UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service

Washington, D. C.
July 14, 1939.

FARM WAGE RATE INDEX DOWN 3 POINTS FROM YEAR AGO

Wage rates paid to agricultural workers increased slightly less than usual during the April-June quarter this year, the Agricultural Marketing Service reported today. At 126 percent of pre-war, the July 1 level was 5 points higher than on April 1, but was the lowest July wage index since 1936. It was 3 points lower than on July 1, 1938.

All classes of farm wage rates advanced during the second quarter, the wages per day with board showing the greatest percentage increase. The July 1 rates were consistently lower, however, than a year earlier. Day rates increased most since April in the West North Central States where the winter wheat harvest materially increased labor requirements. The change in day rates was slight in the East South Central States. Cotton chopping had been largely completed in many southeastern areas.

Labor Supply Smaller: Demand Greater

Reports received from crop correspondents indicate that the supply of farm labor in relation to demand remained above normal on July 1, although somewhat below the level prevailing 3 months ago. The supply of labor in rural areas that was available for farm work averaged 89.6 percent of normal on July 1, compared with 93 percent in April and with 92.3 percent a year ago. Data available through May indicate a slight increase in employment in manufacturing industries as compared with July 1 of last year.

The demand for farm labor, as reported by crop correspondents, increased from 82.8 percent of normal on April 1 to 84.6 percent on July 1. The upturn was general in all parts of the country except in the Rocky Mountain States

SPECIAL TO THIS ISSUE

where, from Wyoming south to Arizona and New Mexico, minor declines were rather uniformly recorded. Farm labor requirement rose in most sections, however, as the small grain harvest got under way. Demand for farm labor on July 1 was reported eight-tenths of a point higher than on the same date last year.

Farm Employment Down

Farm employment declined during June with a decrease in the number of family workers more than offsetting the slight increase in hired workers during the month. Total employment on farms in the United States was estimated at 12,215,000 on July 1. This was about 1 percent less than a month earlier but about 23 percent more than on April 1. On July 1 a year ago farm employment was estimated at 12,473,000 persons.

The small grain harvest was in full swing on the first of July in most Winter Wheat States, except in sections where heavy rains interfered with field work. These wet areas included parts of the western Ohio and lower Mississippi valleys, and the southwestern Wheat Belt. Rains also interfered with crop cultivation in many parts of the Cotton Belt.

Compared with a month earlier, more hired farm workers were employed on July 1 in all sections of the country except the South Atlantic and East South Central States where cotton chopping was nearly finished.

The estimated number of hired hands employed on farms on July 1 was 3,091,000. This was about 6 percent more than a month earlier and about 41 percent more than on April 1. Hired employment on July 1, however, totaled about 2 percent less than a year earlier when farm product prices were at a somewhat higher level.

The number of unpaid family workers (including farm operators) was estimated at 9,124,000 on July 1. This was about 3 percent less than a month earlier, but about 17 percent more than on April 1. A year ago approximately 9,321,0 family workers were actively engaged in the work on farms in the United States.

Continued on page 6

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service

Washington, D. C.
July 14, 1939

FARM WAGE RATES AND RELATED DATA, UNITED STATES, JULY 1, 1939,
WITH COMPARISONS

	Annual average 1910-14	April 1, 1938	July 1, 1938	April 1, 1939	July 1, 1939
FARM WAGE INDEX:					
Unadjusted	100	121	129	121	126
Adjusted for seasonality	100	123	125	123	122
FARM WAGE RATES:					
Per month, with board	$20.41	$27.60	$28.95	$27.08	$28.18
Per month, without board	29.09	33.82	37.28	35.42	36.26
Per day, with board	1.10	1.25	1.38	1.23	1.36
Per day, without board	1.43	1.55	1.63	1.53	1.59
SUPPLY OF AND DEMAND FOR FARM LABOR:					
(Percentage of normal)					
Supply	--	93.9	1/93.3	93.0	89.6
Demand	--	81.9	1/83.8	82.8	84.6
Supply as a percentage of demand	--	114.7	1/110.1	112.3	105.9
FARM EMPLOYMENT:					
(Thousands of persons)					
Family labor	--	7,844	9,321	7,773	9,124
Hired labor	--	2,287	3,152	2,187	3,091
Combined	--	10,131	12,473	9,960	12,215
RELATED INDEXES:					
Prices received by farmers 3/	100	94	95	89	3/ 89
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	100	78	74	74	71
Industrial wage rates 4/	--	204	205	211	5/210
Industrial employment 6/	--	86	82	91	5/ 90
Industrial payrolls 6/	--	75	71	85	5/ 84

1/Revised.
2/Estimates of actual employment are shown in place of number of persons employed per 100 crop-reporting farms.
3/As of the 15th of the month.
4/Average weekly earnings, New York State factories, June 1914 = 100.
5/May 1939 - latest data available.
6/Bureau of Labor Statistics indexes for manufacturing industries, revised 1923-1925 = 100.
7/June 1939 - latest data available.

Based on reports from approximately 21,163 correspondents. The data for previous quarters, by States, appear in Crops and Markets for January, April, July and October.

