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the HIRED FARM WORKING FORCE

of 1956

Agricultural Marketing Service - Washington, D. C.

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This report is the latest of a series begun in 1945 on the basis of enumerative surveys made under the direction of Louis J. Ducoff and Margaret Jarman Hagood, Farm Population and Rural Life Branch. Information was obtained for the Agricultural Marketing Service by the Bureau of the Census.

April 1958

THE HIRED FARM WORKING FORCE OF 1956*

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SUMMARY

More than 3½ million persons did some farm work for wages in the United States in 1956, and 2 million worked 25 days or more at farm wage work. Although the total hired farm working force in 1956 was up about half a million from 1954, the number of workers with 25 days or more of hired farm work was essentially unchanged from 1954, the last year that the survey was made.

Farm wage workers who did any farm wage work during the year,
by sex, United States, 1945-56

Year	All farm wage workers			Workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work during the year			Workers with less than 25 days of farm wage work during the year		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.
1945	3,212	2,375	837	1,965	1,576	389	1,247	799	448
1946	2,770	2,120	650	1,953	1,584	369	817	536	281
1947	3,394	2,587	807	2,215	1,864	351	1,179	723	456
1948	3,752	2,820	932	2,502	2,036	466	1,250	784	466
1949	4,140	3,021	1,119	2,510	2,001	509	1,630	1,020	610
1950	4,342	3,221	1,121	-	-	-	-	-	-
1951	3,274	2,392	882	2,156	1,718	438	1,118	674	444
1952	2,980	2,218	762	1,972	1,558	414	1,008	660	348
1954	3,009	2,237	772	1,908	1,544	364	1,101	693	408
1956	3,575	2,525	1,050	2,078	1,553	525	1,497	972	525

All data on the hired farm working force from the Current Population Survey relate to persons 14 years of age and over in the civilian non-institutional population at or near the end of the year.

* Report prepared under the direction of Margaret Jarman Hagood, Chief, Farm Population and Rural Life Branch. The assistance of Dorothy Anne Fisher of this Branch is acknowledged.

There were more short-term seasonal workers in 1956 than in 1954, including larger proportions of females, young males, and nonwhite workers. Average days of farm wage work per worker and the proportion of workers employed for 250 days or more at farm wage work were lower in 1956 than for most previous years surveyed. About half of the persons who had 25 days or more of farm wage work reported such work as their chief activity in 1956.

Total cash wage income from all sources earned by farm workers was higher in 1956 than for any earlier year. Annual cash earnings from farm wage work were the same in 1956 as in 1954 but such earnings were higher for males than in earlier years. Average daily farm wages of males rose substantially while wages of female farm workers declined between 1954 and 1956. Fifteen percent of the males and 1 percent of female farm wage workers made \$2,000 or more from hired farm work in 1956. About 25 percent of all persons who did 25 days or more of hired farm work also had earnings from nonfarm wage work, but the average duration of nonfarm work among hired farm workers was the lowest reported since 1945, when this survey began.

About 427,000 persons did migratory farm work at some time during 1956, slightly more than in 1954. Eight percent of the migratory workers had 250 days or more of farm wage work in 1956; about three out of five migratory workers reported farm wage work as their chief activity during the year. In addition, there were nearly 400,000 foreign agricultural workers employed in the United States in 1956 who had left the country by December, when the survey was made.

Among migratory workers annual cash earnings from farm wages were higher in 1956 than in 1954 though average days of farm wage work declined. Migratory workers averaged higher daily earnings from nonfarm wage work, and worked more days at nonfarm employment during the year, than nonmigrants. Total earnings of migrants from both farm and nonfarm wage work were higher than those of nonmigrants.

About three-fourths of the migrants who did 25 days or more of hired farm work traveled 75 miles or more, 35 percent traveled over 600 miles, and 18 percent traveled more than 1,000 miles from their homes to do farm wage work during 1956. Workers who traveled the greatest distances to do farm wage work tended to have the highest daily and annual cash farm earnings.

