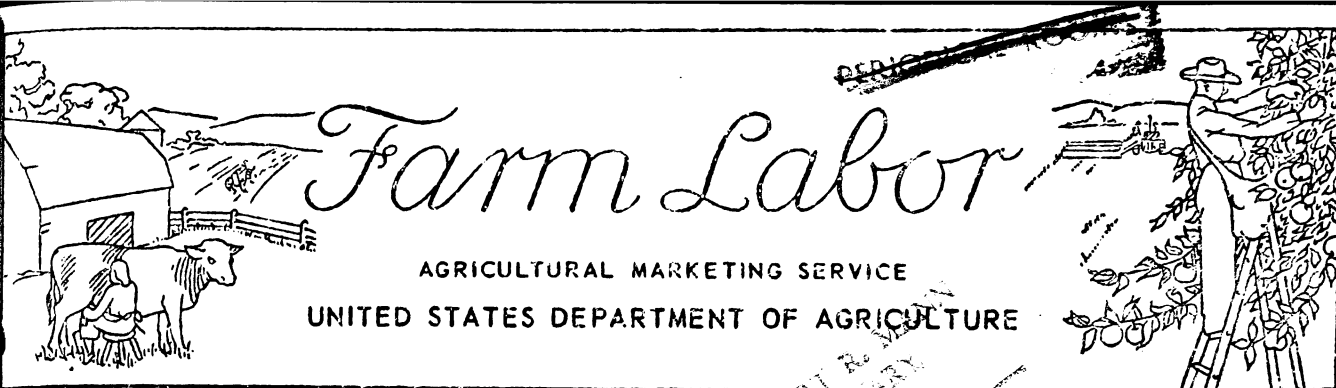




Washington, D. C.

May 10, 1955

FARM EMPLOYMENT UP MORE THAN A MILLION

The number of persons at work on farms during the week of April 17-23, was up a little more than a million from a month earlier, the Crop Reporting Board announced today. The increase, as spring field work was in progress in most areas, was about the same as usual. There were 6,540,000 farm operators and unpaid family members at work and 1,515,000 hired workers. The total number of workers was 16 percent larger than a month earlier.

In comparison with a year earlier, the total number of workers was down 5 percent. Family workers were down 5 percent and hired workers 7 percent. The decrease was partly a continuation of the long-time trend but was also partly due to weather conditions. In the South, continued good weather helped reduce the need for workers, however, in parts of Texas, dry soils delayed planting. In the New England, Mountain and Pacific States cold, rainy weather also delayed field work.

Weather during the survey week was favorable over much of the country east of the Rockies. Temperatures were above normal. In the Mountain and Pacific areas, temperatures were lower than the average for the season. There was some rain in most parts of the country, but not enough to seriously interfere with field work in many sections. Rainfall was fairly heavy in an area covering most of northern Illinois and extending into parts of southern Wisconsin and eastern Iowa. An area along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers from the southern edge of Tennessee to the eastern edge of Indiana also had 2 to 4 inches of rain. In addition, a narrow strip extending along most of the Pacific Coast was also wet.

Farm work made good progress over most of the country east of the Rockies. There were a few areas where rain caused some delay in farm work. In the Northeast, soils were slow in drying out and field work was just starting. Dry weather in part of Texas was also delaying seeding since farmers were waiting for rain. However, in much of the central and eastern part of the country, farm work was ahead of schedule. In much of the Mountain region and in the Pacific region, work was behind schedule because of continued cold weather.

Farmers in most parts of the country were busy planting or preparing to plant spring crops during the week of April 17-23. In the South, cotton and corn planting were major jobs on many farms. In the more southern areas, a

few farmers had started cotton chopping and corn cultivation. Tobacco setting had reached into North Carolina. Small grain seeding was being finished except in the more northern areas. Corn planting was starting in the southern edge of the Corn Belt and in the remainder of the area, farmers were busy plowing and preparing land for corn and soybeans. Planting of potatoes and sugar beets was under way in most areas growing these crops.

Harvest operations were mostly restricted to southern areas where vegetables and citrus fruit were being harvested. Onions, sweet corn and tomatoes were being harvested in southern Texas. The first watermelons of the season were being picked in Florida. Spraying fruit trees was the usual job in fruit areas and in California, fruit was being thinned.

