

NASDA Survey Training

Agricultural Labor Survey – October 2025 (AG LABOR)



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



Workforce Performance and Staff Development Section
October 2025



Ag Labor Survey Overview

- 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.

Survey Information

- Project Code: **956 - Agricultural Labor**
- Questionnaires:
 - Mailed September 25th
- Calling:
 - Around a month, starting in Mid-October
 - Blaise:
 - AG LABOR - 2025/10/01
- Release:
 - *Farm Labor Report*
 - November 26th

2024 October Ag Labor Data

- October Reference Week:
 - 797,000 workers on farms
 - Average Wage: \$19.11 per hour
 - Average Hours worked: 41.4
- July Reference Week:
 - 808,000 workers on farms
 - Average Wage: \$18.95
 - Average Hours worked: 40.6

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 12th – 18th

July 6th – 12th

Paid Workers for October

- Did this operation have anyone on the payroll to do agricultural work the week of October 12th – 18th?
 - 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 12th-18th?
- How many workers on the payroll that week will be paid for 150 days or more in 2025?

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

CROP, NURSERY AND GREENHOUSE WORKERS

Agricultural Equipment Operators - Crop, Nursery and Greenhouse:

Drive and control farm equipment to till soil and to plant, cultivate, and harvest crops.

Farmworkers - Crop, Nursery and Greenhouse:

Manually plant, cultivate, and harvest vegetables, fruits, nuts, horticultural specialties, field crops, Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops. Use hand tools, such as shovels, trowels, hoes, tampers, pruning hooks, shears, and knives. Duties may include tilling soil and applying fertilizers; transplanting, weeding, thinning, or pruning crops; applying pesticides; or cleaning, grading, sorting, packing, and loading harvested products. May construct trellises, repair fences and farm buildings, or participate in irrigation activities.

Graders And Sorters - Crop, Nursery and Greenhouse Products:

Grade, sort, or classify agricultural crops by size, weight, color or condition.

Hand Packers And Packagers - Crop, Nursery and Greenhouse Products:

Pack or package by hand a wide variety of products and materials.

All Other Field Workers: Specify:

All agricultural workers working with crops, nursery or greenhouse products not included in codes 11-14.

LIVESTOCK WORKERS

Agricultural Equipment Operators – Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals: Drive and control heavy farm equipment 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, ranch, or aquacultural animals including cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses and other equines, poultry, finfish, shellfish, and bees. Duties may include feeding, watering, herding, milking, grazing, castrating, branding, de-beaking, weighing, catching, and loading animals. May conduct simple exams; maintain records; assist in births; and administer medications, vaccinations, or insecticides. May clean and maintain animal housing areas.

Graders And Sorters - Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animal Products:

Grade, sort, or classify unprocessed food and other agricultural products by size, weight, color, or condition.

Hand Packers And Packagers - Farm, Ranch and Aquacultural Animal Products:

Pack or package by hand a wide variety of products and materials.

All Other Livestock Workers: Specify:

All agricultural workers working with farm, ranch and aquacultural animals or products not included in codes 20 – 23.

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.

OTHER WORKERS

Agricultural Inspectors:

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

Animal Breeders:

Select and breed animals according to their genealogy, characteristics, and offspring.

Pesticide Handlers and Sprayers:

Mix or apply pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, or insecticides through sprays, dusts, vapors, soil incorporation, or chemical application to all crops including nursery and greenhouse products and facilities, and livestock, and livestock facilities. Usually requires specific training and state or federal certification. Excludes pilots who dust or spray crops from aircraft.

Any Other Worker Not Listed Above: Specify:

Including, but not limited to, mechanics, shop workers, truck drivers, accountants, bookkeepers and office workers. Excluding contract and 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 6th-12th.
 - All includes/excludes are the same as October reference week.

Other Ag Labor Information

- During 2025 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 2025 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 2024. Report by general range of sales
 - If no sales in 2024, or sales <\$1,000:
 - Record all 2025 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 2025?
 - Any H-2A Workers in 2025?
 - Total Gross Value of Sales in 2024?
 - Type of Operation?

Conclusion

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

