farms during the week, October 19-25 declined from the corresponding week a month earlier in all regions except the East South Central region, where there was a 5-percent increase. In this region weather held up harvesting in September thus adding to the October workload. The West South Central region also suffered delays in harvesting in September and this is reflected in the fact that the regional decline in total number of workers from September to October this year was only 3 percent compared with the average decline of 18 percent. The decline from September to October was also considerably less than average in the Mountain region but was very close to average in the other regions. Total employment in October 1958 was above a year ago in all regions except the South Atlantic and East South Central regions.

Family labor declined seasonally in all regions except the East South Central region from September to October. Most of the declines were average to somewhat less than average. In the East South Central region there was a 13-percent increase in family labor from September to October which is well above the average increase of 2 percent.

The number of hired workers on farms in October this year was generally much greater than October 1957 in all regions. The sharpest increases were in the regions in which harvesting was delayed in September. All regions except the Mountain region showed a decline in number of hired workers from September to October. In the Mountain States there was a 2-percent increase compared with the average decline of 18 percent. In the West South Central Region there was only a 1-percent decline from September to October compared with the average drop of 26 percent.

Cotton Picking Rates Above 1957

The rates for picking 100 pounds of seed cotton averaged $2.65 as reported by cotton farmers in 16 States up to November 1. This was an increase of 5 cents from last year's rate. Picking rates include snapping and pulling converted to equivalent rates for picking.

Picking rates increased over last year in 9 States --Missouri, North Carolina, Florida, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Decreases in rates occurred in 4 States --Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, and Louisiana. Only in 3 States --South Carolina, Georgia and Mississippi did picking rates remain unchanged from 1957. Highest rates continued to prevail in California, Arizona, Missouri, and North Carolina where historically these have been among the States with highest rates.

Farm employment and indexes for week of October 19-25, 1958, United States, with comparisons

	October average 1953-57 1/	October 20-26, 1957	September 21-27, 1958	October 19-25, 1958
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons)				
Total	9,440	8,519	9,383	8,723
Family labor	6,994	6,282	6,507	6,238
Hired labor	2,446	2,237	2,876	2,485
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES (Adjusted for seasonal variation, 1910-14=100)				
Total	60	54	53	55
Family labor	60	54	52	54
Hired labor	59	53	53	59

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, indexes, and related data, October 1, 1958, United States, with comparisons 1/

	July 1, 1957	October 1, 1957	July 1, 1958	October 1, 1958
FARM WAGE RATES				
Per month with house	$177.00	$168.00	$181.00	$176.00
Per month with board and room	133.00	134.00	135.00	138.00
Per week with board and room	34.25	33.75	34.00	34.25
Per week without board or room	42.50	41.00	42.75	42.25
Per day with house	4.50	4.75	4.60	5.10
Per day with board and room	6.20	5.80	6.40	6.00
Per day without board or room	5.70	6.30	5.80	6.70
Per hour with house	.86	.94	.87	.96
Per hour without board or room	.93	.84	.94	.88
Composite rate per hour 2/	.717	.757	.728	.795
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Adjusted for seasonal variation	552	565	566	594
RELATED INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Prices received by farmers 3/	246	242	254	255
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	45	43	45	43

1/ Wage rates on the average refer to a date 2 or 3 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.

Total workers on farms during week of October 19-25, 1958
by regions and selected States, with comparisons

State and region	October average 1953-57 1/	September 22-28, 1957	October 20-26, 1957	September 21-27, 1958	October 19-25, 1958
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
New England	209	211	193	213	196
New York	214	231	191	228	195
New Jersey	62	65	56	70	55
Pennsylvania	251	243	217	247	217
Middle Atlantic	527	539	464	545	467
Ohio	313	281	286	287	290
Indiana	254	250	225	247	238
Illinois	315	285	273	291	289
Michigan	243	247	226	252	227
Wisconsin	305	325	292	329	289
East North Central	1,430	1,388	1,302	1,406	1,333
Minnesota	290	302	259	309	270
Iowa	332	332	313	325	323
Missouri	350	396	322	405	341
North Dakota	109	126	100	125	100
South Dakota	108	119	101	118	101
Nebraska	170	173	154	170	165
Kansas	185	193	174	201	178
West North Central	1,544	1,641	1,423	1,653	1,478
Delaware-Maryland	80	93	75	94	77
Virginia	238	240	222	255	214
West Virginia	94	86	78	90	80
North Carolina	536	588	466	575	438
South Carolina	253	285	240	254	218
Georgia	307	302	268	288	265
Florida	105	106	102	113	107
South Atlantic	1,613	1,700	1,451	1,669	1,399
Kentucky	344	285	320	282	323
Tennessee	445	349	390	318	402
Alabama	348	269	305	264	296
Mississippi	502	525	433	485	401
East South Central	1,639	1,428	1,448	1,349	1,422
Arkansas	347	346	287	341	324
Louisiana	239	282	200	227	232
Oklahoma	224	203	191	216	220
Texas	547	590	495	586	556
West South Central	1,357	1,421	1,173	1,370	1,332
Montana	58	63	56	59	53
Idaho	77	86	74	85	77
Colorado	89	99	85	94	88
New Mexico-Arizona	133	143	125	129	149
Wyoming-Utah-Nevada	77	90	71	85	74
Mountain	434	481	411	452	441
Washington	116	126	112	133	109
Oregon	96	105	86	105	84
California	475	486	456	488	462
Pacific	687	717	654	726	655
UNITED STATES	9,440	9,526	8,519	9,383	8,723

