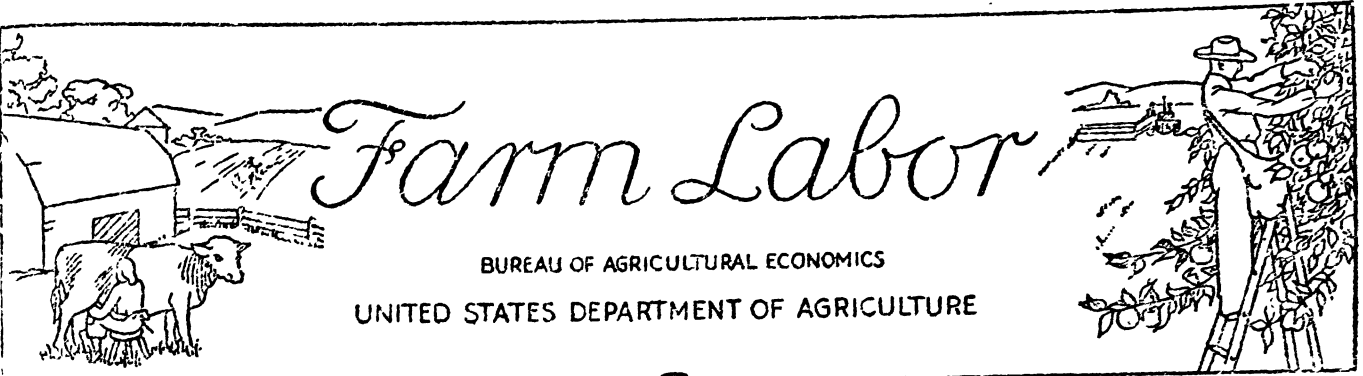




Washington, D. C.

BAE

May 9, 1952

FARM EMPLOYMENT UP MORE THAN A MILLION

Farm employment was 10,033,000 for the week of April 20-26, up seasonally by 1,293,000 from a month earlier, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. However, about 300,000 fewer persons were working on farms than a year earlier. For the last three and a half years, farm employment has been decreasing from a year earlier, continuing the long time trend which was broken briefly at the end of World War II.

In most parts of the country, farm work was making good progress during the survey week. For the first time this year, field work was under way in all areas. The weather was good in most areas, although rains along the Atlantic Coast from southern New England to South Carolina, and in parts of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana, kept many farmers out of their fields. In the Mid-West, farmers were generally farther along with spring planting than a year ago.

In the States along the Canadian border, spring small grains were nearly all planted by the end of April. Preparations were well along for planting corn in the Corn Belt. In Iowa, planting had started and was farther along than in any year since 1946. A few farmers had started planting corn in Minnesota. In Kansas, corn planting was half done. Farmers in the South were also planting corn but the job was nearly finished. Cotton chopping was in progress in the southern edge of the Cotton Belt and planting was well along in all parts of the South. Farmers in New Mexico, Arizona, and California were also planting cotton and some were thinning in Arizona.

Truck crop operations were common in all parts of the country. Asparagus was being harvested in New Jersey and in Washington. Potatoes were being planted as far north as New York and Washington and were being dug in Florida and southern Alabama. Strawberry harvest was moving northward and was in progress in North Carolina and about to start in Arkansas. Fruit growers were spraying trees in all parts of the country and were thinning fruit in the more southern sections. Other miscellaneous crop operations in progress included sugar beet planting, preparations for planting soybeans, and sorghum planting in most parts of Texas. In many parts of the West, ranchers were busy with lambing, shearing sheep and moving livestock to summer ranges.

The number of persons at work on farms in late April was up 15 percent from a month earlier for the country as a whole. The increases for most regions ranged from 9 percent to 19 percent. In the Middle Atlantic States, the increase was very small and less than usual largely because of rain. In the Mountain States, where weather was usually favorable, the seasonal rise was a little more than a third and it was greater than usual. In terms of actual numbers of workers, increases amounted to more than 100,000 in the East North Central, West South Central and Mountain States, more than 200,000 in the West North Central and East South Central States and was over 300,000 in the South Atlantic States.

