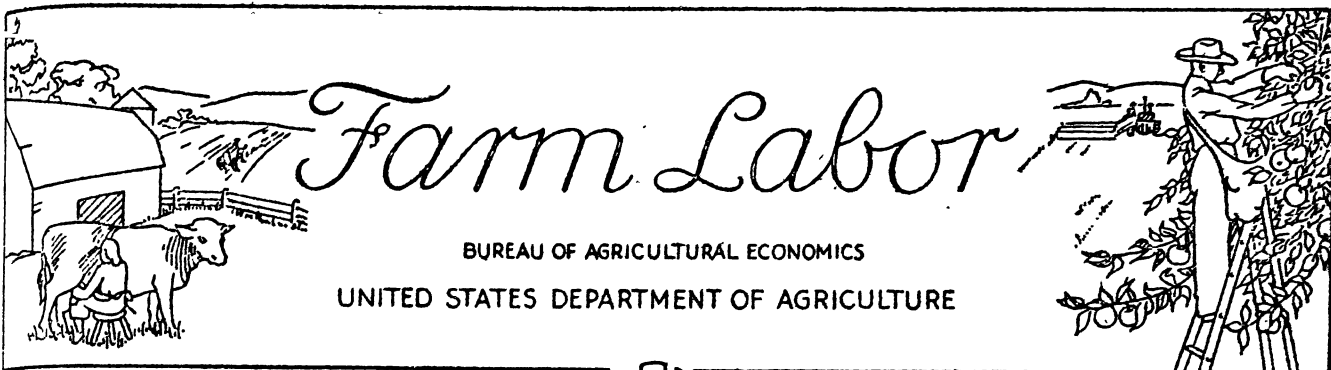




Washington, D. C.

BAE

May 12, 1948

FARM EMPLOYMENT INCREASES USUAL AMOUNT DURING APRIL

The number of persons at work on farms increased 12 percent from April 1 to May 1, about the usual amount for the season, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. Generally favorable weather and increased activity accounted for the increase. A total of 10,368,000 hired and family workers were engaged in farm work on May 1. This was 1 percent more than a year ago. The increase over last year was almost entirely in hired workers.

Farm work in late April was at about its usual stage except in the Pacific Northwest and the northern Mountain Region where work was a week to three weeks late. Continued cool rainy weather was delaying spring seeding. In the South the rainy weather of previous months came to an end and southern farmers were catching up with their work. Cotton planting was making good progress and chopping was starting in the South Atlantic and Gulf Coast areas. Corn, peanuts and tobacco were also being planted. In the East and mid-West, spring grains were about all planted and preparations for planting corn were under-way. Planting had just started in Iowa and Missouri.

The weather during the last week in April was generally fair and warm except in the Pacific Northwest. Cool, rainy weather in this area continued to limit field work. Showers extending from the Dakotas to Texas during the week interfered with field work in some sections but not enough to affect employment. Dry soils in western Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas and southwestern Nebraska were delaying planting of spring crops.

The number of family workers on May 1 was about the same as a year ago. In most regions family employment was about the same or a little less than a year ago except in the South Atlantic and West South Central regions. Seasonal increases in the number of family workers were about the same as usual except for a slightly larger than ordinary increase in the South Atlantic States. The largest increases in family employment during April were in the South and ranged from 15 to 20 percent in the three southern regions. In other regions the seasonal changes ranged from a 5-percent increase in the West North Central Region to little or no change in New England and the Mountain States.

The number of hired workers was up sharply from a year ago in the South Central Region where farmers were trying to make up for time lost because of earlier unfavorable weather. Increases in hired farm employment were moderate in the New England, East North Central and Mountain States. In other regions there was little change. The number of hired farm workers in the East and

West North Central States increased a little more than a third from April 1 to May 1. The increases in these regions were the largest regional increases and were a little larger than usual. Hired employment was also up a little more than usual in the East South Central States. Increases during April were less than expected in the Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic, and Mountain States. The less than usual increase in hired employment in the South Atlantic States was offset by a greater than usual increase in family employment while in the Mountain States a somewhat later than usual season held down the need for hired help.

