

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service

FARM LABOR REPORT

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January 15, 1941

FARM WAGE RATES DOWN LESS
THAN USUAL SINCE OCTOBER

The general level of farm wage rates during the quarter ending January 1 dropped much less than the usual seasonal downturn from October 1 to January 1, the Agricultural Marketing Service reported today. At 124 percent of the 1910-14 average, the wage rate index on the first of January was 5 points lower than 3 months earlier, whereas it ordinarily declines about 7 points during the last quarter of the year.

Rates in a few sections actually advanced a little since October 1940. This was true in southern New England, where defense industries are actively competing with dairymen for the available labor supply. But in most other sections winter wage rates on the farm were steady to lower, with sizable ~~seasonal~~ declines reported in many instances. The average of reports on the daily rate without board in Connecticut--\$7.05 per day--was the highest recorded for any State.

Apparently, the less than usual decline in farm wage rates during the past 3 months has been largely the result of a limited supply of workers available for hire on farms at current wage rates, together with a somewhat stronger demand for their services. For the second consecutive quarter, reporting crop correspondents have indicated that, on the average, rural labor supplies are somewhat smaller than demand. These reports would suggested that a surplus of laborers for agricultural work no longer exists east of the Mississippi River. The national average of reports on the supply of farm labor, expressed as a Percentage of demand, was 99.1 on January 1, as compared with 97.2 three months

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earlier and 114.7 a year ago. The ratio as of the first of this month was the smallest January figure recorded since 1924. Bountiful 1940 harvests, a very limited export demand for farm products, and large stocks of food and fiber products indicate, however, that any shortage of farm labor that may exist is not of serious proportions even in the eastern part of the country.

The increase in the demand for hired labor is reflected in the larger number of hired hands retained on farms this winter. The number of hired workers employed as of January 1 was estimated at 1,649,000. Although sharply lower than on the first of October 1940, this estimate is up 71,000 from a year ago, or nearly enough to offset the decline of 98,000 in the number of unpaid family workers (including farm operators).

The recent increase in nonagricultural employment already has drawn some workers from the farm. These people undoubtedly have come from the ranks of both family and hired workers. It is probable that, with the increase in nonagricultural employment opportunities, there has been a considerable shift in the status of other agricultural workers from an unpaid to a paid status.

The total number of persons employed on farms (hired and family workers) as of January 1 was estimated to be 8,614,000, compared with 11,735,000 on October 1 and 8,641,000 on January 1, 1940. The latest information at hand regarding nonagricultural employment would indicate that increases in industrial employment in recent months have not been sufficient to offset the seasonal decline in the number of persons working on farms. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that 35,535,000 persons were employed in nonagricultural industries in November, 1940, compared with 36,497,000 a month earlier and 35,418,000 in November 1939. These estimates now exclude all military and naval forces, as well as persons employed on W.P.A. and N.Y.A. projects and enrollees in C.C.C. camps. Available data indicate that the number of persons employed in the United States last November totaled 46,646,000, aside from those working in the above-mentioned categories. This total was 1,169,000 less than the number employed a month earlier, but an increase of 1,186,000 over the number of persons working in November 1939.

Farm wage rates and related data, United States, January 1, 1941,
with comparisons