FARM WAGE RATES AND RELATED DATA, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS, JULY 1, 1939, WITH COMPARISONS

Geographic division	Annual average 1910-14	April 1, 1938	July 1, 1938	April 1, 1939	July 1, 1939
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
FARM WAGE RATES					
Per month with board					
New England	24.18	31.83	33.40	31.92	32.96
Middle Atlantic	22.25	29.18	30.05	28.48	29.23
East North Central	23.75	29.11	29.91	28.80	29.57
West North Central	26.32	28.35	29.47	28.21	29.05
South Atlantic	14.62	16.50	17.06	16.10	16.89
East South Central	14.71	15.78	15.98	15.97	16.47
West South Central	17.35	18.70	19.39	18.54	19.19
Mountain	32.48	34.95	37.37	35.03	37.24
Pacific	33.45	44.39	44.19	40.89	43.18
Per month without board					
New England	37.70	55.66	57.23	56.23	57.24
Middle Atlantic	33.41	46.01	46.56	45.39	45.56
East North Central	32.80	41.03	41.91	40.91	41.71
West North Central	36.86	38.93	39.82	38.41	39.19
South Atlantic	20.97	24.43	25.11	24.32	25.17
East South Central	20.80	22.73	23.05	22.95	23.57
West South Central	24.93	27.29	28.37	26.94	27.68
Mountain	46.42	51.00	53.53	51.00	53.64
Pacific	48.16	66.68	65.96	62.31	64.04
Per day with board					
New England	1.27	1.73	1.84	1.73	1.79
Middle Atlantic	1.24	1.69	1.79	1.64	1.74
East North Central	1.31	1.53	1.66	1.50	1.66
West North Central	1.46	1.39	1.56	1.38	1.57
South Atlantic	.81	.86	.89	.84	.90
East South Central	.81	.78	.80	.78	.81
West South Central	.98	.93	.99	.92	1.00
Mountain	1.50	1.63	1.74	1.61	1.75
Pacific	1.49	1.95	2.10	1.96	2.00
Per day without board					
New England	1.71	2.55	2.62	2.72	2.71
Middle Atlantic	1.63	2.32	2.37	2.26	2.33
East North Central	1.68	2.02	2.16	2.03	2.15
West North Central	1.88	1.92	2.09	1.87	2.06
South Atlantic	1.05	1.15	1.19	1.14	1.20
East South Central	1.05	1.00	1.03	1.02	1.04
West South Central	1.25	1.22	1.28	1.18	1.26
Mountain	2.05	2.19	2.31	2.22	2.34
Pacific	2.06	2.81	2.78	2.66	2.70

FARM WAGE RATES AND RELATED DATA, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS, JULY 1, 1939, WITH COMPARISONS

Geographic divisions	April 1, 1937	July 1, 1937 1/	April 1, 1938	July 1, 1938 1/	April 1, 1939	July 1, 1939
SUPPLY OF FARM LABOR (Percentage of normal)						
New England	87.0	79.1	99.9	94.9	92.0	87.5
Middle Atlantic	81.0	71.8	88.2	87.1	90.8	87.3
East North Central	83.4	77.2	96.4	93.1	94.1	90.9
West North Central	91.8	84.7	94.7	92.0	95.0	91.8
South Atlantic	82.7	78.3	89.1	88.1	88.6	84.4
East South Central	85.9	81.4	89.3	87.5	88.2	83.0
West South Central	91.0	90.1	91.7	92.1	92.1	89.4
Mountain	93.7	90.2	102.9	98.6	99.4	97.2
Pacific	96.4	92.7	104.9	104.3	104.0	101.0
DEMAND FOR FARM LABOR (Percentage of normal)						
New England	92.3	95.0	84.3	87.4	86.8	89.9
Middle Atlantic	90.8	94.4	86.3	86.7	84.3	85.3
East North Central	92.0	95.0	83.5	86.6	84.5	87.3
West North Central	79.4	86.6	79.5	84.6	80.1	81.9
South Atlantic	91.3	93.4	84.4	85.8	87.0	87.9
East South Central	90.2	90.7	84.4	83.4	86.1	89.7
West South Central	79.7	85.7	76.9	78.2	75.0	78.2
Mountain	85.2	88.8	78.4	82.4	81.4	80.3
Pacific	89.5	93.2	79.9	81.2	80.8	85.4
SUPPLY AS A PERCENTAGE OF DEMAND (Percentage of normal)						
New England	94.3	83.3	118.5	108.6	106.0	97.3
Middle Atlantic	89.2	76.1	102.2	100.5	107.7	102.3
East North Central	90.7	81.3	115.4	107.5	111.4	104.1
West North Central	115.6	97.8	119.1	108.7	118.6	112.1
South Atlantic	90.6	83.8	105.6	102.7	101.8	96.0
East South Central	95.2	89.7	105.8	104.9	102.4	92.5
West South Central	114.2	105.1	119.2	117.8	122.8	114.3
Mountain	110.0	101.6	131.2	119.7	122.1	121.0
Pacific	107.7	99.5	131.3	128.4	128.7	118.3
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons)						
Total family and hired						
New England	248	281	253	284	241	277
Middle Atlantic	586	720	605	719	594	728
East North Central	1,476	1,666	1,469	1,688	1,451	1,611
West North Central	1,575	1,959	1,590	1,942	1,582	1,905
South Atlantic	1,981	2,489	1,988	2,574	1,975	2,458
East South Central	1,639	2,048	1,665	2,010	1,603	2,027
West South Central	1,632	2,170	1,630	2,143	1,573	2,118
Mountain	442	538	404	527	415	501
Pacific	534	543	527	586	526	590

1/ Supply of and demand for farm labor, and supply-demand ratios revised.

FARM WAGE RATES AND RELATED DATA, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS, JULY 1, 1939, WITH COMPARISONS (Continued)

Geographic Division	April 1, 1937	July 1, 1937	April 1, 1938	July 1, 1938	April 1, 1939	July 1, 1939
FARM EMPLOYMENT						
Family Labor						
New England	162	176	163	175	161	172
Middle Atlantic	406	461	412	458	410	469
East North Central	1,153	1,249	1,156	1,261	1,148	1,209
West North Central	1,288	1,486	1,278	1,459	1,286	1,437
South Atlantic	1,486	1,920	1,511	1,970	1,496	1,859
East South Central	1,398	1,762	1,441	1,749	1,386	1,742
West South Central	1,322	1,621	1,298	1,633	1,268	1,601
Mountain	296	328	286	309	290	305
Pacific	311	311	299	307	328	330
Hired Labor						
New England	86	105	90	109	80	105
Middle Atlantic	180	259	193	261	184	259
East North Central	323	417	313	427	303	402
West North Central	287	473	312	483	296	468
South Atlantic	495	569	477	604	479	599
East South Central	241	286	224	261	217	285
West South Central	310	549	332	510	305	517
Mountain	146	210	118	218	125	196
Pacific	223	232	228	279	198	260

-------0--------

Farm Employment Trend Down in East South Central States

A study of employment on farms in the East South Central States shows a decrease each year since 1935. Total employment in this region averaged 1,766,000 in 1938. This was about 2 percent less than the average for 1937 and about 6 percent less than for 1935.

Total agricultural employment tended to increase in this area from 1930 to 1935 influenced largely by additions to the number of family workers employed on farms. Low farm incomes in 1932 and the drought of 1934 which affected some of these States were accompanied by declines in the number of hired hands employed in these years.