Information on employment by months was obtained for the first time in 1956. It revealed that about half of the entire

hired farm working force were employed for some time during each month from June through October. A little over a fifth of the hired farm working force were working on farms for wages in January 1956. Half of the total days of work on farms for wages in 1956 were in the 5 months from June through October. Migrant workers showed greater fluctuations in seasonal employment than nonmigrants. In July 1956, 60 percent of all persons who did some migratory farm work during the year were working on farms for wages, but in January 1956 only 22 percent of the migrants worked at farm wage work. Peak employment of children 14 and 15 years of age was reached in August--during that month 51 percent of all hired farm workers in that age group were employed on farms for pay. Only 5 percent of the 14- and 15-year-olds were working for wages on farms in the months of January and February; about 3 percent had nonfarm wage jobs in the early months of the year.

About 53 percent of all hired farm workers were eligible for Social Security coverage on the basis of their farm wage earnings in 1956. About 300,000 of those eligible had less than \$150 in farm wages and qualified on the basis of having 20 days or more of farm work for wages earned on a time basis.

SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF THE HIRED FARM WORKING FORCE

The estimated $3\frac{1}{2}$ million persons 14 years of age and older who worked on U. S. farms for wages in 1956 included all persons who worked at least one day at farm wage work during the year. Among these were many diverse groups of workers, ranging from the many who worked only at the peak of the harvest season to the few at the other extreme who did some farm work every day in the year. About 2 million persons 14 years of age and over worked 25 days or more on farms for wages in 1956, including almost 300,000 who worked 300 days or more at farm wage work during the year. The approximately 2 million persons who worked 25 days or more for farm wages in 1956 represented 58 percent of the entire hired farm working force. They accounted for 95 percent of the total days of farm wage labor and 93 percent of the total cash earnings from farm wages reported for the year. An additional 1.5 million persons 14 years of age and over worked for farm wages for less than 25 days in 1956. These groups differ widely in experience, earnings, and general characteristics as well as in the degree of their attachment to the agricultural labor force. Both for this reason and for convenience in presenting the data, information on the hired farm working force is given under two broad groupings: (1) Persons who worked 25 days or more at farm wage work during the year and (2) persons who worked less than 25 days for farm wages during the year. Except where noted, data in the following

analysis refer to persons in the hired farm working force who did 25 days or more of farm wage work in the specified year.

The ratio of males to females at about 4 to 1 was relatively stable during earlier survey years. In 1956 the ratio of males to females declined to 3 to 1. The change in sex ratio was due entirely to a substantial increase in number of female workers; the number of male hired farm workers remained about the same (table 1). The proportion of nonwhite workers among those who did 25 days or more of farm wage work increased from 30 percent in 1954 to 33 percent in 1956. Negro workers made up about nine-tenths of all nonwhites in 1954 and 96 percent in 1956.

Table 1. - Farm wage workers with 25 or more days of farm wage work in the year, by sex, United States, 1945-49, 1951, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Sex	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1951	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>1,965</u>	<u>1,953</u>	<u>2,215</u>	<u>2,502</u>	<u>2,510</u>	<u>2,156</u>	<u>1,972</u>	<u>1,908</u>	<u>2,078</u>
Male	1,576	1,584	1,864	2,036	2,001	1,718	1,558	1,544	1,553
Female	389	369	351	466	509	438	414	364	525
	Percentage distribution								
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Male	80	81	84	81	80	80	79	81	75
Female	20	19	16	19	20	20	21	19	25

Age composition of the hired farm working force has remained essentially unchanged in the survey years. About 80 percent of both sexes were in the age group 18 through 64 (table 2), but a smaller proportion of females than males was found in the 65 and over age group.

Table 2. - Percentage distribution of male and female workers who did 25 days or more of hired farm work, by age groups, United States, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Age	Male			Female		
	1952	1954	1956	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
14-17 years	17	14	17	18	19	18
18-34	42	41	39	37	44	39
35-64	37	41	39	44	36	41
65 and over	4	4	5	1	1	2

The "regular" hired farm working force--workers who spend 150 days (about 6 months) or more at farm wage work--comprised only a little over a third of all workers reporting 25 days or more of work on farms for pay in 1956 (table 3). Year-round hired farm workers (those who reported 250 days or more of farm wage work) represented about a fifth of the total in 1956 compared with about a fourth for most previous years.