	Annual average: 1910-14	Oct. 1, 1939	Jan. 1, 1940	Oct. 1, 1940	Jan. 1, 1941
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES:					
Unadjusted.....	100	126	119	129	124
Adjusted for seasonal variation....	100	122	124	125	129
FARM WAGE RATES:					
Per month, with board.....	\$22.09	\$28.28	\$25.37	\$22.77	\$26.88
Per month, without board.....	29.18	36.17	35.27	36.84	36.61
Per day, with board.....	1.16	1.75	1.22	1.79	1.29
Per day, without board.....	1.42	1.57	1.55	1.61	1.59
SUPPLY OF AND DEMAND FOR FARM LABOR:					
Supply, percentage of normal	---	90.4	87.1	85.6	85.7
Demand, percentage of normal	---	87.4	81.2	82.1	86.6
Supply, percentage of demand	---	102.4	114.7	97.2	99.1
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES:					
Total -					
Unadjusted.....	100	99	72	97	71
Adjusted for seasonal variation....	100	87	89	85	83
Family labor -					
Unadjusted.....	100	97	77	95	76
Adjusted for seasonal variation....	100	87	92	86	90
Hired labor -					
Unadjusted.....	100	104	55	106	57
Adjusted for seasonal variation....	100	85	79	86	81
FARM EMPLOYMENT					
(Thousands of persons)					
Total.....	12,052	11,883	8,641	11,735	8,614
Family labor.....	9,160	8,864	7,063	8,683	5,965
Hired labor.....	2,892	3,022	1,578	3,052	1,649
RELATED INDEXES:					
Prices received by farmers <u>1</u> /.....	100	97	99	99	<u>2</u> /101
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates.....	100	77	83	77	81
Industrial wage rates <u>3</u> /.....	--	219	218	229	--
Industrial employment <u>5</u> /.....	--	104	104	110	<u>4</u> /111
Industrial pay rolls <u>5</u> /.....	--	102	102	115	<u>4</u> /115

1/As of the 15th of the month. 2/Dec. 1940 - latest data available. 3/Average weekly earnings, New York State factories, June 1914 = 100. 4/Nov. 1940 - latest data available. 5/Bureau of Labor Statistics indexes for manufacturing industries revised 1923-25 = 100.

Based on reports from approximately 22,047 correspondents. The data for previous quarters, by States, appear in Crops and Markets for Jan., Apr., July, and Oct.

Farm wage rates, by geographic divisions, January 1, 1941,
by comparisons

Geographic Division	Annual : average : 1910-14 :	Oct. 1, : 1939 :	Jan. 1, : 1940 :	Oct. 1, : 1940 :	Jan. 1, : 1941 :
<u>FARM WAGE RATES</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>
PER MONTH WITH BOARD	:	:	:	:	:
New England	: 24.18	33.52	31.75	34.23	34.29
Middle Atlantic	: 22.25	29.37	27.46	30.32	29.74
East North Central	: 27.75	29.75	25.80	30.54	28.22
West North Central	: 26.32	28.89	22.32	23.75	24.39
South Atlantic	: 14.62	16.86	16.76	17.75	18.26
East South Central	: 14.71	16.08	15.93	16.50	16.94
West South Central	: 17.35	18.93	18.35	20.13	20.24
Mountain	: 32.48	36.39	33.39	36.98	34.33
Pacific	: 33.45	44.79	40.30	44.86	47.45
PER MONTH WITHOUT BOARD	:	:	:	:	:
New England	: 37.70	58.52	56.71	58.43	58.31
Middle Atlantic	: 37.41	45.62	47.56	47.35	46.70
East North Central	: 32.20	42.07	37.94	42.95	40.52
West North Central	: 36.86	39.36	33.33	40.42	35.70
South Atlantic	: 20.97	24.80	25.08	25.77	27.00
East South Central	: 20.80	22.81	22.99	23.08	24.30
West South Central	: 24.93	27.46	27.01	28.78	28.76
Mountain	: 46.42	52.54	48.55	52.89	50.45
Pacific	: 48.16	67.04	65.78	67.83	66.51
PER DAY WITH BOARD	:	:	:	:	:
New England	: 1.27	1.84	1.73	1.85	1.84
Middle Atlantic	: 1.24	1.76	1.61	1.86	1.78
East North Central	: 1.31	1.67	1.48	1.72	1.57
West North Central	: 1.46	1.58	1.24	1.64	1.34
South Atlantic	: .81	.92	.88	.95	.97
East South Central	: .81	.77	.79	.83	.83
West South Central	: .98	1.00	.93	1.02	1.01
Mountain	: 1.50	1.72	1.59	1.76	1.56
Pacific	: 1.49	2.02	1.92	2.10	2.01
PER DAY WITHOUT BOARD	:	:	:	:	:
New England	: 1.71	2.70	2.55	2.70	2.67
Middle Atlantic	: 1.63	2.35	2.21	2.45	2.41
East North Central	: 1.68	2.17	1.97	2.23	2.05
West North Central	: 1.88	2.11	1.77	2.17	1.86
South Atlantic	: 1.05	1.19	1.20	1.24	1.27
East South Central	: 1.05	1.03	1.03	1.03	1.07
West South Central	: 1.25	1.24	1.19	1.28	1.27
Mountain	: 2.05	2.27	2.14	2.29	2.22
Pacific	: 2.06	2.79	2.70	2.92	2.74

