



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service



# FARM LABOR

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## FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 41,000 for the week of October 12 through 18. Farmers hired 38,000 compared with 42,000 in July 2008 and 43,000 in October 2007. Agricultural services provided 3,000 paid workers, up 1,000 from last quarter but 1,000 less than those supplied a year ago.

Most of the State received less than a half inch of rain during the survey period. The southern counties of Dade, Collier, and Broward averaged slightly more with totals near an inch. Favorable conditions allowed ground preparations and planting to stay very active and advance during the survey week. Vegetable growers marketed light supplies of cucumbers, eggplant, okra, squash, avocados, and tomatoes. Cabbage planting was nearing completion in St. Johns, Putnam, and Flagler counties. Market News Service reported a preliminary 5.21 million pounds of vegetables shipped during the survey week versus 16.7 million pounds shipped last year. Activity in the groves included limited harvesting, irrigating, applying herbicide, mowing middles, cleaning groves, and getting ready for harvest. Citrus producers harvested 379,000 boxes during the survey week compared to the 394,000 boxes harvested a year ago.

The October combined farmer and agricultural all hired worker wage rate averaged \$10.09 per hour, 19 cents more than the \$9.90 paid last quarter, and 35 cents more than last year. Farmers paid an average of \$10.09 per hour, 19 cents higher than the \$9.90 paid in previous quarter, and 33 cents above the \$9.76 paid last year. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$10.05 per hour, 20 cents higher than the \$9.85 paid last quarter, and 50 cents above the \$9.55 paid last year.

## UNITED STATES

### Hired Workers Down 3 Percent, Wage Rates up 3 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 1,117,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 12-18, 2008, down 3 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 801,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 316,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.70 per hour during the October 2008 reference week, up 32 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.05 per hour, up 43 cents from last October, while livestock workers earned \$10.19 per hour compared with \$10.02 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.08 per hour, was up 35 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 41.3 hours for hired workers during the survey week, down 2 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California, the Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), and Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia) regions. In California, lack of available irrigation water caused much acreage to be left fallow. Planted acreage of cotton, dry beans, and sugar beets declined sharply from 2007. Therefore, the demand for field workers was considerably lower. Wet conditions in the Corn Belt I, Southern Plains, and the Appalachian I and II regions, compared with the previous year's drier reference week, decreased the need for field workers. Lower cattle inventories in the Appalachian regions led to fewer livestock workers being needed.

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Pacific (Oregon and Washington), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Northeast I (New England and New York), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), and Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah) regions. In the Pacific region, increased acreage of cherries, berries, and grapes heightened the demand for hired workers. Despite wetter conditions in the Corn Belt II region, compared with the previous year's reference week, increased acreage of major field crops kept the demand for hired workers above last year. In the Northeast I region, drier conditions compared with the previous year's reference week led to a stronger demand for hired workers. In the Delta region, larger cattle and hog inventories increased the demand for livestock workers. Movement of cattle from summer pastures in the Mountain II region was increasing. Therefore, more livestock workers were necessary.

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**TABLE 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, October 12 through 18, 2008, with comparisons**

Employer, Year, and Survey Week	Number of Hired Workers			Hours Worked Per Week	Wages Paid by Type of Work			
	All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock	
		150 days or more	149 days or less					
	Thousands			Hours	Dollars Per Hour <sup>2/</sup>			
<b>HIRED BY FARMERS<sup>1/</sup></b>								
<b>2008</b>	<b>October 12 - 18</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>10.09</b>	<b>8.90</b>	<b>9.30</b>
	July 6 - 12	42.0	39.0	3.0	40.9	9.90	8.84	9.25
	April 6 - 12	51.0	45.0	6.0	41.5	10.25	9.32	9.59
	January 6 - 12	49.0	45.0	4.0	41.8	9.98	9.00	9.20
2007	October 7 - 13	43.0	39.0	4.0	41.8	9.76	8.70	8.95
	July 8 - 14	41.0	39.0	2.0	41.0	9.49	8.50	8.60
	April 8 - 14	55.0	46.0	9.0	39.2	10.01	9.20	9.00
	January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>							
2006	October 8 - 14	44.0	40.0	4.0	41.1	9.42	8.50	9.10
	July 9 - 15	43.0	38.0	5.0	41.0	9.40	8.39	9.10
<b>HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES</b>								
<b>2008</b>	<b>October 12 - 18</b>	<b>3.0</b>			<b>42.0</b>	<b>10.05</b>		
	July 6 - 12	2.0			43.0	9.85		
	April 6 - 12	8.0			40.0	10.05		
	January 6 - 12	9.0			41.0	9.90		
2007	October 7 - 13	4.0			42.0	9.55		
	July 8 - 14	2.0			43.0	9.60		
	April 8 - 14	8.0			40.0	10.45		
	January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>							
2006	October 8 - 14	5.0			42.0	9.90		
	July 9 - 15	3.0			45.0	9.50		
<b>HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS &amp; AGRICULTURAL SERVICES</b>								
<b>2008</b>	<b>October 12 - 18</b>	<b>41.0</b>				<b>10.09</b>		
	July 6 - 12	44.0				9.90		
	April 6 - 12	59.0				10.22		
	January 6 - 12	58.0				9.97		
2007	October 7 - 13	47.0				9.74		
	July 8 - 14	43.0				9.50		
	April 8 - 14	63.0				10.07		
	January 7 - 13 <sup>3/</sup>							
2006	October 8 - 14	49.0				9.47		
	July 9 - 15	46.0				9.41		

<sup>1/</sup> Excludes Agricultural Services workers.