Seasonal Variation in Farm Wage Rates

Farm wage rates have a pronounced seasonal variation. They normally rise about 7 percent from the low winter level to that maintained during the summer and fall. Labor requirements usually are considerably higher on farms in the United States during the summer and fall than during the winter months. Labor requirements for the production and care of most kinds of livestock remain fairly constant throughout the year. But for crop production they are much greater during the harvest season from June to November when new crop cultivation, and many other jobs also must be performed. Thus, seasonal fluctuation in the demand for hired labor ordinarily results in considerable seasonal variation in farm wage rates.

Continued on page 11

Farm Wage Rates and Related Data, by States, July 1, 1939

State	Per month		Per day		Supply of and demand for farm labor		
	With board	Without board	With board	Without board	Supply as percentage of normal	Demand as percentage of normal	Supply as percentage or demand
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Percent	Percent	Percent
Maine	33.00	45.50	1.60	2.25	90	86	105
N. H.	31.00	56.00	2.15	3.00	77	96	80
Vt.	31.25	48.25	1.75	2.45	86	97	89
Mass.	32.00	61.75	1.95	2.85	91	88	103
R. I.	40.00	65.50	2.20	3.05	99	99	100
Conn.	35.25	65.00	1.85	2.90	84	88	95
N. Y.	30.50	46.00	1.75	2.35	86	84	102
N. J.	32.50	54.25	1.85	2.50	92	87	106
Pa.	26.75	42.00	1.70	2.25	87	86	101
Ohio	26.75	39.50	1.70	2.15	87	85	102
Ind.	27.75	37.75	1.55	1.95	92	88	105
Ill.	33.00	43.50	1.75	2.25	91	88	103
Mich.	29.00	43.50	1.70	2.25	90	89	101
Wis.	30.00	43.00	1.55	2.05	95	87	109
Minn.	32.25	43.75	1.70	2.35	95	85	112
Iowa	34.25	43.50	1.85	2.35	95	89	107
Mo.	24.00	32.00	1.20	1.50	84	87	97
N.Dak.	29.75	43.00	1.30	1.95	91	69	132
S.Dak.	29.25	41.50	1.40	2.00	90	68	132
Nebr.	27.00	36.50	1.45	1.95	93	73	127
Kans.	25.75	37.00	1.75	2.15	94	76	124
Del.	25.00	38.00	1.50	1.90	94	87	108
Md.	27.50	39.50	1.45	1.95	90	94	96
Va.	21.50	30.75	1.10	1.45	89	88	101
W.Va.	21.75	32.00	1.05	1.50	87	83	105
N.C.	16.75	24.75	.95	1.20	87	90	97
S.C.	12.50	18.75	.60	.80	80	84	95
Ga.	12.25	18.25	.70	.90	79	89	89
Fla.	15.50	26.50	.85	1.25	86	84	102
Ky.	21.25	30.00	1.00	1.30	87	89	98
Tenn.	16.75	24.50	.80	1.05	85	90	94
Ala.	14.00	19.75	.70	.90	81	91	89
Miss.	14.50	21.00	.75	.95	80	89	90
Ark.	16.50	24.25	.80	1.05	83	84	99
La.	15.25	22.75	.80	1.05	86	85	101
Okla.	21.00	30.50	1.25	1.55	91	78	117
Tex.	20.75	29.50	1.05	1.30	92	74	124
Mont.	39.50	55.75	1.90	2.60	97	81	120
Idaho	39.50	54.50	1.90	2.50	103	86	120
Wyo.	37.00	54.00	1.60	2.30	96	83	116
Colo.	30.75	46.75	1.50	2.10	96	79	122
N.Mex.	28.00	40.50	1.25	1.65	93	75	124
Ariz.	39.75	57.00	1.70	2.10	97	79	123
Utah	44.50	58.50	2.20	2.60	97	78	124
Nev.	46.00	66.75	2.00	2.80	96	80	120
Wash.	37.00	55.00	1.95	2.60	102	83	123
Oreg.	37.50	54.50	1.90	2.45	100	89	112
Calif.	46.50	69.50	2.05	2.80	101	85	119
U. S.	28.18	36.26	1.36	1.59	89.6	84.6	105.9

ces

Farm Employment: Numbers of Persons Employed on the First of Each Month, East South Central States, 1930-38 1/

Date	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
	1,000 persons	1,000 persons	1,000 persons	1,000 persons	1,000 persons	1,000 persons	1,000 persons	1,000 persons	1,000 persons
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT									
Jan. 1	1,427	1,381	1,373	1,432	1,480	1,462	1,465	1,411	1,374
Feb. 1	1,520	1,512	1,526	1,538	1,533	1,494	1,528	1,408	1,406
Mar. 1	1,597	1,566	1,623	1,571	1,542	1,630	1,620	1,502	1,476
Apr. 1	1,841	1,790	1,793	1,805	1,805	1,845	1,813	1,639	1,665
May 1	2,102	2,014	2,034	2,021	2,065	2,147	2,027	1,960	1,975
June 1	2,320	2,309	2,243	2,278	2,294	2,313	2,270	2,291	2,236
July 1	2,096	2,074	2,089	2,076	2,123	2,044	1,932	2,048	2,010
Aug. 1	1,646	1,625	1,646	1,666	1,658	1,738	1,579	1,585	1,617
Sept.1	2,040	2,031	2,006	2,081	1,957	1,983	2,054	1,962	1,928
Oct. 1	2,222	2,279	2,253	2,244	2,202	2,320	2,266	2,276	2,176
Nov. 1	1,831	1,973	1,934	1,935	1,877	2,022	1,819	1,968	1,842
Dec. 1	1,487	1,601	1,551	1,531	1,566	1,541	1,532	1,468	1,486
Average	1,844	1,846	1,839	1,848	1,842	1,878	1,825	1,793	1,766
FAMILY WORKERS									
Jan. 1	1,238	1,220	1,217	1,266	1,309	1,300	1,293	1,220	1,199
Feb. 1	1,323	1,340	1,372	1,339	1,352	1,326	1,322	1,206	1,216
Mar. 1	1,367	1,322	1,424	1,383	1,367	1,428	1,383	1,279	1,278
Apr. 1	1,570	1,525	1,564	1,577	1,574	1,630	1,554	1,398	1,441
May 1	1,786	1,733	1,767	1,782	1,817	1,897	1,754	1,675	1,712
June 1	1,958	1,978	1,954	1,984	1,987	2,003	1,938	1,944	1,931
July 1	1,789	1,797	1,827	1,837	1,845	1,784	1,703	1,762	1,749
Aug. 1	1,420	1,427	1,478	1,472	1,476	1,516	1,379	1,364	1,406
Sept.1	1,741	1,782	1,751	1,840	1,737	1,740	1,746	1,681	1,651
Oct. 1	1,879	1,934	1,969	1,960	1,950	2,023	1,907	1,954	1,857
Nov. 1	1,572	1,695	1,704	1,689	1,622	1,748	1,537	1,680	1,579
Dec. 1	1,289	1,401	1,366	1,343	1,381	1,318	1,307	1,263	1,267
Average	1,578	1,596	1,616	1,623	1,618	1,643	1,569	1,536	1,524
HIRED WORKERS									
Jan. 1	189	161	156	166	171	162	172	191	175
Feb. 1	197	172	154	199	181	168	206	202	190
Mar. 1	230	244	199	188	175	202	237	223	198
Apr. 1	271	265	229	228	231	215	259	241	224
May 1	316	281	267	239	248	250	273	285	263
June 1	362	331	289	294	307	310	332	347	305
July 1	307	277	262	239	278	260	229	286	261
Aug. 1	226	198	168	194	182	222	200	221	211
Sept.1	299	249	255	241	220	243	308	281	277
Oct. 1	343	345	292	284	252	297	359	322	319
Nov. 1	259	278	230	246	255	274	282	288	263
Dec. 1	198	200	185	188	185	223	225	205	219
Average	266	250	224	226	224	236	257	258	242