Farm labor supply, demand, and farm employment, January 1, 1941
with comparisons

	Oct.1, 1938	Jan.1, 1939	Oct.1, 1939	Jan.1, 1940	Oct.1, 1940	Jan.1, 1941
SUPPLY OF FARM LABOR						
(Percentage of normal)						
New England	90.5	92.5	88.2	91.9	81.0	78.7
Middle Atlantic	87.9	92.5	88.5	91.2	79.0	80.6
East North Central	91.3	96.2	89.9	94.7	95.4	86.9
West North Central	92.2	96.8	92.5	95.6	82.6	91.4
South Atlantic	87.9	90.5	84.4	87.5	81.1	80.8
East South Central	86.5	90.6	88.1	88.9	86.5	84.3
West South Central	91.1	94.5	91.3	92.6	85.1	85.3
Mountain	97.7	100.3	95.8	99.8	91.5	91.6
Pacific	104.0	104.8	99.9	102.6	94.5	93.0
DEMAND FOR FARM LABOR						
(Percentage of normal)						
New England	87.4	87.9	88.1	86.7	91.6	89.9
Middle Atlantic	87.0	80.9	86.3	82.4	90.3	88.2
East North Central	86.0	81.8	87.6	84.8	91.0	89.7
West North Central	77.2	74.8	79.9	77.8	86.1	85.9
South Atlantic	81.3	81.2	86.6	85.1	90.7	89.0
East South Central	81.1	80.2	81.6	80.8	83.9	85.0
West South Central	76.9	73.1	76.3	72.1	84.4	80.6
Mountain	82.3	75.9	83.6	81.9	87.0	85.6
Pacific	79.2	81.3	87.7	82.7	91.3	88.5
SUPPLY OF FARM LABOR						
(Percentage of demand)						
New England	103.5	105.2	100.1	106.0	88.4	87.5
Middle Atlantic	101.0	114.3	102.5	110.7	87.5	91.4
East North Central	106.2	117.6	102.6	111.7	93.8	96.8
West North Central	119.4	129.4	115.8	122.9	102.9	106.8
South Atlantic	108.1	111.5	97.5	102.8	89.4	90.8
East South Central	106.7	113.0	108.0	110.0	103.1	99.3
West South Central	118.5	129.3	119.7	128.4	100.8	105.7
Mountain	118.7	132.1	114.6	121.9	105.2	107.1
Pacific	131.3	128.9	113.9	124.1	107.5	104.7
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
(Thousands of persons)						
<u>Total</u>						
New England	268	228	265	227	273	228
Middle Atlantic	637	546	625	532	621	542
East North Central	1,551	1,375	1,516	1,329	1,492	1,325
West North Central	1,741	1,439	1,745	1,427	1,773	1,431
South Atlantic	2,380	1,596	2,353	1,569	2,352	1,562
East South Central	2,176	1,404	2,124	1,361	2,073	1,305
West South Central	2,177	1,403	2,191	1,377	2,141	1,426
Mountain	506	359	493	372	462	367
Pacific	622	457	574	447	568	428