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

Family and hired workers on farms during week of October 19-25, 1958
by regions and selected States, with comparisons

State and region	Family 2/				Hired 3/			
	October average 1953-57 1/	Oct. 20-26, 1957	Sept. 21-27, 1958	Oct. 19-25, 1958	October average 1953-57 1/	Oct. 20-26, 1957	Sept. 21-27, 1958	Oct. 19-25, 1958
	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.
New England	120	110	112	109	89	83	101	87
New York	140	121	134	124	74	70	94	71
New Jersey	34	32	34	31	28	24	36	24
Pennsylvania	197	175	185	173	54	42	62	44
Middle Atlantic	371	328	353	328	156	136	192	139
Ohio	261	247	222	244	52	39	65	46
Indiana	215	193	197	198	39	32	50	40
Illinois	256	224	231	234	59	49	60	55
Michigan	194	181	194	178	49	45	58	49
Wisconsin	266	254	275	254	39	38	54	35
East North Central	1,192	1,099	1,119	1,108	238	203	287	225
Minnesota	258	230	256	237	32	29	53	33
Iowa	291	275	276	281	41	38	49	42
Missouri	288	266	309	268	62	56	96	73
North Dakota	85	76	93	76	24	24	32	24
South Dakota	96	89	99	89	12	12	19	12
Nebraska	149	135	141	141	21	19	29	24
Kansas	170	157	166	157	15	17	35	21
West North Central	1,337	1,228	1,340	1,249	207	195	313	229
Delaware-Maryland	52	50	58	49	28	25	36	28
Virginia	182	171	175	162	56	51	80	52
West Virginia	81	67	75	67	13	11	15	13
North Carolina	455	388	464	366	81	78	111	72
South Carolina	192	179	192	156	61	61	62	62
Georgia	229	206	212	196	78	62	76	69
Florida	57	54	69	54	48	48	44	53
South Atlantic	1,248	1,115	1,245	1,050	365	336	424	349
Kentucky	289	267	222	267	55	53	60	56
Tennessee	364	309	233	325	81	81	85	77
Alabama	269	231	197	227	79	74	67	69
Mississippi	375	346	326	285	127	87	159	116
East South Central	1,297	1,153	978	1,104	342	295	371	318
Arkansas	219	176	187	180	128	111	154	144
Louisiana	145	117	126	122	94	83	101	110
Oklahoma	168	146	145	149	56	45	71	71
Texas	317	272	319	291	230	223	267	265
West South Central	849	711	777	742	508	462	593	590
Montana	45	42	45	41	13	14	14	12
Idaho	58	53	59	55	19	21	26	22
Colorado	60	57	61	58	29	28	33	30
New Mexico-Arizona	47	38	39	46	86	87	90	103
Wyo.-Utah-Nev.	51	46	57	46	26	25	28	28
Mountain	261	236	261	246	173	175	191	195
Washington	80	75	85	75	36	37	48	34
Oregon	72	66	68	65	24	20	37	19
California	167	161	169	162	308	295	319	300
Pacific	319	302	322	302	368	352	404	353
UNITED STATES	6,994	6,282	6,507	6,238	2,446	2,237	2,876	2,485

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.