Cattle ranchers were busy with calving, lambing, sheep shearing, branding and vaccination. In some cases, livestock were being moved to pastures.

Increases from a month earlier in the total number of persons working on farms were reported for all geographic regions. Increases were quite large in all regions except the New England, Middle Atlantic and Pacific. In the Northeast, spring work was late starting while in the Pacific States, with a 2 percent rise, rain and cold weather were delaying field work. In both the New England and Pacific States, the increase was less than usual. There were three regions with more than 20 percent increases. The number of workers was up 24 percent in the South Atlantic States, 22 percent in the West South Central States and 21 percent in the Mountain States. Increases amounted to 13 percent in the East North Central States and 16 percent in the West North Central States. In the regions with the larger increases, most of the increases were about the same or larger than usual.

The number of family workers was up from a month ago in all regions except the Pacific where there was no change. This was also the only region in which there was not the same or a larger than usual increase. Increases ranged from the low of 5 percent in the Middle Atlantic States and 7 percent in the New England States to the high of 28 percent in the South Atlantic States.

There were more hired workers employed on farms in late April this year than a month earlier in all regions. The largest rise, 62 percent, was in the West South Central States where the increase was greater than usual. An increase of 41 percent in the West North Central States was much more than the average of recent years. Increases in other regions ranged from 4 percent in the New England States to 26 percent in the East South Central States. Increases were less than usual in the New England, East North Central, Mountain and Pacific States and about the same as usual in the East South Central States.

There were fewer persons at work on farms than a year earlier during the survey week in all regions. The largest drops were in the South and West where they ranged from 6 percent to 9 percent. Decreases were a little less than the national average of 5 percent in the remaining regions with the 1-percent decline in the West North Central States, the smallest.

Decreases in the numbers of family workers were reported for all regions with the largest declines in the South Atlantic, East South Central and Mountain States. Except for these regions and the West South Central, decreases by regions were less than the average for the entire country.

There were about 100,000 fewer hired workers employed on farms in April this year than a year earlier. Over half of this decrease was in the West South Central and Pacific States. On a percentage basis, decreases were also fairly large in the New England, East South Central and Mountain States. All of the regions with the larger decreases were adversely affected by weather. Cold and rain in the New England, Mountain and Pacific States, heavy rain in parts of the East South Central States and dry weather in parts of the West South Central States reduced the need for hired workers.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service

Farm employment: Persons employed during week of April 17-23, 1955, United States, with comparisons

	April : average : 1950-54 1/	April : 18-24, : 1954	March : 20-26, : 1955	April : 17-23, : 1955
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons):				
Total	8,652	8,510	6,918	8,055
Family labor	7,057	6,886	5,663	6,540
Hired labor	1,595	1,624	1,255	1,515
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES (Adjusted for seasonal variation, 1910-14 = 100)				
Total	66	65	61	62
Family labor	68	66	63	63
Hired labor	59	61	56	56
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, 1955, United States, with comparisons 1/

	Jan. 1, : 1954	Apr. 1, : 1954	Jan. 1, : 1955	Apr. 1, : 1955
FARM WAGE RATES				
Per month with house	\$154.00	\$144.00	\$152.00	\$145.00
Per month with board and room	124.00	117.00	122.00	118.00
Per week with board and room	29.00	28.50	28.50	28.50
Per week without board or room	37.50	37.00	37.25	38.00
Per day with house	4.30	4.05	4.30	4.05
Per day with board and room	5.20	4.70	5.20	4.75
Per day without board or room	5.40	5.00	5.30	5.10
Per hour with house	.68	.63	.66	.63
Per hour without board or room	.90	.84	.88	.85
Composite rate per hour 2/	.730	.580	.724	.590
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Adjusted for seasonal variation....	525	507	521	516
RELATED INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Prices received by farmers 3/.....	256	256	242	246
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	49	50	46	48

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
Agricultural Marketing Service

Farm employment: Persons employed during week of April 17-23, 1955, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons

Geographic division	April : average : 1950-54 1/	March : 21-27, : 1954	April : 18-24, : 1954	March : 20-26, : 1955	April : 17-23, : 1955
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT					
United States	8,652	7,278	8,510	6,918	8,055
New England	164	149	163	147	156
Middle Atlantic	507	482	505	466	492
East North Central	1,390	1,225	1,358	1,167	1,319
West North Central	1,585	1,373	1,532	1,303	1,513
South Atlantic	1,565	1,206	1,551	1,160	1,435
East South Central	1,316	1,078	1,304	999	1,193
West South Central	1,224	990	1,193	913	1,117
Mountain	362	291	356	271	329
Pacific	539	484	548	492	501
FAMILY WORKERS 2/					
United States	7,057	5,958	6,886	5,663	6,540
New England	115	105	112	102	109
Middle Atlantic	386	368	389	362	380
East North Central	1,220	1,073	1,195	1,023	1,162
West North Central	1,427	1,245	1,382	1,195	1,361
South Atlantic	1,259	921	1,239	884	1,130
East South Central	1,119	909	1,096	847	1,002
West South Central	938	816	891	745	845
Mountain	273	220	266	202	248
Pacific	320	301	316	303	303
HIRED WORKERS 3/					
United States	1,595	1,320	1,624	1,255	1,515
New England	49	44	51	45	47
Middle Atlantic	121	114	116	104	112
East North Central	170	152	163	144	157
West North Central	158	128	150	108	152
South Atlantic	306	285	312	276	305
East South Central	197	169	208	152	191
West South Central	286	174	302	168	272
Mountain	89	71	90	69	81
Pacific	219	183	232	189	198

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
Agricultural Marketing Service

Farm employment: Average number of persons employed per month, January through April 1955, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons 1/

Geographic division	1950-54	1952	1953	1954	1955
	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Thousands</u>
TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT					
United States	7,277	7,152	7,088	7,044	6,715
New England	147	149	140	147	144
Middle Atlantic	473	462	464	465	449
East North Central	1,196	1,189	1,168	1,173	1,122
West North Central	1,380	1,369	1,355	1,326	1,288
South Atlantic	1,246	1,217	1,185	1,189	1,122
East South Central	1,057	1,019	1,032	1,032	955
West South Central	991	959	965	942	878
Mountain	300	297	297	292	278
Pacific	487	491	482	478	479
FAMILY WORKERS <u>2/</u>					
United States	6,022	5,916	5,862	5,807	5,539
New England	106	107	102	104	102
Middle Atlantic	363	354	358	360	351
East North Central	1,062	1,057	1,042	1,040	998
West North Central	1,249	1,235	1,234	1,208	1,177
South Atlantic	990	965	935	937	878
East South Central	918	890	883	883	818
West South Central	810	787	790	765	713
Mountain	220	217	218	214	204
Pacific	304	304	300	296	298
HIRED WORKERS <u>3/</u>					
United States	1,255	1,236	1,226	1,237	1,176
New England	41	42	38	43	42
Middle Atlantic	110	108	106	105	98
East North Central	134	132	126	133	124
West North Central	131	134	121	118	111
South Atlantic	256	252	250	252	244
East South Central	139	129	149	149	137
West South Central	181	172	175	177	165
Mountain	80	80	79	78	74
Pacific	183	187	182	182	181

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.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

EXPLANATIONS 1/

Farm employment estimates of the Agricultural Marketing Service 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 during the last complete calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month. The Census of Agriculture and interview surveys of farmers are used to provide bench mark data on employment.

All farm operators who spend one hour or more during the survey week at farm work, chores, or in the transaction of farm business are counted as employed. 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 week. Operators plus unpaid members of their families or households who meet these criteria are called family workers. All persons doing one or more hours of farm work or chores for pay during the week are counted as hired workers.

The data on farm employment published by the Agricultural Marketing Service differ from those on agricultural employment of the Census in the Monthly Report on the Labor Force because of the differences in the method of approach, in concepts of employment, and in time of the month for which data are collected. The AMS collects information from the farmer on all persons working on his farm during the week regardless of age or other jobs held by these workers. The Census data are obtained by interview from about 22,000 farm and nonfarm households on the labor force status of the household members 14 years of age and over, for the week including the 8th of the month. In addition, both series are subject to sampling variation and may differ from the results of a complete census.

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.

1/ Additional information available in January 1955 issue of Farm Labor.