Farm employment, by geographic divisions, January 1, 1941
with comparisons

Geographic division	Oct. 1, 1938	Jan. 1, 1939	Oct. 1, 1939	Jan. 1, 1940	Oct. 1, 1940	Jan. 1, 1941
FARM EMPLOYMENT	:	:	:	:	:	:
(Thousands of persons)	:	:	:	:	:	:
<u>Family Labor</u>	:	:	:	:	:	:
New England	166	159	166	162	167	162
Middle Atlantic	401	399	403	399	402	400
East North Central	1,139	1,106	1,128	1,106	1,115	1,102
West North Central	1,329	1,284	1,305	1,208	1,705	1,190
South Atlantic	1,784	1,772	1,767	1,245	1,715	1,224
East South Central	1,857	1,233	1,879	1,217	1,783	1,162
West South Central	1,616	1,159	1,653	1,150	1,595	1,147
Mountain	296	275	284	279	281	277
Pacific	318	301	319	301	320	301
<u>Hired Labor</u>	:	:	:	:	:	:
New England	102	69	99	65	106	66
Middle Atlantic	232	147	212	137	219	142
East North Central	412	229	382	223	377	223
West North Central	412	215	440	219	468	241
South Atlantic	596	324	586	324	617	338
East South Central	319	171	285	148	290	143
West South Central	561	234	538	227	545	279
Mountain	220	84	209	93	191	90
Pacific	304	156	255	146	248	127

Persons employed in the United States, December 1940,
with comparisons

	Oct., 1939	Nov., 1939	Dec., 1939	Oct., 1940	Nov., 1940	Dec., 1940
	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's
Farm employment <u>1</u> /.....	11,324	10,042	8,980	11,318	10,111	8,967
Family workers.....	8,434	7,70	7,140	8,411	7,576	7,089
Hired workers.....	2,830	2,372	1,840	2,907	2,435	1,878
Nonagricultural employ- ment <u>2</u> / <u>3</u> /.....	35,546	35,418	35,641	36,437	36,535	---
Total employment <u>3</u> /.....	46,870	45,460	44,621	47,815	46,646	---

1/Average of estimates of farm employment as of the first of the given and the following month.

2/Estimates of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Labor. Excludes persons employed on W.P.A. or N.Y.A. projects, enrollees in C.C.C. camps, and military and naval forces.

3/~~P~~reliminary revision.

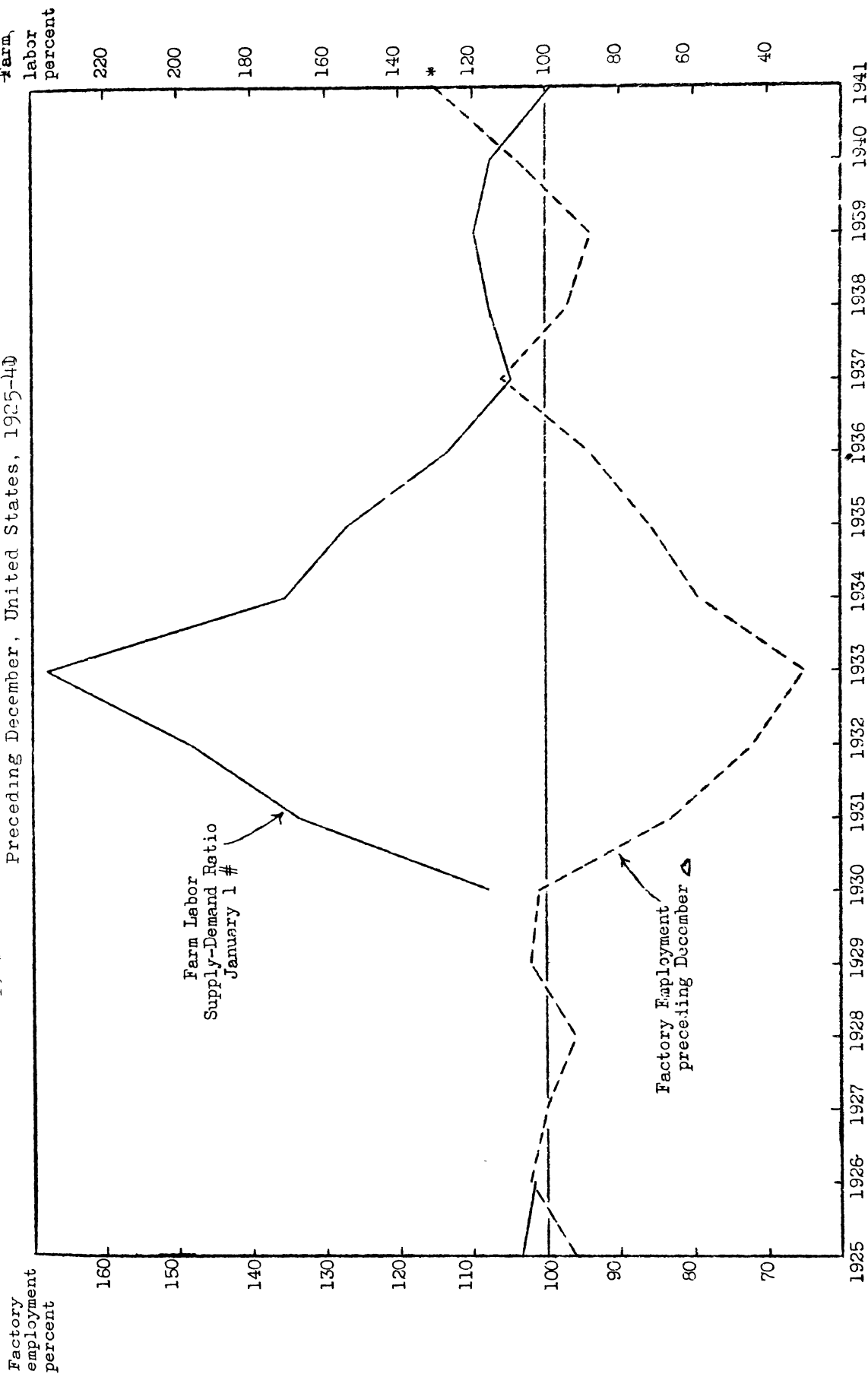
Farm employment: Annual averages of number of persons employed,
and index numbers, United States, 1909-40