<sup>2/</sup> Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

<sup>3/</sup> The January Farm Labor Survey was not conducted.

**TABLE 2 -- Number of workers hired by farmers, wage rates, and hours worked, Selected States, October 12 through 18, 2008, with comparisons <sup>1/</sup>**

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States <sup>2/</sup>
	<i>Thousands</i>					
<b>ALL HIRED WORKERS</b>						
October 12 – 18, 2008	38	173	60	21	6	801
July 6 – 12, 2008	42	160	57	20	6	828
October 7 – 13, 2007	43	188	69	22	6	817
<b>EXPECTED TO WORK</b>						
150 days or more						
October 12 – 18, 2008	32	139	43	19	5	575
July 6 – 12, 2008	39	127	43	17	5	585
October 7 – 13, 2007	39	152	55	21	5	603
149 days or less						
October 12 – 18, 2008	6	34	17	2	1	226
July 6 – 12, 2008	3	33	14	3	1	243
October 7 – 13, 2007	4	36	14	1	1	214
	<i>Average hours per week</i>					
<b>HOURS WORKED BY ALL HIRED WORKERS</b>						
October 12 – 18, 2008	39.7	45.8	36.7	44.5	38.9	41.3
July 6 – 12, 2008	40.9	45.5	39.0	42.0	37.0	40.5
October 7 – 13, 2007	41.8	45.5	39.0	46.1	40.0	42.2
	<i>Dollars per hour <sup>3/</sup></i>					
<b>WAGES BY TYPE OF WORKER</b>						
Field						
October 12 – 18, 2008	8.90	9.95	9.44	9.44	11.00	10.05
July 6 – 12, 2008	8.84	9.85	8.60	9.21	11.10	9.66
October 7 – 13, 2007	8.70	9.70	8.59	8.26	11.00	9.62
Livestock						
October 12 – 18, 2008	9.30	11.95	9.58	10.80	<sup>4/</sup>	10.19
July 6 – 12, 2008	9.25	11.00	10.12	11.44	<sup>4/</sup>	9.98
October 7 – 13, 2007	8.95	11.00	10.46	9.91	<sup>4/</sup>	10.02
Field & Livestock Combined						
October 12 – 18, 2008	8.95	10.21	9.50	10.00	11.21	10.08
July 6 – 12, 2008	8.90	10.00	9.20	9.85	11.21	9.74
October 7 – 13, 2007	8.74	9.89	9.45	8.85	11.13	9.73
<b>ALL HIRED WORKER WAGE RATE</b>						
October 12 – 18, 2008	10.09	10.95	10.10	10.70	13.24	10.70
July 6 – 12, 2008	9.90	10.74	9.80	10.55	13.33	10.34
October 7 – 13, 2007	9.76	10.74	10.05	9.21	13.19	10.38

<sup>1/</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service workers.

<sup>2/</sup> United States exclude Alaska.

<sup>3/</sup> Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

<sup>4/</sup> Insufficient data for livestock.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), Appalachian I, Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming), Northeast I and Appalachian II regions. In the Mountain III and Appalachian II regions, the higher wages were due to more salaried workers working fewer hours which pushed the average wage up. The wage increases in the Appalachian I and Mountain I regions were because of a smaller proportion of part time workers in the work force. The higher wages in the Northeast I region were due to a higher percentage of dairy, equine, and nursery and greenhouse workers.

### ANNUAL WAGES, HIRED WORKERS AND HOURS

The 2008 hired worker annual wage rate for Florida average \$10.06, up 33 cents from the 2007 annual average of \$9.73. The annual average wage rate for Florida field workers was \$9.04, up 22 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate for Florida was \$9.08, up 26 cents from last year's annual average wage rate of \$8.82.

The 2008 U.S. all hired worker annual average wage rate was \$10.59 per hour, up 4 percent from the 2007 annual average wage rate of \$10.23 per hour. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was \$9.78 per hour, up 38 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate at the U.S. level was \$9.89 per hour, up 4 percent from last year's annual average wage rate of \$9.49 per hour.

**TABLE 3--Annual average wage rates, number of hired workers, and hours worked  
2007 and 2008 <sup>1/ 2/</sup>**

State and Region	Wages by Type of Worker			Number of Hired Workers	Hours Worked by Hired Workers
	All Hired <sup>3/</sup>	Field	Field & Livestock		
<b>2008</b>					
Florida	10.06	9.04	9.08	45.0	41.1
Texas & Oklahoma	9.86	8.77	9.27	55.3	38.8
Arizona & New Mexico	10.46	9.20	9.82	18.3	44.0
California	11.04	9.98	10.16	155.3	44.1
Hawaii	13.22	10.92	11.06	6.0	38.2
United States <sup>4/</sup>	10.59	9.78	9.89	730.8	40.4
<b>2007</b>					
Florida	9.73	8.82	8.82	46.8	40.3
Texas & Oklahoma	9.53	8.38	9.02	54.8	39.0
Arizona & New Mexico	9.37	8.26	8.70	20.8	45.7
California	10.58	9.57	9.74	167.0	45.1
Hawaii	12.84	10.70	10.86	6.5	39.1
United States <sup>4/</sup>	10.23	9.40	9.49	746.5	40.8

<sup>1/</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers.

<sup>2/</sup> Annual rates are averages of the published wage rates for each survey week weighted by the number of hours worked during the week. The annual average for all States, Regions, and the U.S. is based on modeled data for January and survey data for, April, July, and October.

<sup>3/</sup> Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

<sup>4/</sup> Excludes AK.