1/Data from 1930 to 1936 based on estimates from Shaw, E.E., and Hopkins, J.A., Trends in Employment in Agriculture, 1909-36, Works Progress Administration, National Research Project Report No.A-8, Philadelphia, Penna., Nov. 1938.

Index numbers of farm wage rates; adjusted and unadjusted for seasonal variation, United States, by quarters January 1923-July 1939 1/

(1910-14 = 100)

Year and month	Unadjusted	Adjusted	Year and month	Unadjusted	Adjusted
1923:			1932:		
Jan.	145	151	Jan.	108	113
Apr.	155	152	Apr.	102	104
July	177	172	July	96	93
Oct.	181	176	Oct.	91	88
1924:			1933:		
Jan.	168	175	Jan.	80	83
Apr.	169	172	Apr.	78	80
July	177	172	July	85	83
Oct.	178	173	Oct.	92	89
1925:			1934:		
Jan.	165	173	Jan.	87	91
Apr.	171	174	Apr.	94	96
July	180	175	July	97	94
Oct.	182	177	Oct.	99	96
1926:			1935:		
Jan.	166	173	Jan.	93	97
Apr.	174	178	Apr.	100	102
July	184	179	July	106	103
Oct.	185	180	Oct.	108	105
1927:			1936:		
Jan.	173	180	Jan.	100	104
Apr.	175	179	Apr.	106	108
July	183	178	July	114	111
Oct.	185	180	Oct.	116	113
1928:			1937:		
Jan.	169	176	Jan.	110	115
Apr.	174	178	Apr.	120	122
July	181	176	July	131	127
Oct.	185	180	Oct.	134	130
1929:			1938:		
Jan.	174	181	Jan.	118	123
Apr.	175	179	Apr.	121	123
July	186	181	July	129	125
Oct.	183	178	Oct.	126	122
1930:			1939		
Jan.	170	177	Jan.	117	122
Apr.	172	176	Apr.	121	123
July	173	168	July	126	122
Oct.	162	157			
1931:					
Jan.	142	148			
Apr.	136	139			
July	135	131			
Oct.	122	118			

1/Data apply to the first of the month.

Farm Labor: Supply and Demand Statistics, by Geographic Division, July 1, 1923-39 1/

SUPPLY OF FARM LABOR (PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL)

Year	New England	Middle Atlantic	East North Central	West North Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific	United States
1923	70.5	64.3	67.5	85.3	75.2	79.5	90.5	90.6	88.3	79.
1924	88.2	81.7	89.1	95.9	79.8	81.9	87.0	96.8	104.5	88.
1925	91.6	84.0	92.5	97.5	85.2	90.6	94.1	99.5	98.3	92.
1926	90.4	83.3	87.6	95.5	84.0	87.1	91.0	95.0	97.7	89.
1927	88.3	83.9	90.4	96.4	86.9	88.6	89.6	96.9	100.0	91.
1928	96.3	91.0	94.2	97.8	89.1	87.6	93.6	98.3	101.0	93.
1929	90.2	89.2	90.8	95.5	91.5	91.2	92.4	97.2	100.0	93.
1930	102.6	98.7	109.4	105.4	100.2	98.6	104.2	111.5	108.5	104.
1931	111.7	110.9	116.0	111.7	105.8	107.5	111.5	122.4	120.0	112.
1932	132.3	122.9	130.8	126.8	114.5	119.1	125.9	132.0	132.5	124.
1933	124.6	115.5	122.6	121.1	108.5	109.0	115.5	126.4	124.2	117.
1934	100.2	102.8	111.1	113.4	95.4	99.1	109.3	113.9	108.5	105.
1935	97.2	95.4	96.5	96.8	94.5	91.6	97.0	99.8	98.6	96.
1936	88.3	83.7	85.6	91.1	88.0	89.5	93.2	87.8	89.7	88.
1937	79.1	71.8	77.2	84.7	78.3	81.4	90.1	90.2	92.7	82.
1938	94.9	87.1	93.1	92.0	88.1	87.5	92.1	98.6	104.3	92.
1939	87.5	87.3	90.9	91.8	84.4	83.0	89.4	97.2	101.0	89.

DEMAND FOR FARM LABOR (PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL)

Year	New England	Middle Atlantic	East North Central	West North Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific	United States
1923	86.8	82.7	91.4	94.6	93.6	95.9	94.2	91.7	97.3	92.
1924	89.2	86.8	88.0	90.9	90.2	91.1	95.3	91.5	83.1	90.
1925	91.7	89.5	88.6	94.3	91.2	90.2	83.8	90.0	95.2	90.
1926	92.7	90.6	91.7	91.4	88.8	91.3	95.1	95.6	96.3	92.
1927	91.1	88.0	90.4	92.0	89.3	88.6	87.5	90.6	93.5	90.
1928	92.4	86.9	87.6	89.9	89.1	92.9	77.2	92.3	92.4	87.
1929	92.3	90.8	91.6	92.3	89.2	90.3	90.7	92.9	87.8	90.
1930	90.5	86.2	80.6	83.9	81.8	80.3	75.8	81.5	85.1	81.
1931	82.1	80.6	75.9	72.9	75.6	72.1	66.1	69.7	75.5	73.
1932	73.8	72.9	64.1	58.8	65.1	59.2	54.3	60.2	66.2	62.
1933	75.8	74.5	69.4	60.6	69.1	64.2	56.9	63.5	69.2	66.
1934	80.9	78.3	70.4	59.7	77.6	73.2	61.1	65.8	77.2	70.
1935	85.5	82.3	85.8	78.7	81.9	78.9	74.7	78.8	84.5	80.
1936	90.4	88.6	89.8	81.8	84.1	75.5	77.5	83.1	91.4	84.
1937	95.0	94.4	95.0	86.6	93.4	90.7	85.7	88.8	93.2	90.
1938	87.4	86.7	86.6	84.6	85.8	83.4	78.2	82.4	81.2	83.
1939	89.9	85.3	87.3	81.9	87.9	89.7	78.2	80.3	85.4	84.