Year	<u>Total employment</u>		<u>Family workers</u>		<u>Hired workers</u>	
	Average	Index	Average	Index	Average	Index
	number	1910-14	number	1910-14	number	1910-14
	persons	= 100	persons	= 100	persons	= 100
	1,000's		1,000's		1,000's	
1909	12,209	101	9,341	107	2,868	99
1910	12,146	101	9,289	101	2,857	99
1911	12,042	100	9,172	100	2,870	99
1912	12,038	100	9,149	100	2,889	100
1913	12,033	100	9,128	100	2,905	100
1914	12,000	100	9,081	99	2,919	101
1915	11,981	99	8,047	99	2,934	101
1916	12,016	100	8,050	99	2,966	103
1917	11,789	98	8,856	97	2,933	101
1918	11,348	94	8,507	93	2,841	98
1919	11,106	92	8,322	91	2,784	96
1920	11,362	94	8,479	93	2,883	100
1921	11,412	95	8,511	93	2,901	100
1922	11,443	95	8,528	93	2,915	101
1923	11,385	94	8,491	93	2,894	100
1924	11,362	94	8,468	93	2,874	99
1925	11,446	95	8,577	94	2,869	99
1926	11,534	96	8,507	93	3,027	105
1927	11,246	93	8,296	91	2,950	102
1928	11,296	94	8,340	91	2,956	102
1929	11,289	94	8,305	91	2,984	103
1930	11,173	93	8,323	91	2,850	99
1931	11,159	93	8,489	92	2,890	99
1932	11,069	92	8,571	94	2,498	86
1933	11,023	91	8,590	94	2,433	84
1934	10,852	90	8,506	93	2,346	81
1935	11,172	93	8,704	95	2,468	85
1936	10,997	91	8,502	93	2,495	86
1937	10,850	90	8,273	90	2,557	88
1938	10,745	89	8,216	90	2,529	87
1939	10,629	88	8,150	89	2,479	86
1940	10,445	87	7,995	87	2,450	85

