

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service

FARM LABOR REPORT

Washington, D. C. August 15, 1940

FARM EMPLOYMENT SHOWS
DECLINE DURING JULY

Total farm employment on August 1 was estimated at 10,867,000 persons by the Agricultural Marketing Service -- a decline of 1,170,000 workers from the July 1 estimate. On August 1 a year ago farm employment totaled 11,058,000 persons, including both hired and family labor. The decline in farm employment during July was slightly more than the usual seasonal drop for that period, placing the index of total farm employment at 90 percent of the 1910-14 average, compared with 100 percent a month ago, and 92 on August 1 last year.

With the exception of the New England and Middle Atlantic States, declines in farm employment were general throughout the country. The sharpest drop occurred in the South Atlantic and South Central regions with farm activity at a mid-summer point prior to cotton picking time.

The August 1 estimate of family labor (including farm operators) was placed at 7,986,000 workers. This was 87 percent of the 1910-14 average -- a decline of 3 points from July 1 and 3 points under a year ago when the index stood at 90. The number of family workers on farms was less than a year ago in all sections except the Middle Atlantic group of States.

Numbers of hired workers, however, remained above the levels of a year ago. The decline during July was somewhat less than usual. At 100, the August 1 index of hired farm labor was 8 points lower than a month earlier, but 2 points above a year ago. In terms of persons employed, the August 1 estimate was 2,881,000 persons compared with 3,112,000 a month earlier and 2,845,000 workers in August of last year. The generally late season is reflected in the increased numbers of hired workers during July in the North Central and North Atlantic States.

Farm employment, August 1, 1940, with comparisons

FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES (1910-14 = 100)

	June 1, 1939	July 1, 1939	Aug. 1, 1939	June 1, 1940	July 1, 1940	Aug. 1, 1940
Total -						
Unadjusted.....	103	101	92	99	100	90
Adjusted for seasonality..	89	89	88	85	88	87
Family labor -						
Unadjusted.....	103	100	90	100	97	87
Adjusted for seasonality..	90	90	88	87	87	85
Hired labor -						
Unadjusted.....	101	107	98	96	108	100
Adjusted for seasonality..	85	88	88	81	89	90

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons)

United States.....	12,372	12,215	11,058	11,896	12,037	10,867
New England.....	269	277	294	268	273	288
Middle Atlantic.....	628	728	684	625	709	738
East North Central.....	1,572	1,611	1,568	1,560	1,600	1,591
West North Central.....	1,820	1,905	1,886	1,810	1,911	1,886
South Atlantic.....	2,633	2,458	2,199	2,398	2,423	2,080
East South Central.....	2,201	2,027	1,558	2,072	1,912	1,542
West South Central.....	2,200	2,118	1,703	2,139	2,085	1,676
Mountain.....	483	501	508	479	537	501
Pacific.....	566	590	658	545	587	565

FAMILY WORKERS (Thousands of persons)

United States.....	9,443	9,124	8,213	9,131	8,925	7,986
New England.....	166	172	183	166	170	169
Middle Atlantic.....	418	469	451	413	461	463
East North Central.....	1,208	1,209	1,181	1,192	1,216	1,175
West North Central.....	1,431	1,437	1,397	1,407	1,419	1,381
South Atlantic.....	1,983	1,859	1,688	1,834	1,846	1,571
East South Central.....	1,880	1,742	1,351	1,799	1,643	1,341
West South Central.....	1,725	1,601	1,322	1,714	1,563	1,288
Mountain.....	303	305	299	293	303	293
Pacific.....	329	330	341	313	304	305

HIRED WORKERS (Thousands of persons)

United States.....	2,929	3,091	2,845	2,765	3,112	2,881
New England.....	103	105	111	102	103	119
Middle Atlantic.....	210	259	233	212	248	275
East North Central.....	364	402	387	368	384	416
West North Central.....	389	468	489	403	492	505
South Atlantic.....	650	509	511	564	577	509
East South Central.....	321	285	207	273	269	201
West South Central.....	475	517	381	425	522	388
Mountain.....	180	196	209	186	234	208
Pacific.....	237	260	317	232	283	260

Based on reports from 21,828 farmers.