Continued

Farm Labor: Supply and Demand Statistics, by Geographic Divisions, July 1, 1923-39 1/ (Continued)

SUPPLY AS A PERCENTAGE OF DEMAND (PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL)

Year	New England	Middle Atlantic	East North Central	West North Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific	United States
1923	81.2	77.8	73.9	90.2	80.3	82.9	96.1	98.8	90.8	85.3
1924	98.9	94.1	101.2	105.5	88.5	89.9	91.3	105.8	125.8	98.3
1925	99.9	93.9	104.4	103.2	93.4	100.4	112.3	110.6	103.3	102.2
1926	97.5	91.9	95.5	104.5	94.6	95.4	95.7	99.4	101.5	97.4
1927	96.9	95.3	100.0	104.8	97.3	100.0	102.4	107.0	107.0	101.3
1928	104.2	104.7	107.5	108.8	100.0	94.3	121.2	106.5	109.3	106.7
1929	96.7	98.2	99.1	103.5	102.6	101.0	101.9	104.6	113.9	102.4
1930	113.4	114.5	135.7	125.6	122.5	122.8	137.5	136.8	127.5	127.6
1931	136.1	137.6	152.8	153.2	139.9	149.1	168.7	175.6	158.9	152.2
1932	179.3	168.6	204.1	215.6	175.9	201.2	231.9	219.3	200.2	199.2
1933	164.4	155.0	176.7	199.8	157.0	169.8	203.0	199.1	179.5	177.5
1934	123.9	131.3	157.8	189.9	122.9	135.4	178.9	173.1	140.5	149.6
1935	113.7	115.9	112.5	123.0	115.4	116.1	129.9	126.6	116.7	118.9
1936	97.7	94.5	95.3	111.4	104.6	118.5	120.3	105.7	98.1	105.7
1937	83.3	76.1	81.3	97.8	83.8	89.7	105.1	101.6	99.5	91.3
1938	108.6	100.5	107.5	108.7	102.7	104.9	117.8	119.7	128.4	110.1
1939	97.3	102.3	104.1	112.1	96.0	92.5	114.3	121.0	118.3	105.9

1/Revised for dates prior to July 1, 1939.