Farm wage rates and related data, by States, January 1, 1941

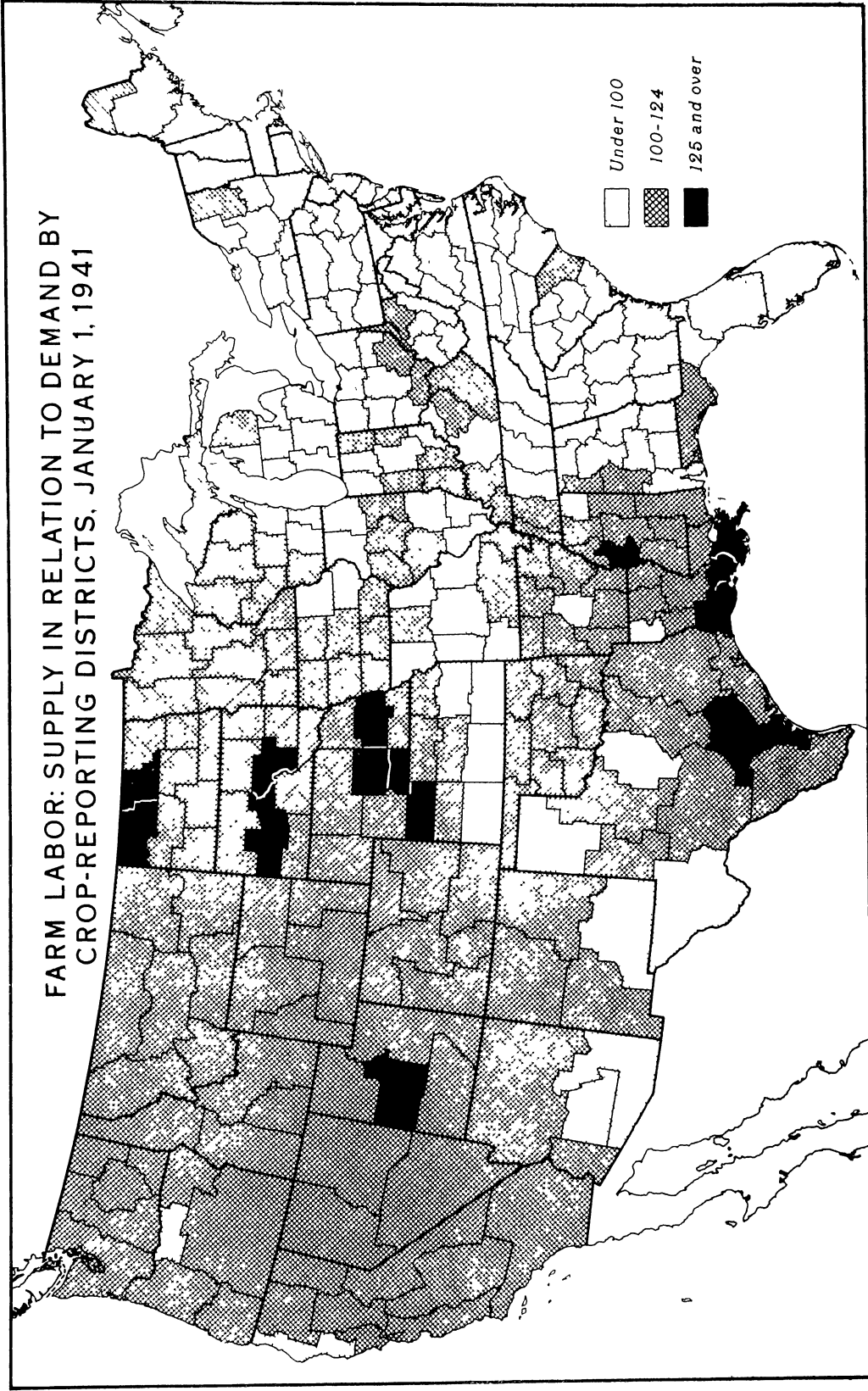
State	Per month		Per day		Supply of and demand for farm labor		
	With	Without	With	Without	Supply as	Demand as	Supply as
	board	board	board	board	percentage	percentage	percentage
	:	:	:	:	of normal	of normal	of demand
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Maine	31.50	49.50	1.65	2.25	87	90	92
N.H.	31.25	53.50	2.15	2.85	80	86	93
Vt.	32.25	50.00	1.80	2.45	82	96	85
Mass.	34.75	63.50	1.80	2.70	75	85	88
R.I.	39.00	65.50	2.70	2.95	83	95	93
Conn.	37.75	65.00	2.10	3.05	75	92	82
N.Y.	30.75	47.25	1.80	2.45	80	89	90
N.J.	33.50	56.00	1.90	2.60	79	86	92
Pa.	27.00	42.75	1.70	2.70	82	82	93
Ohio	26.50	39.25	1.65	2.10	84	88	95
Ind.	27.75	38.50	1.50	1.90	87	89	98
Ill.	31.75	43.25	1.65	2.20	89	80	100
Mich.	28.00	42.25	1.70	2.25	79	90	88
Wis.	26.50	39.50	1.40	1.90	90	92	98
Minn.	22.25	34.50	1.35	2.00	95	27	109
Iowa	28.50	39.25	1.60	2.10	96	93	103
Mo.	23.25	32.75	1.10	1.50	84	85	99
N.Dak.	17.50	31.00	1.10	1.65	90	79	114
S.Dak.	22.50	36.50	1.30	1.85	89	77	116
Nebr.	24.25	35.00	1.30	1.75	91	71	128
Kans.	25.00	36.75	1.75	1.85	90	87	103
Del.	27.75	41.50	1.60	2.10	82	99	83
Md.	28.00	40.75	1.45	1.95	80	90	89
Va.	22.50	32.00	1.15	1.50	79	92	86
W.Va.	21.75	32.00	1.10	1.50	85	86	99
N.C.	18.50	26.50	1.00	1.25	82	91	90
S.C.	12.75	18.50	.65	.85	70	83	95
Ga.	13.25	19.25	.70	.90	81	90	90
Fla.	17.25	23.50	1.00	1.75	87	88	94
Kv.	20.50	28.75	.95	1.25	86	87	99
Tenn.	17.75	25.50	.85	1.05	85	88	97
Ala.	13.75	19.75	.70	.90	78	85	92
Miss.	14.25	20.75	.75	1.00	85	80	106
Ark.	13.75	24.25	.85	1.10	82	81	101
