



# 2023 October Ag Labor Survey Training

Below you will find direct links to the PowerPoint presentation, and survey information sheet, for NASS's October Ag Labor Survey.

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# NASDA Survey Training

## Agricultural Labor Survey – October 2023 (AG LABOR)



**United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service**



Workforce Performance and Staff Development Section  
September 2023



# Survey Information

- Questionnaires:
  - Mailed October 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Web option and instructions in mail package.
- Release:
  - *Farm Labor Report*
  - November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 3PM (eastern)

# 2022 October Ag Labor Data

- October Reference Week:
  - 785,000 workers on farms
  - Average Wage: \$17.72 per hour
  - Average Hours worked: 41.8
- July Reference Week:
  - 797,000 workers on farms
  - Average Wage: \$17.63
  - Average Hours worked: 41.1

# Screening/Initial Questions

- Name, address, and phone verification.
- In-business/ag activity screening questions.
  - Grow Crops?
  - Livestock or Poultry?
  - Sell any Ag products?
  - Receive government agricultural payments?
  - More than 19 acres idle cropland or 99 acres pasture?
- Who makes the day-to-day decisions?
  - Individual, Hired Manager, or Partners?
    - Verify name, address, and phone number of any partners.

# Paid Workers

- Survey asks for hired worker data for two separate weeks. Questions are the same, only the reference period changes.

October 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>

July 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>

# Paid Workers for October

- Did this operation have anyone on the payroll to do agricultural work the week of October 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>?
  - Include:
    - Workers directly hired and paid by the operation, regardless of method of pay.
    - Part-time workers, paid family members, and hired managers.
    - Workers on paid leave.
  - Exclude:
    - Contract or custom workers.
    - Workers primarily engaged in retail sales or value-added work
      - Value-added work: the material alteration of products – production of jam, wine, cheese, cider, etc.

# Paid Workers for October

- How many workers did you have on the payroll to do agricultural work the week of October 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>?
- How many workers on the payroll that week will be paid for 150 days or more in 2023?



# Paid Workers for October

- Fill out the table for all paid workers during the reference week.
- Report workers who fall under the same worker code on a single line.
- Report each worker only once.
- For salaried employees, report the standard amount of hours worked on your operation

# Paid Workers for October

- Recording paid workers:
  - Select the appropriate worker code from the list.
  - Record number of paid workers
  - Record total hours worked by all paid workers in that category
  - Record total gross wages paid to all workers in that category

# Worker Type Categories (And Subcategories)

## MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS:

**Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers:** Plan, direct, or coordinate the management or operation of farms, ranches, greenhouses, aquacultural operations, nurseries, tree farms, or other agricultural establishments.

**First-Line Supervisors of Farm Workers:** Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of agricultural, aquacultural, and related workers.

## LIVESTOCK WORKERS:

**Graders and Sorters – Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals:** Grade, sort, or classify unprocessed food and other agricultural products by size, weight, color, or condition

**Hand Packers and Packers – Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals:** Pack or package by hand a wide variety of products and materials.

**Ag Equipment Operators – Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals:** drive and control heavy farm machinery while attending to live farm, ranch, or aquacultural animals and in harvest of unprocessed animal products

**Farmworkers – Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals:** Attend to live farm animals.

**All Other Livestock Workers:** All agricultural workers working with farm, ranch, and aquacultural animals or products not included in previous codes.



# Worker Type Categories (And Subcategories)

## CROP, NURSERY, and GREENHOUSE:

**Graders and Sorters - Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse Products:** grade, sort, or classify crop

**Hand Packers and Packagers - Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse Products:** Pack or package by hand a variety of products

**Ag Equipment Operators – Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse:** Drive and control farm equipment while Attending to crops

**Farmworkers - Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse:** manually plant, cultivate, and harvest crops

**All Other Field Workers:** All agricultural workers working with crops, nursery, or greenhouse products not included in previous codes

## AGRICULTURAL INSPECTORS:

**Agricultural Inspectors:** Inspect agricultural commodities, processing equipment and facilities, and aquacultural operations, to ensure compliance with regulations and laws governing health, quality, and safety.

## OTHER WORKERS:

**Any Other Worker Not Listed Above:** Including, but not limited to, mechanics, shop workers, truck drivers, accountants, bookkeepers, office workers. Excluding contract & custom workers, retail workers, and “value-added” workers.



# Paid Workers

- **Note:** For field and livestock workers, the type of work they were ***hired to do*** determines the category of work they go in
  - For example: A worker may normally work with livestock, but during the reference week, he helped harvest hay. He is considered a livestock worker.
- If unsure or if operator has additional remarks, leave a note

# Paid Workers for July

- After the October reference week, survey asks the exact same series of questions BUT reference date is July 9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>.
  - All includes/excludes are the same as October reference week.