Most of the decrease from a year ago in total farm employment occurred in the South Atlantic and West South Central States. In both of these regions, rain limited field work. The decreases in each of these regions was over 100,000. The only other region where the decline was appreciable in relation to the national total was the East South Central.

For family workers the increase from a month earlier was about the same as the increases for all workers for the United States and each region on a percentage basis. The major exception was in the South Atlantic States where the increase in family workers was considerably larger than the increase in all workers. In this region, there were 360,000 more family workers than a month earlier and an increase of 325,000 in all workers as the number of hired workers declined. Percentage changes from a year earlier were also about the same for family workers as for all workers.

The number of hired workers in late April for the entire country was 11 percent above a month earlier, a smaller increase than for family workers. Increases for regions ranged from 4 percent to 44 percent with a decrease of 8 percent for one region, the South Atlantic. A decrease is usual at this season for the region, but it has generally been smaller in the past. The smallest increase, the 4 percent in the East South Central States is about the same as the average of recent years. The 44 percent increase in the Mountain States is also about the usual increase. In the Middle Atlantic States, the increase was considerably less than usual.

The number of hired farm workers was only slightly less than a year ago for the Nation, 1 percent. In 5 of the 9 regions, there were more hired workers than a year ago. The increases were largest in the New England, East South Central and Pacific States where they ranged from 6 percent to 9 percent. Decreases varied from 6 percent to 7 percent for the Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic and West South Central States, the regions with the largest decreases. In all these regions, employment was probably affected by unfavorable weather.

In actual numbers, the changes in hired employment from a year ago amounted to more than 10,000 workers in only the southern regions. The East South Central States had an increase of 25,000. In the South Atlantic States, the decrease was 33,000 and in the West South Central States, it was 24,000.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Employment

Farm employment estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics cover persons doing farm work on all farms. Mailed questionnaires are received every month from 15,000 to 20,000 farmers who report the number of persons working on their farms. Interview surveys of farmers are used less frequently to provide bench mark data on employment. The survey week for the mailed questionnaire each month is the last complete calendar week in the month except when that week includes the last day of the month; in that case, the survey week is the next to the last full calendar week.

Employment concepts

All farm operators are counted as employed if they spend one hour or more during the survey week at farm work, chores, or in the transaction of farm business. 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 survey week. Operators plus unpaid members of their families or households who meet these criteria of employment are called family workers. All persons doing one or more hours of farm work or chores for pay during the survey week are counted as hired workers. Members of the operator's family doing farm work for cash wages are counted as hired workers. Croppers are considered family workers when working on their own crops, but hired workers when doing farm work for pay off their own tracts. If a person is employed both as a family worker and a hired worker during the week on the same farm he is counted as a hired worker.

Comparability with other data

The data on farm employment published by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics differ from those on agricultural employment published by the Bureau of the Census in the Monthly Report On The Labor Force. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics collects information from the employer (the farmer) who reports the number of persons working on his farm during the week, regardless of the other jobs held by those workers. The Census data, on the other hand, are obtained through interviews with approximately 25,000 farm and nonfarm households with the housewife or some other member of the household reporting on the labor force status of the household members. They relate only to persons 14 years of age and over, who are in the civilian population and not in institutions.

The difference between the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Census data is attributable mainly to the different treatment of three groups of workers. Children under 14 years of age who meet the criteria of employment are included in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimates, but not in the Census Bureau's. It is estimated that this number may reach a summer peak as high as two million. Persons working on more than one farm during the survey week are counted only once by the Census Bureau, but they are counted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics on each farm where they work and meet the minimum hour requirements. This group is also more numerous during the harvest season when the demand for farm labor is greatest. The additional count of workers attributable to this duplication is estimated at a minimum of a quarter of a million and may be considerably larger. The third group is composed of persons who work in both agricultural and nonagricultural employment, but work longer at the nonagricultural job; they are classified by Census as working on nonagricultural employment, but by Bureau of Agricultural Economics as working on a farm. This last group may range from one-half million to a million in different seasons of the year.