In the New England States about May 1, field work was just beginning and farm work consisted mostly of jobs in preparation for spring planting. Family employment was the same as a month earlier and a little less than last year. There were 25 percent more persons working as hired laborers than a month earlier, up a little from a year ago.

Farm work in the Middle Atlantic States was about on schedule by May 1. Oats were about all planted and corn ground was being prepared. In New York early vegetables were being put in. Onions were mostly planted. Cultivation of Long Island potatoes was in progress but planting was just getting started in up-state areas. Work in northern New Jersey was about the same as in the rest of the region. In central Jersey ground was being prepared for the canning crop of tomatoes. Asparagus and spinach were being harvested in the southern part of the State. Both family and hired employment were about the same as a year ago. Family employment was up slightly from last month as usual, hired employment increased less than usual although it was up more than a fifth from April 1.

Plowing and other preparations for planting corn were the major jobs in the East North Central States about May 1. A little corn was being planted in the southern parts of the region. Employment was about the same as a year ago, as family employment was down slightly but hired employment up enough to hold the total the same as last year. The increase from April 1 in the number of family workers was about the same as usual but there was a larger than usual increase in the number of hired workers.

In most of the West North Central States farm work on May 1 was about the same as in the East North Central Region. However, field work was just starting in northern North Dakota and spring grains were still being sown in the northern States of the region. Some corn, which had been snowed in, was being harvested in South Dakota. In the southern part of the region, southern Kansas and Missouri, corn planting was well advanced. There was some plowing up of volunteer and poor stands of wheat in Kansas. Also some fallowing operations were underway. Family and hired employment were each about the same as a year ago after the usual increase from April 1.

Farm work in the South Atlantic States consisted largely of planting and cultivation of spring sown crops. Corn and cotton planting had been completed in the South and in the coastal areas of the Carolinas. And planting of these crops was in progress in the Piedmont sections of the Carolinas and Virginia. Cultivation and hoeing of corn and cotton was started in the southern States of the region. Tobacco was being transplanted in the Carolinas and Virginia. In Florida tomatoes, eggplant and watermelons were being harvested in volume. Strawberry harvest had reached North Carolina. Family and hired employment was up sharply from a month earlier, with the larger percentage increase in

family employment. The number of family workers on May 1 was a little larger than a year ago. The number of hired workers continued above the number in the past few years.

Cotton and corn were mostly planted in the southern States of the East South Central Region by May 1 and cotton chopping was started. Planting was still in progress in Kentucky and Tennessee. First cuttings of alfalfa hay were being made as far north as Tennessee. Strawberry harvest had also reached this State and continued to the south. Hired employment in this region increased more than usual from April 1 and registered the largest increase over a year ago. Family employment remained at about the same level as last year with a usual seasonal rise. Pressure to complete delayed work probably was responsible for the increase in the number of hired workers.

In the West South Central States planting cotton and corn was making good progress except in the north and northwest sections of Texas. Some cultivation was started. Rice planting was about two-thirds completed in Arkansas. Early potatoes were being dug in Louisiana and alfalfa hay baled in Oklahoma. The number of hired workers on May 1 was considerably larger than a year ago but the number of family workers was about the same. Family and hired employment both showed the usual seasonal increase.

Field work in the northern part of the Mountain States Region was getting off to a late start because of cold weather and rain. Consequently, the number of family workers on May 1 remained unchanged from last month and down from last year. Hired employment was up less than usual from last month but slightly larger than a year ago. Planting of spring crops was the major job in the region.

In the Pacific Coast States progress with spring work was two to four weeks late in the northern part of the area compared with the earlier than usual season a year ago. Planting of spring crops was proceeding slowly in Washington and Oregon as farmers were working whenever they could get into their fields. In Oregon ground and seed were being prepared to plant potatoes in the Crook-Deschutes and Klamath areas. Very little work was being done in cultivating and planting berries. Spraying and dusting orchards was proceeding as weather permitted. In California major seasonal activities increased sharply since a month ago. Citrus harvest was still in progress in Southern California but some citrus pickers were moving north for higher paying work. The Kern County potato harvest was approaching its peak. Apricots, plums and peaches were being thinned. The usual vegetable operations were in progress. Family employment continued less than a year ago after about the usual seasonal increase. The lateness of the season in Washington and Oregon was largely responsible. Hired employment which is less important in the northern part of the region was up slightly from last year after a usual rise during April.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm labor: Persons employed, wage rates, indexes and related data, United States, May 1, 1948, with comparisons