La.	15.25	23.00	.80	1.05	84	78	108
Okla.	21.50	31.00	1.10	1.40	88	82	107
Tex.	22.50	31.50	1.10	1.75	86	81	106
Mont.	34.75	52.25	1.65	2.65	84	86	109
Idaho	35.50	49.50	1.75	2.25	93	86	114
Wyo.	35.75	51.50	1.65	2.30	90	90	109
Colo.	30.00	45.25	1.50	2.05	94	81	116
N.Mex.	28.75	40.75	1.30	1.65	84	83	101
Ariz.	37.00	53.00	1.45	2.05	83	91	91
Utah	43.00	60.00	2.10	2.45	97	85	114
Nev.	41.75	63.50	1.80	2.50	93	82	113
Wash.	33.50	54.25	1.70	2.60	93	86	108
Oreg.	34.75	52.50	1.80	2.75	97	89	104
Calif.	47.75	72.25	2.10	2.85	93	89	104
U.S.	26.88	36.61	1.29	1.59	85.7	86.6	99.1

Farm Labor Supply as a Percentage of Demand, January 1, and Factory Employment, Preceding December, United States, 1925-40



Supply as percentage of demand. "Normal" supply with "normal" demand = 100. 1927-29 data not available.
 Δ Employment in manufacturing industries. Monthly average 1923-25 = 100.
 * November 1940 - latest available data.

FARM LABOR: SUPPLY IN RELATION TO DEMAND BY CROP-REPORTING DISTRICTS, JANUARY 1, 1941



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Nov. 1, 1930

NEG 346 AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

THE SUPPLY OF WORKERS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE ON JANUARY 1, 1941, WAS REPORTED SOMEWHAT LOWER THAN THE DEMAND FOR FARM LABOR AT PREVAILING WAGE RATES, IN MOST AREAS THROUGHOUT THE EASTERN HALF OF THE COUNTRY. THIS WAS DUE LARGELY TO WIDESPREAD EMPLOYMENT IN DEFENSE INDUSTRIES AND ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN AND NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGIONS, HOWEVER, THE FARM LABOR SUPPLY CONTINUES IN EXCESS OF DEMAND