Other groups counted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics but not by the Census Bureau are imported foreign workers and some migratory workers not living in private households. On the other hand, the Census Bureau includes in its estimates of agricultural employment certain classes of workers which the Bureau of Agricultural Economics does not include. Persons with "nonfarm" occupations who are working on farms, such as bookkeepers and typists, some persons in certain agricultural processing activities, and farm operators with no other job who did no farm work are considered as employed in agriculture by the Census Bureau, but are not included by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in its estimates of agricultural employment.

Because the volume of agricultural employment is affected by changes both in season and in weather, the difference in the week of the month for which the data are collected may also make some difference. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics data relate to the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month while the Census Bureau information relates to the week containing the 8th of the month.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimates farm employment from current reports made by a selected group of farmers adjusted to enumerative survey bench mark data. The Bureau of The Census bases its figures on a sample of dwelling units. Accordingly, the figures in both cases are subject to a sampling variation and may differ from the results of a complete census.

Wage rates

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. The "at this time" on the average probably represents the second or third day before the end of the month.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm employment: Persons employed during week of April 20-26, 1952, United States, with comparisons

	: April : average : 1945-49 1/	: April : : 22-28, : : 1951 : 1952	: March : : 23-29, : : 1952	: April : 20-26 : 1952
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons):				
Total	11,190	10,371	8,790	10,083
Family labor	9,227	8,513	7,133	8,248
Hired labor	1,963	1,858	1,657	1,835
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES (Adjusted for seasonal variation, 1910-14 = 100)				
Total	92	85	83	83
Family labor	94	87	84	84
Hired labor	83	78	78	77

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

Farm wage rates: Wage rates, indexes and related data,
April 1, 1952, with comparisons 1/

	: January 1, : 1951	: April 1, : 1951	: January 1, : 1952	: April 1, : 1952
FARM WAGE RATES				
Per month with board and room	\$105.00	\$107.00	\$116.00	\$114.00
Per month with house	127.00	128.00	141.00	138.00
Per week with board and room	24.25	26.00	27.25	23.00
Per week without board or room	31.75	33.50	35.00	34.75
Per day with board and room	4.50	4.35	5.00	4.55
Per day with house	3.75	3.75	4.20	4.00
Per day without board or room	4.65	4.70	5.20	5.00
Per hour with house	.59	.57	.65	.61
Per hour without board or room	.79	.78	.86	.83
Composite rate per hour 2/	.626	.535	.693	.571
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Adjusted for seasonal variation	450	479	498	510
RELATED INDEXES (1910-14 = 100)				
Prices received by farmers 3/	293	310	302	289
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	65	65	61	57

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.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm employment: Persons employed during week of April 20-26, 1952, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons

Geographic division	: April : : average : : 1945-49 1/	: March : : 18-24, : : 1951 :	: April : : 22-28, : : 1951 :	: March : : 23-29, : : 1952 :	: April : : 20-26, : : 1952 :
	: Thousands	: Thousands	: Thousands	: Thousands	: Thousands
TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT					
United States	: 11,190	: 8,996	: 10,371	: 8,790	: 10,083
New England	: 236	: 199	: 230	: 205	: 234
Middle Atlantic	: 587	: 545	: 568	: 536	: 549
East North Central	: 1,643	: 1,375	: 1,525	: 1,361	: 1,519
West North Central	: 1,916	: 1,511	: 1,717	: 1,474	: 1,706
South Atlantic	: 2,318	: 1,832	: 2,194	: 1,746	: 2,071
East South Central	: 1,847	: 1,409	: 1,679	: 1,396	: 1,635
West South Central	: 1,703	: 1,396	: 1,594	: 1,361	: 1,489
Mountain	: 416	: 300	: 385	: 290	: 394
Pacific	: 524	: 429	: 479	: 421	: 486
FAMILY WORKERS 2/					
United States	: 9,227	: 7,324	: 8,513	: 7,133	: 8,248
New England	: 178	: 146	: 169	: 149	: 169
Middle Atlantic	: 468	: 441	: 445	: 432	: 433
East North Central	: 1,424	: 1,204	: 1,320	: 1,190	: 1,318
West North Central	: 1,727	: 1,370	: 1,563	: 1,339	: 1,549
South Atlantic	: 1,890	: 1,386	: 1,753	: 1,303	: 1,663
East South Central	: 1,535	: 1,111	: 1,393	: 1,098	: 1,324
West South Central	: 1,358	: 1,162	: 1,271	: 1,132	: 1,190
Mountain	: 328	: 237	: 299	: 228	: 305
Pacific	: 319	: 267	: 300	: 262	: 297
HIRED WORKERS 3/					
United States	: 1,963	: 1,672	: 1,858	: 1,657	: 1,835
New England	: 58	: 53	: 61	: 56	: 65
Middle Atlantic	: 119	: 104	: 123	: 104	: 116
East North Central	: 219	: 171	: 205	: 171	: 201
West North Central	: 189	: 141	: 154	: 135	: 157
South Atlantic	: 428	: 446	: 441	: 443	: 408
East South Central	: 312	: 298	: 286	: 298	: 311
West South Central	: 345	: 234	: 323	: 229	: 299
Mountain	: 88	: 63	: 86	: 62	: 89
Pacific	: 205	: 162	: 179	: 159	: 189

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.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm employment: Average number of persons employed per month, January through April 1952, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons 1/

Geographic division	1945-49	1949	1950	1951	1952
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT					
United States	9,291	9,034	8,907	8,566	8,347
New England	203	203	200	195	200
Middle Atlantic	535	531	525	520	512
East North Central	1,425	1,373	1,363	1,322	1,314
West North Central	1,631	1,574	1,546	1,484	1,454
South Atlantic	1,846	1,838	1,788	1,717	1,647
East South Central	1,453	1,416	1,389	1,308	1,259
West South Central	1,430	1,363	1,363	1,308	1,256
Mountain	320	311	310	298	294
Pacific	448	425	423	414	411
FAMILY WORKERS <u>2/</u>					
United States	7,776	7,515	7,424	7,145	6,945
New England	158	157	152	148	150
Middle Atlantic	438	428	424	418	414
East North Central	1,249	1,200	1,196	1,166	1,160
West North Central	1,489	1,440	1,415	1,361	1,334
South Atlantic	1,491	1,455	1,426	1,365	1,304
East South Central	1,212	1,168	1,145	1,085	1,030
West South Central	1,189	1,144	1,146	1,099	1,058
Mountain	258	247	245	237	234
Pacific	292	276	275	266	261
HIRED WORKERS <u>3/</u>					
United States	1,515	1,519	1,483	1,421	1,402
New England	45	46	48	47	50
Middle Atlantic	97	103	101	102	98
East North Central	176	173	167	156	154
West North Central	142	134	131	123	120
South Atlantic	355	383	362	352	343
East South Central	241	248	244	223	229
West South Central	241	219	217	209	198
Mountain	62	64	65	61	60
Pacific	156	149	148	148	150

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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<u>IN THIS ISSUE</u>		<u>Page</u>
Text		1 - 2
Definitions and Explanations		3 - 4
Farm employment: Persons employed during week of April 20-26, 1952, United States, with comparisons		5
Farm wage rates: Wage rates, indexes, and related data, April 1, 1952, with comparisons		5
Farm employment: Persons employed during week of April 20-26, 1952, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons...		6
Farm employment: Average number of persons employed per month, January through April 1952, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons		7