# Other Ag Labor Information

- During 2023 what was or will be the largest number of hired workers on the payroll on **any one day**?
  - Include all workers directly hired and paid by the operation.
  - Exclude contract or custom workers
- During 2023 did or will the operation have any H-2A temporary agricultural workers on the payroll?

# H-2A Temporary Ag Worker Program

- Program allows U.S. employers to hire foreign nationals to fill temporary agriculture jobs.
- To qualify, an employer must:
  - Offer a job that is temporary or seasonal in nature.
  - Demonstrate that there are not sufficient U.S. workers who are able, willing, qualified, and available to do the temporary work.
  - Show that the employment of H-2A workers will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers.



# Value of Sales

- Total **gross value of sales** for 2022. Report by general range of sales
  - If no sales in 2022, or sales <\$1,000:
    - Record all 2023 crops, land uses, and livestock or poultry now on the total acres operated
- Type of operation category
  - Which category represents the largest portion of gross income from the operation
    - 16 Categories (Grains, Fruit, Hogs, Aquaculture, etc)
    - Can only choose *one*

# Watch For:

- Total workers not equal to sum of categories
- Sum of workers paid is not equal to total number of workers reported
- High/low wages
- High/low hours worked
- Paid supervisors out of line with number of other workers
- Hours incorrectly reported
- Livestock operations without livestock workers
  - Stock operations will usually have workers year-round
  - Crop operations may have more seasonal workers

# Be Aware Of:

- Workers are commonly misreported by type. In many regions, farmer workers usually fall into the “Equipment Operators” category and not the “Farmworkers” category as they are likely operating a tractor or some other large piece of equipment and not manually planting or harvesting by hand.
- Nursery Operations: A number of greenhouse workers may get reported as “Other,” when really they should be included in “Field Workers.” Landscape workers, florists, etc. and non-ag income, should be excluded from the data. Nurseries should report only what is produced on the operation as gross value of sales.
- Supervisors: You need to watch out for operations paying their CEOs and upper management large salaries when they are not involved in the day-to-day decision making process of the operation. We want to collect data on supervisors who are making the day-to-day decisions on the farm, not someone who is in a corporate office away from the day-to-day decision making.

# Out of Business? No Paid Workers?

- ‘No’ to all screening questions?
  - Has operation been sold/rented/turned over?
- ‘Yes’ to screening questions but ‘No’ to paid workers on operation? Asks for:
  - Largest # of workers on any one day in 2023?
  - Any H-2A Workers in 2023?
  - Total Gross Value of Sales in 2022?
  - Type of Operation?

# Conclusion

- Make notes for anything odd or unusual
- Any questions, comments?
- Practice exercises



# 2023 Ag Labor Survey Information

**Survey Purpose:** To determine the types and number of farm workers employed, and wages paid.

Farm employment and wage statistics are used by federal, state, and local government agencies, farm organizations, and employers for many purposes, including planning, recruitment and placement of workers, and policy-making. The agricultural wage rate is a component of the Parity Index and is used in the establishment of minimum wage rates for domestic and foreign agricultural workers.

**What IS Agricultural Work:** (what should be included)?

Agricultural work includes any activity performed on a farm or ranch in connection with the production and delivery of agricultural products, up to the point of first sale. Agricultural work also includes the maintenance of buildings and machinery, bookkeeping, and supervision of employees if these activities are directly related to the production of agricultural products. However, exclude any workers if their job isn't directly related to farming, such as "value-added" workers (ex: cashiers working retail sales in a store on the farm).



# 2023 Ag Labor Survey Information

- Legislators and USDA use farm worker data in making farm policy decisions.
  - Agencies responsible for administering farm labor recruitment and placement programs use the statistics in their planning and evaluation.
- Labor data are used in the formulation of farm productivity indexes.
  - The inclusion of wage rate data in the Parity Index (Index of Prices Paid by Farmers) is required by law.
- Farm worker data are an important component of the agricultural sector in the Gross Domestic Product.

# 2023 Ag Labor Survey Information

- **Watch for:**
- -Extreme hours per week or wages per hour. Low hours could be indicative of misreported contract labor. Leave notes verifying any unusually high values.
- -Misreporting of data. Be sure the operator understands we are asking for TOTALS
- -Livestock operations should have livestock workers reported.
- -Workers reported as “Jack of All Trades”: In these cases, try to get as much detail as possible about the exact work performed, in order for office staff to code the workers accurately
- -‘Other’ workers reported. HQ looks at these closely, should be very few legitimate Other workers reported.
- -It might be necessary to explain the type of data we’re asking for on this survey to the respondent. On larger operations the first person to answer the phone might not have the hours and wages information we need for this survey