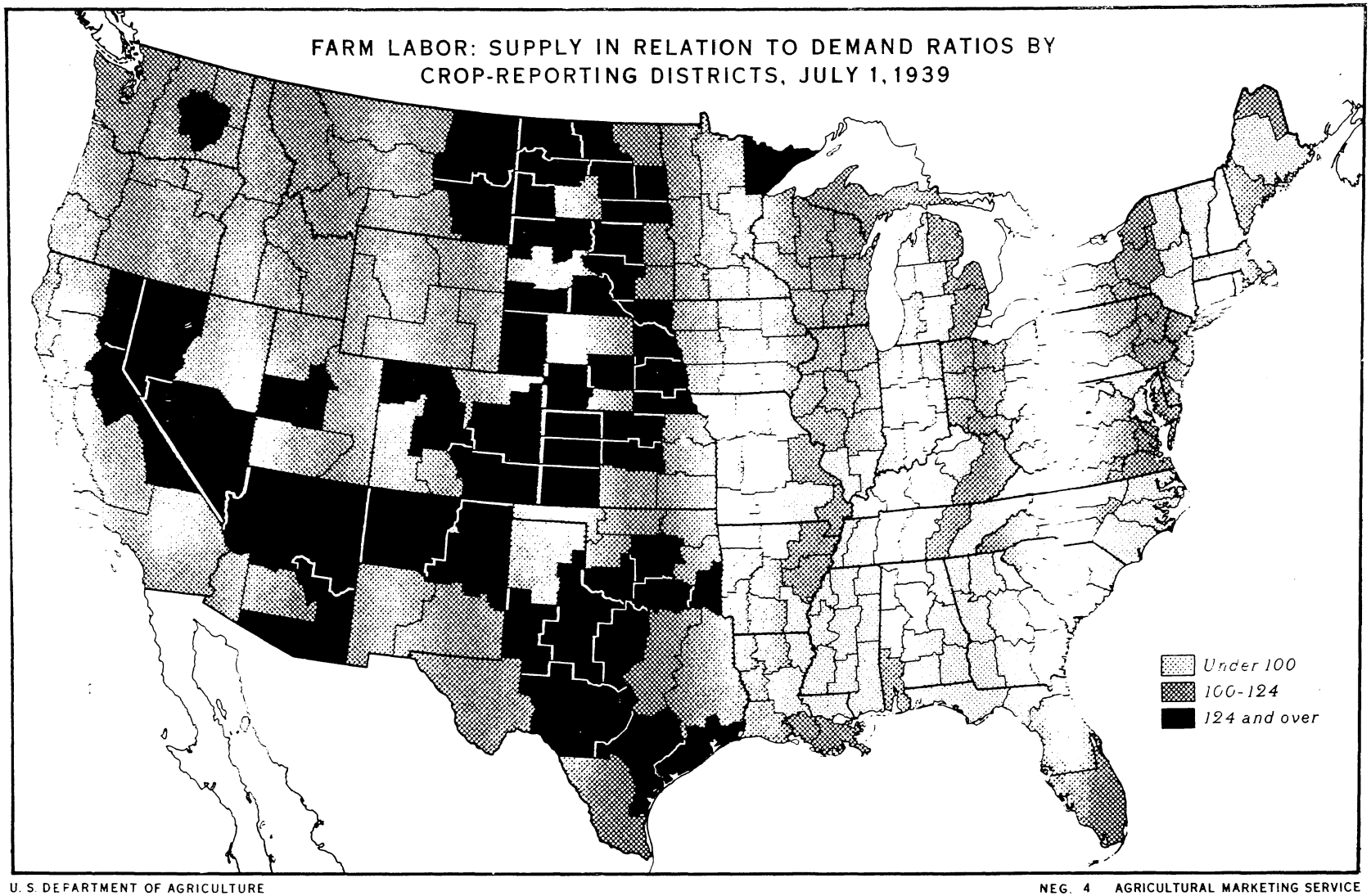
---O---

The new series of index numbers of farm wage rates has been adjusted for normal seasonal variation. These adjusted figures, together with the unadjusted index numbers are shown from January 1923 to July 1939 in the table on page 9 of this report. Seasonal adjustment factors were determined on the basis of the average relationship of the quarterly indexes to the annual averages during the past 16 years. The factors so obtained were as follows: January, 96; April, 98; July, 103; October 103. This relationship of the quarterly indexes to the annual averages appears to have been fairly stable, and examination of the series revealing no appreciable trend in these ratios since 1923. Adjustments for seasonal variation were made by dividing indexes of farm wage rates for each quarter by the seasonal adjustment factor for the corresponding date.

Farm Labor Supply and Demand Ratios Revised

Included in this issue are revised figures on the supply of and the demand for farm labor, and supply-demand ratios as of July 1, from 1923 to date. Similar series as of April 1 were published in the Farm Labor Report for April of this year. In all of these series the number of hired workers was used as a weighting factor in place of the 1920 Census of Occupation data previously employed for this purpose in all months.

During the past 17 years, reports from farmers indicate that there has seldom been an actual shortage of farm labor on July 1 for the country as a whole. The supply demand ratio on July 1 was below 100 only in 1923, 1924, 1926, and again in 1937. From 1926 to 1932 the ratio increased steadily. At the peak in 1932, when the ratio reached 199 percent, labor was very plentiful but jobs for hired workers were very scarce because of the extremely low level of farm income. The July 1 ratio declined steadily from 1932 to 1937 when it reached 91. It increased sharply in 1938 but again declined slightly in 1939 as employment in other industries picked up.



FOR THE UNITED STATES AS A WHOLE THE SUPPLY OF FARM LABOR ON JULY 1 EXCEEDED THE DEMAND. THIS SURPLUS WAS GREATEST IN THE WESTERN HALF OF THE COUNTRY WITH THE RATIO OF SUPPLY TO DEMAND OVER 125 PERCENT FOR MANY DISTRICTS. IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN FARMING AREAS THE RATIO AVERAGED ONLY SLIGHTLY ABOVE 100 PERCENT, WHILE FOR MOST OF THE SOUTH AND A LARGE PART OF NEW ENGLAND IT WAS LESS THAN 100.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Acreage of Wheat, Oats and Corn for Grain, Harvested by Specified Methods, and Custom Harvest and Labor Rates, 1938

Crop reporters of the Department of Agriculture were circularized on February 1, 1939 for information relative to the methods of harvesting wheat and oats for grain; acreage of corn for grain harvested with a picker; custom rates for threshing and "combining" wheat and oats and for harvesting corn with a picker; labor cost per bushel for husking corn by hand, and the amount of money paid and number of meals furnished hired day labor for harvesting small grains.

The inquiry was in response to requests from various sources for detailed information relative to the use of the combine-harvester-thresher, and corn picker, and the cost of services and labor hired by farmers for harvesting their principal grain crops. It is the first time that crop reporters furnished information relative to grain-harvesting methods and custom rates for harvesting corn with a mechanical corn picker, but 4 years earlier they had furnished information relative to custom threshing rates, custom rates for combining, and the labor cost per bushel of husking corn by hand.

Crop reporters were asked to furnish information applicable to their immediate locality and the data apply to crops harvested in 1938 only. Climatic conditions, insect infestation, crop yields, and prices received by farmers for their crops all affect to some extent harvesting methods and rates paid for hired services and labor. For example, in some of the Great Plans States, because of grasshopper infestations in the summer of 1938, the use of the combine-harvester-thresher probably was curtailed. Low yields in some States were reflected in relatively high charges per bushel for threshing small grain and husking corn. On the other hand, low yields tend to be reflected in low charges per acre for harvesting corn with a picker and for harvesting small grains with a combine-harvester-thresher. Low yields and relatively low prices result in low crop values per acre, and operators of machines for hire must of necessity consider this aspect, as well as the cost of operating the machine, in arriving at a custom rate for the use of their machines.

Methods of Harvesting Grain Crops

The results of the survey indicate that about 49 percent of the wheat acreage in 1938 was harvested with a "combine," about 47 percent with a binder, and about 4 percent with the header, cradle, etc. The "combine" was used in all States producing wheat that were included in the survey, but its use was most pronounced along the Pacific Coast and in the hard winter wheat States of the Southern Great Plains (tables 1 and 2). The binder was also used in all wheat-producing States. It was used extensively in the major spring wheat States, the Corn Belt, and the Eastern States.

Continued on page 17

Table 1.- Acreage of wheat, oats and corn for grain harvested by specified methods, by States, 1938 1/

State	Wheat acreage harvested with			Oat acreage harvested with			Corn acreage harvested with mechanical picker
	Combine	Binder	All other methods	Combine	Binder	All other methods	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
N.Y.	11	87	2	5	86	9	1
N.J.	24	73	3	18	70	12	2
Pa.	6	92	2	4	91	5	3
Ohio	22	77	1	14	85	1	12
Ind.	30	69	1	20	78	2	22
Ill.	44	55	1	22	77	1	43
Mich.	16	84	2/	9	89	2	5
Wis.	3	96	1	3	95	2	5
Minn.	6	94	2/	3	96	1	35
Iowa	28	72	2/	8	91	1	35
Mo.	22	76	2	9	82	9	2
N.Dak.	23	70	7	6	89	5	5
S.Dak.	19	71	10	2	96	2	18
Nebr.	51	48	1	6	92	2	4
Kans.	82	16	2	18	80	2	1
Del.	11	89	2/	5	95	2/	2/
Md.	3	96	1	2	92	6	2/
Va.	3	83	14	4	60	36	2/
W.Va.	1	58	41	2	35	63	2/
N.C.	11	67	22	12	44	44	2/
S.C.	8	62	30	7	53	40	2/
Ga.	11	45	44	7	41	52	2/
Ky.	8	85	7	3	62	35	2
Tenn.	6	85	9	5	71	24	-
Ala.	22	35	43	10	18	72	-
Miss.	-	-	-	23	19	58	2/
Ark.	12	68	20	4	41	55	-
La.	-	-	-	26	22	52	2/
Okla.	70	28	2	10	84	6	-
Tex.	82	18	2/	18	73	9	-
Mont.	55	40	5	10	81	9	-
Idaho	40	57	3	25	73	2	2/
Wyo.	32	60	8	7	80	13	2
Colo.	44	41	15	7	86	7	4
N.Mex.	58	37	5	15	74	11	2/
Ariz.	93	7	2/	22	78	-	-
Utah	41	56	3	6	94	2/	-
Nev.	63	24	13	47	53	-	-
Wash.	83	14	3	35	59	6	-
Oreg.	78	21	1	37	61	2	2/
Calif.	95	4	1	3/	3/	3/	3/
U.S. 4/	49	47	4	10	83	7	13