	: Annual:	May	May	: April	: May
	: average:	: average:	: 1,	: 1,	: 1,
	: 1910-14:	: 1935-39:	: 1947	: 1948	: 1948
:					
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons)					
Total	12,052	11,465	10,280	9,225	10,368
Family labor	9,160	8,870	8,281	7,494	8,287
Hired labor	2,892	2,595	1,999	1,731	2,081
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES (Adjusted for seasonal variation)					
Total	100	91	83	85	85
Family labor	100	92	85	86	86
Hired labor	100	88	74	80	81
:					
	: Annual:	April	April	: January:	: April
	: average:	: average:	: 1,	: 1,	: 1,
	: 1910-14:	: 1935-39:	: 1947	: 1948	: 1948
:					
FARM WAGE RATES					
Per month, with board	\$22.09	\$25.36	\$91.50	\$95.00	\$97.00
Per month, without board	29.18	33.44	107.00	113.00	113.00
Per day, with board	1.16	1.14	4.17	4.50	4.45
Per day, without board	1.42	1.44	4.77	5.20	5.10
Composite rate per month <u>1/</u>	24.76	28.22	96.20	101.00	102.00
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES					
Unadjusted	100	114	389	408	412
Adjusted for seasonal variation	100	116	397	425	420
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES BY REGION					
New England	100	141	383	402	412
Middle Atlantic	100	127	389	400	418
East North Central	100	114	362	391	398
West North Central	100	96	349	349	376
South Atlantic	100	108	363	386	381
East South Central	100	98	303	336	320
West South Central	100	98	355	382	386
Mountain	100	102	342	357	365
Pacific	100	125	418	426	431
RELATED INDEXES					
Prices received by farmers <u>2/</u>	100	109	278	304	287
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	100	96	71	75	70
Average weekly factory earnings <u>3/</u>	100	196	423	465	--

1/ Weighted average of monthly rates with and without board, and daily rates with and without board converted to a monthly basis.

2/ Average of the 15th of the given and the 15th of the previous month.

3/ Factory payroll per employed worker; average of all weeks during the designated month.

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Farm employment: Persons employed, United States and geographic divisions,
May 1, 1948, with comparisons

Geographic divisions	May average 1935-39	April 1, 1947	May 1, 1947	April 1, 1948	May 1, 1948
	Thousands				
	TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT				
United States	11,465	9,242	10,280	9,225	10,368
New England	250	222	247	230	246
Middle Atlantic	631	559	606	564	605
East North Central	1,557	1,368	1,438	1,335	1,437
West North Central	1,694	1,499	1,623	1,495	1,619
South Atlantic	2,338	1,708	2,002	1,727	2,042
East South Central	2,026	1,480	1,695	1,464	1,715
West South Central	1,974	1,490	1,685	1,497	1,727
Mountain	448	399	430	407	487
Pacific	547	517	554	506	550
	FAMILY WORKERS ^{1/}				
United States	8,870	7,571	8,281	7,494	8,287
New England	162	160	170	166	166
Middle Atlantic	418	397	402	397	401
East North Central	1,204	1,182	1,200	1,149	1,187
West North Central	1,367	1,321	1,383	1,317	1,378
South Atlantic	1,759	1,359	1,593	1,359	1,630
East South Central	1,747	1,330	1,521	1,294	1,517
West South Central	1,585	1,214	1,390	1,213	1,400
Mountain	299	291	304	298	297
Pacific	329	317	318	301	311
	HIRED WORKERS				
United States	2,595	1,671	1,999	1,731	2,081
New England	88	62	77	64	80
Middle Atlantic	213	162	204	167	204
East North Central	353	186	238	186	250
West North Central	327	178	240	178	241
South Atlantic	579	349	409	368	412
East South Central	279	150	174	170	198
West South Central	389	276	295	284	327
Mountain	149	108	126	109	130
Pacific	218	200	236	205	239

^{1/} Including farm operators and members of their families working without wages.