Average number of persons working on farms, per month, January through October 1958, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons 1/

Class of workers and geographic division	1953-57	1955	1956	1957	1958
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
TOTAL WORKERS					
United States	8,584	8,705	8,145	7,853	7,787
New England	197	196	185	180	178
Middle Atlantic	518	522	482	462	463
East North Central	1,446	1,463	1,396	1,337	1,337
West North Central	1,571	1,592	1,491	1,451	1,454
South Atlantic	1,541	1,571	1,448	1,408	1,362
East South Central	1,114	1,131	1,038	998	951
West South Central	1,184	1,222	1,107	1,046	1,066
Mountain	384	381	379	366	369
Pacific	629	627	619	605	607
FAMILY 2/					
United States	6,436	6,536	6,075	5,819	5,692
New England	124	122	116	109	108
Middle Atlantic	369	376	345	330	327
East North Central	1,227	1,241	1,185	1,132	1,128
West North Central	1,332	1,354	1,267	1,228	1,220
South Atlantic	1,133	1,156	1,050	1,011	962
East South Central	892	906	823	799	749
West South Central	800	821	737	687	673
Mountain	244	243	241	224	225
Pacific	315	317	311	299	300
HIRED 3/					
United States	2,148	2,169	2,070	2,034	2,095
New England	73	74	69	71	70
Middle Atlantic	149	146	137	132	136
East North Central	219	222	211	205	209
West North Central	239	238	224	223	234
South Atlantic	408	415	398	397	400
East South Central	222	225	215	199	202
West South Central	384	401	370	359	393
Mountain	140	138	138	142	144
Pacific	314	310	308	306	307

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.

Average rates for picking 100 pounds of seed cotton, by States, up to November 1, 1940-1958

State	1940	1941 1/	1942 1/	1943 1/	1944 1/	1945 1/	1946 1/	1947 1/	1948 1/	1949 1/	1950 1/	1951 1/	1952 1/	1953 1/	1954 1/	1955 1/	1956 1/	1957 1/	1958 1/
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.
Missouri	.77	1.40	1.85	2.00	2.40	2.05	2.80	3.10	3.75	2.95	3.00	3.10	3.85	3.25	3.45	3.40	3.30	3.00	3.15
Virginia	.70	1.00	1.50	1.80	1.95	2.20	2.70	2.75	2.85	2.55	2.90	3.05	3.20	3.00	2.90	2.90	2.95	2.95	2.85
North Carolina	.67	.95	1.40	1.75	2.10	2.30	2.85	2.95	3.10	2.70	2.85	3.35	3.50	3.35	3.15	3.25	3.40	3.15	3.20
South Carolina	.54	.75	1.00	1.25	1.45	1.75	2.25	2.25	2.50	2.25	2.35	2.85	3.00	2.75	2.45	2.50	2.60	2.45	2.45
Georgia	.53	.75	1.00	1.30	1.50	1.70	2.30	2.35	2.45	2.20	2.45	3.00	3.05	2.90	2.65	2.75	2.80	2.65	2.65
Florida	.67	.85	1.15	1.45	1.75	1.75	2.30	2.30	2.45	2.20	2.45	3.30	3.15	3.05	3.05	3.25	3.15	2.90	2.95
Tennessee	.65	1.20	1.50	1.80	1.95	1.95	2.50	2.60	2.95	2.75	2.70	2.80	3.15	2.75	2.75	2.95	2.75	2.80	2.75
Alabama	.51	.85	1.10	1.40	1.60	1.70	2.40	2.25	2.50	2.10	2.30	2.65	2.70	2.65	2.40	2.60	2.60	2.55	2.50
Mississippi	.57	1.10	1.40	1.70	2.10	1.95	2.30	2.60	3.25	2.15	2.75	2.80	2.95	2.80	2.55	2.70	2.55	2.50	2.50
Arkansas	.65	1.20	1.50	1.70	2.05	2.00	2.60	2.80	3.25	2.60	2.85	2.90	3.20	2.90	2.95	3.00	2.85	2.80	2.85
Louisiana	.55	.85	1.20	1.50	1.80	1.80	2.10	2.40	2.80	2.50	2.60	3.05	2.95	2.75	2.50	2.65	2.65	2.60	2.50
Oklahoma	.72	1.20	1.50	1.80	1.95	1.90	2.60	2.60	2.65	2.35	2.65	2.90	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.80	2.55	2.50	2.65
Texas	.58	1.10	1.45	1.70	1.95	1.95	2.50	2.75	2.65	2.65	2.45	3.00	2.90	2.65	2.55	2.55	2.35	2.35	2.45
New Mexico	.68	1.20	1.75	2.00	2.10	1.95	2.60	2.60	2.50	2.10	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.35	2.35	2.30	2.30	2.35
Arizona	.93	1.45	2.45	2.70	2.25	2.30	2.60	2.60	3.00	2.85	3.10	3.10	3.35	3.00	3.10	3.25	3.10	3.15	3.25
California	.95	1.30	1.90	2.10	2.25	2.25	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.45	3.70	3.60	3.00	3.00	3.15	3.20	3.20	3.25
UNITED STATES	.62	1.09	1.41	1.66	1.92	1.93	2.50	2.65	2.90	2.55	2.65	3.00	3.05	2.80	2.70	2.75	2.65	2.60	2.65

1/ Includes rates paid for snapping bolls converted to seed cotton equivalent.

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