1/No information relative to the above harvesting practices was obtained in the New England States or Florida. 2/Less than one-half of one percent. 3/No information relative to these practices was obtained. 4/United States average based on States included in the study. The reporting States had more than 99.9 percent of the United States harvested wheat acreage and about 99.0 percent of the harvested acreage of oats and corn for grain in 1938.

Table 2.- Acreage of wheat, oats and corn for grain harvested by specified methods, by geographic divisions, 1938 1/

Division	Wheat acreage harvested with			Oat acreage harvested with			Corn acreage harvested with mechanical picker
	Combine	Binder	All other methods	Combine	Binder	All other methods	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
N.Atl.	8	90	2	5	88	7	3
E.N.Cent.	30	69	1	14	84	2	28
W.N.Cent.	48	48	4	7	91	2	19
So.Atl.	6	76	18	8	48	44	2/
E.S.Cent.	7	85	8	10	39	51	2/
W.S.Cent.	75	24	1	12	60	28	2/
Mount.	50	44	6	11	81	8	3
Pacific	84	14	2	37	60	3	2/
U.S.	49	47	4	10	83	7	13

1/ Averages for States reporting - See table 1.
2/ Less than one-half percent of average.

Table 3.- Wheat, oats and corn: Custom harvest and labor rates, by geographic divisions, 1938

Division	Custom rate per acre for combining		Custom rate per bushel for threshing		Custom rate per acre for mechanical corn picker	Custom rate per bushel for husking corn by hand from		Amount paid and meals furnished hired day labor for harvesting small grains	
	Wheat	Oats	Wheat	Oats		Standing: Stalk	Shock	Dollars	Meals
	Dollars	Dollars	Cents	Cents	Dollars	Cents	Cents	Dollars	Number
N.Eng.	-	-	9.2	7.0	-	-	8.3	2.20	1.3
M.Atl.	3.30	3.20	6.2	4.5	3.70	4.8	5.7	2.20	1.6
E.N.Cent.	2.30	2.25	5.6	3.3	2.20	4.4	6.1	2.20	1.8
W.N.Cent.	1.90	2.20	6.8	3.3	2.00	4.4	4.7	2.45	2.7
So.Atl.1/	2.80	2.65	6.4	4.8	2.80	4.2	5.1	1.50	1.6
E.S.Cent.	2.55	2.40	8.1	5.8	2.10	3.5	4.5	1.30	1.2
W.S.Cent.	1.55	2.10	8.3	4.7	-	4.7	5.6	1.75	1.9
Mount.	1.95	2.45	6.7	4.7	2.35	5.9	6.2	2.50	2.5
Pacific1/	2.35	3.15	6.8	4.7	-	6.7	7.3	3.10	1.9
U.S. 1/	1.90	2.30	6.6	3.6	2.10	4.3	5.8	2.30	2.3

1/Averages for States reporting - See table 4.