Based on reports from 18,867 farmers who reported for their own farms the number of family and hired workers doing 2 or more days of work during the week of inquiry.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm employment: Total, family and hired workers, United States, specified annual averages, and by months, January 1, 1946 - May 1, 1948 ^{1/}

Year and month	:	Total farm employment	:	Family workers ^{2/}	:	Hired workers
	:			Thousands		
1910-14 average	:	12,052		9,160		2,892
1935-39 average	:	10,920		8,352		2,568
1939 average	:	10,740		8,145		2,595
1940 average	:	10,585		8,019		2,566
1941 average	:	10,361		7,829		2,532
1942 average	:	10,397		7,855		2,542
1943 average	:	10,263		7,857		2,406
1944 average	:	10,037		7,810		2,227
1945 average	:	9,844		7,726		2,118
1946 average	:	10,010		7,862		2,148
January 1	:	7,732		6,412		1,320
February 1	:	7,799		6,375		1,424
March 1	:	8,263		6,774		1,489
April 1	:	9,121		7,469		1,652
May 1	:	10,366		8,391		1,975
June 1	:	11,422		8,969		2,453
July 1	:	11,586		8,875		2,711
August 1	:	11,044		8,258		2,786
September 1	:	11,111		8,334		2,777
October 1	:	11,458		8,834		2,624
November 1	:	10,809		8,306		2,503
December 1	:	9,405		7,345		2,060
1947 average	:	10,157		7,930		2,227
January 1	:	8,272		6,747		1,525
February 1	:	8,280		6,693		1,587
March 1	:	8,591		7,046		1,545
April 1	:	9,242		7,571		1,671
May 1	:	10,280		8,281		1,999
June 1	:	11,394		8,913		2,481
July 1	:	11,518		8,833		2,685
August 1	:	11,140		8,301		2,839
September 1	:	11,132		8,259		2,873
October 1	:	11,700		8,896		2,804
November 1	:	10,938		8,320		2,618
December 1	:	9,402		7,298		2,104
1948 average	:	--		--		--
January 1	:	8,129		6,641		1,488
February 1	:	8,133		6,661		1,472
March 1	:	8,541		6,996		1,545
April 1	:	9,225		7,494		1,731
May 1	:	10,368		8,287		2,081

^{1/} Annual averages are straight averages of first of month employment estimates.

^{2/} Includes farm operators and members of their families working without wages.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm labor: Farm wage rates, rural living costs and real farm wage rates, United States, 1910-1947

Index numbers, 1910-1914 = 100			
Year	Farm wage rates	Rural living costs 1/	Real farm wage rates 2/
1910	97	98	99
1911	98	100	98
1912	101	101	100
1913	103	100	103
1914	101	101	100
1915	103	106	97
1916	113	124	91
1917	141	147	96
1918	177	177	100
1919	207	210	99
1920	242	222	109
1921	155	161	96
1922	151	156	97
1923	169	160	106
1924	173	159	109
1925	176	163	108
1926	179	162	110
1927	179	160	112
1928	179	160	112
1929	180	159	113
1930	167	150	111
1931	130	128	102
1932	96	108	89
1933	85	108	79
1934	95	122	78
1935	103	124	83
1936	111	123	90
1937	126	128	98
1938	125	122	102
1939	123	120	102
1940	126	121	104
1941	154	131	118
1942	201	154	131
1943	264	170	155
1944	315	178	177
1945	350	185	189
1946	378	<u>3/</u> 210	180
1947	408	255	160

1/ Prices paid by farmers for commodities used in living.

2/ Wage rates divided by rural living costs.

3/ Revised.

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BAE-FL 5/12/48 - 1700
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IN THIS ISSUE

	<u>Page</u>
Text	1 - 3
Farm labor: Persons employed, wage rates, indexes and related data, United States, May 1, 1948, with comparisons	4
Farm employment: Persons employed, United States and geographic divisions, May 1, 1948, with comparisons	5
Farm employment: Total, family and hired workers, United States, specified annual averages, and by months, January 1, 1946 -May 1, 1948	6
Farm labor: Farm wage rates, rural living costs and real farm wage rates, United States, 1910-1947.	7