Table 4.- Wheat, oats and corn: Custom harvest and labor rates, by States, 1938

State	Custom rate per acre for combining		Custom rate per bushel for threshing		Custom rate per acre for mechanical corn picker	Custom rate per bushel for husking corn by hand from		Amount paid and meals furnished hired day labor for harvesting small grains	
	Wheat	Oats	Wheat	Oats		Standing stalk	Shock		Meal
	Dollars	Dollars	Cents	Cents	Dollars	Cents	Cents	Dollars	Number
Me.	1/	1/	9.2	7.6	1/	-	6.7	2.10	1.3
N.H.	1/	1/	-	8.8	1/	-	7.5	2.65	.8
Vt.	1/	1/	-	5.5	1/	-	7.6	2.20	1.4
Mass.	1/	1/	-	7.0	1/	-	8.2	2.85	.3
R.I.	1/	1/	-	8.5	1/	-	8.0	2.50	.8
Conn.	1/	1/	-	8.5	1/	-	9.0	2.90	1.1
N.Y.	3.15	3.15	6.3	4.8	4.30	5.8	6.1	2.25	1.4
N.J.	3.95	3.85	10.3	6.9	4.60	5.8	7.4	2.90	.9
Pa.	3.20	3.15	5.9	4.2	3.60	4.5	5.4	2.10	1.8
Ohio	2.50	2.50	5.8	3.7	2.50	4.8	6.5	2.15	1.6
Ind.	2.20	2.15	5.8	3.5	2.25	4.5	6.7	2.25	1.2
Ill.	2.20	2.10	5.3	2.7	2.15	4.2	5.9	2.45	1.6
Mich.	2.65	2.65	5.3	3.8	2.75	4.4	5.4	2.10	2.0
Wis.	2.65	2.65	5.1	3.4	2.40	4.7	5.3	1.90	2.6
Minn.	2.20	2.20	5.3	3.1	1.95	4.9	5.8	2.55	3.3
Iowa	2.35	2.35	5.2	2.7	2.05	4.2	5.8	2.45	2.2
Mo.	2.30	2.25	6.1	3.6	1.70	3.8	5.6	1.75	1.3
N.Dak.	1.80	1.90	9.0	5.4	1.95	6.7	8.1	2.35	3.4
S.Dak.	1.70	1.95	6.2	3.5	1.65	5.9	7.5	2.30	2.9
Nebr.	2.05	2.10	5.5	3.5	1.85	4.5	6.5	2.40	2.5
Kans.	1.85	2.05	6.6	4.2	1.95	4.0	5.4	2.75	2.4
Del.	2.75	2.75	7.1	5.0	-	4.1	6.3	2.15	1.6
Md.	2.70	3.00	6.1	4.5	-	4.2	7.0	2.05	2.2
Va.	2.85	3.20	5.9	4.4	-	4.6	5.0	1.55	1.8
W.Va.	2.80	2.75	6.2	4.6	-	4.3	5.0	1.45	1.9
N.C.	2.90	2.60	6.1	4.1	-	4.2	4.5	1.40	1.6
S.C.	2.80	2.75	8.7	4.8	-	3.7	3.8	1.20	.9
Ga.	2.65	2.50	8.9	5.3	-	4.0	5.0	1.20	1.2
Fla.	1/	1/	1/	1/	1/	4.9	-	-	-
Ky.	2.55	2.35	8.3	5.1	2.05	3.4	4.7	1.50	1.1
Tenn.	2.55	2.65	7.9	5.3	-	3.2	4.1	1.15	1.2
Ala.	2.30	2.25	9.3	5.9	-	4.0	-	1.05	1.4
Miss.	-	2.45	-	7.1	-	3.5	-	.90	1.1
Ark.	1.90	1.75	7.6	4.7	-	4.1	4.6	1.20	1.1
La.	-	3.90	-	6.1	-	4.5	-	1.10	1.2
Okla.	1.70	1.85	8.0	4.4	-	4.1	5.7	1.95	2.1
Tex.	1.40	2.10	9.3	4.9	-	4.1	5.7	1.60	1.7
Mont.	1.80	1.85	7.3	4.7	-	8.7	9.0	2.65	3.6
Idaho	2.60	2.75	5.8	4.6	-	5.8	8.0	2.55	2.2
Wyo.	2.00	2.35	5.8	4.2	1.60	6.8	7.0	2.10	2.2
Colo.	1.95	2.75	6.5	5.0	2.40	5.3	6.0	2.20	1.9
N.Mex.	1.40	2.60	7.9	5.5	-	5.5	6.0	1.75	2.1
Ariz.	3.15	2.85	10.0	7.0	-	-	-	2.40	1.0
Utah	2.40	2.80	6.7	5.5	-	7.0	-	2.60	1.1
Nev.	4.10	3.75	10.0	7.0	-	-	-	2.45	2.0
Wash.	2.40	2.75	7.3	4.9	-	7.5	-	3.25	2.4
Oreg.	2.25	3.40	5.7	4.4	-	7.5	-	2.60	1.9
Calif.	2.35	1/	9.0	1/	-	1/	1/	3.35	1.9
U.S. 2/	1.90	2.30	6.6	3.6	2.10	4.3	5.8	2.30	2.3

1/No information available. 2/Average for States reporting.

Farmers use the "combine" only to a limited extent for harvesting oats. or the country as a whole only about 10 percent of the acreage was "combined," 3 percent cut with a binder, and 7 percent harvested by all other methods. The se of the combine was most pronounced in the Pacific Northwest, but even here it as used less than the binder. Farmers usually prefer oat straw over wheat straw nd straw from other small grains, and in order to obtain sufficient straw for heir needs a relatively high percentage of the oats is harvested with a binder.

Use of the mechanical corn picker is known to have been rapidly increasing n recent years. The picker is used largely in the Corn Belt, especially in llinois, Iowa, and Minnesota where hybrid corns are planted most extensively. or the country as a whole only about 13 percent of the acreage of corn harvested or grain in 1938 was harvested with a picker. Owing to the high corn yields in he States using the picker to the greatest extent, it is probable that about 20 ercent of the total production of corn for grain was harvested with a picker.

Custom Rates for Harvesting

Custom rates for harvesting wheat with a combine-harvester-thresher varied rom about $4 per acre to about $1.40 per acre in the different States. The higher ates were reported in some of the Western States, where much of the wheat is rown under irrigation, and in the Middle Atlantic States (table 3 and 4). In the tates with the high "combine rates," fields usually tend to be of small size and heat yields and wage rates are materially above the average of the country. ustom rates per acre for "combining" were relatively low in the Great Plains, specially in the Southern Great Plains States. Factors contributing to the low ustom rates in these areas were the large level fields, low wheat yields, and small eturns from wheat. Low returns from wheat which resulted from low yields and rel- tively low prices were reflected in custon rates as low as $1 per acre for comb- ning" in some instances. In most States the custom-combine rate for "combining" ats varied but little from the wheat rate.

Custom rates for threshing wheat and oats varied appreciably in different tates. Many factors contributed to this, but wage rates, yields per acre, and mount of grain available for stationary threshers were probably of chief im- ortance. In some States, especially the South Atlantic and East South Central tates, reports show that some farmers gave from 5 to 10 bushels of grain for each 00 bushels threshed as toll for threshing. In computing the threshing charge in hese States the money value of the grain paid as toll was used as a threshing ate. In most States the rate per bushel for threshing oats was usually from 30 o 45 percent below the wheat rate.

Custon rates for harvesting corn with a corn picker varied in different tates from less than $2 to more than $4 per acre. In the States where the corn icker was used most extensively, the State average was usually around $2 to $2.50 er acre. Custom rates for the corn picker usually follow fairly closely custon ates for harvesting small grains with a combine-harvester-thresher in the same tate.

In most of the Corn Belt States and to a less extent in other States an ppreciable part of the corn crop is harvested by contract labor at a specified ate per bushel. In the principal corn-producing States, the rate for husking corn

 Continued on page 18

from the standing stalk by hand usually ranged from 4 to 5 cents a bushel. Rates in other States varied appreciably, and were highest in States where day wage rates tend to be high, but were also above the average in most States that had low corn yields. Rates for husking from the shock were usually from 25 to 40 percent higher than were rates for husking from the standing stalk. Spreads between the rates tended to narrow when corn yields were below average.

Money wages paid hired labor for harvesting small grains averaged around $2.30 per day for the country as a whole. In addition to the money, harvest workers received an average of 2.3 meals per day. The money wage rate ranged from less than $1 per day to more than $3 per day in different States. Except in the South, however, wage rates were generally in excess of $2 per day. Number of meals including lunches furnished per day ranged from three or more in North Dakota, Minnesota, and Montana to less than one meal in some of the Eastern States. Harvest labor in some States, especially in the major wheat States, is rather highly specialized. In these States highly skilled labor such as tractor and combine operators usually receive wages appreciably above the average