Table 3. - Distribution of farm wage workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, by duration of farm wage work during year, United States, 1945-49, 1951, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Days of farm wage work	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1951	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>
Total	1,965	1,953	2,215	2,502	2,510	2,156	1,972	1,908	2,078
Less than 150 days	1,164	1,089	1,182	1,501	1,543	1,304	1,252	1,074	1,329
150 days and over	801	864	1,033	1,001	967	852	720	834	749
	Percentage distribution								
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Less than 150 days	59	56	53	60	61	60	63	56	64
150 days and over	41	44	47	40	39	40	37	44	36

The increase in the size of the hired farm working force between 1954 and 1956 occurred primarily among short-term seasonal workers (those who did less than 25 days of farm wage work) and among females, young males, and nonwhite workers in the group that worked 25 days or more at farm wage work. The number of persons working 25 days or more increased about 9 percent, and the aggregate number of days at farm wage work for all persons in this group increased only 4 percent between 1954 and 1956.

CHIEF ACTIVITY DURING THE YEAR

Only about 1 in 3 hired farm workers doing 25 days or more of farm wage work spent 6 months or more at farm work for wages in 1956. About 1 in 5 put in the equivalent of 50 five-day work weeks (250 days or more) at farm work for wages during the year. Less than 1 in 7 put in 300 days or more of farm wage work. Since the majority of all hired farm workers spend the largest share of their time doing something other than farm wage work, an investigation of the workers' chief activity during the year will reveal more clearly the varied pattern of their activities. For our purposes, "chief activity" is defined as the activity at which the hired farm worker spent the most time during the year.

Work for wages on farms was the chief activity of just half of all persons reporting 25 days or more of farm wage work in 1956. This is about the same proportion as that found in all earlier survey years except 1947 (table 4). Evidence of the growing importance of housewives, students, and elderly persons in the hired farm labor force is revealed in the increased proportion of farm wage workers who are out of the labor force most of the year. In 1947 about a fifth of all persons who worked 25 days or more on farms for pay were classified as out of the labor force the greater part of the year; in 1952, 1954, and 1956 the proportion so classified has been about a third. On the other hand, the proportion who work chiefly at nonfarm jobs during the year has held fairly steady in the years surveyed, varying between 8 and 11 percent. The proportion of farm wage workers who were chiefly engaged in such activities as nonfarm work, keeping house, or going to school is, of course, much greater among the workers who reported less than 25 days of farm wage work than among those who reported 25 days or more.

EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS OF HIRED FARM WORKERS

At farm work.—The changing employment pattern among farm wage workers, revealed in trends in chief activity, is borne out by data on average duration of hired farm employment. Farm wage workers who

Table 4. - Distribution of farm wage workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work in the year, by chief activity during year, United States, 1947, 1949, 1951, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Chief activity of workers during year	Farm wage workers					
	1947	1949	1951	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>
Total	2,215	2,510	2,156	1,972	1,908	2,078
Farm work	1,563	1,622	1,292	1,078	1,166	1,223
Farm wage work	1,325	1,262	981	884	979	1,028
Without nonfarm work	1,014	978	768	674	759	825
With nonfarm work	311	284	213	210	220	203
Other farm work	238	360	311	194	187	195
Nonfarm work	245	252	245	222	173	160
Not in the labor force	407	636	<u>1/619</u>	<u>1/672</u>	<u>1/569</u>	<u>1/695</u>
Keeping house	128	299	267	288	205	285
Attending school	195	258	287	284	243	314
Other	84	79	<u>1/65</u>	<u>1/100</u>	<u>1/121</u>	<u>1/95</u>
	Percentage of farm wage workers					
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Farm work	71	65	60	55	61	59
Farm wage work	60	50	46	45	51	50
Without nonfarm work	46	39	36	34	40	40
With nonfarm work	14	11	10	11	11	10
Other farm work	11	15	14	10	10	9
Nonfarm work	11	10	11	11	9	8
Not in the labor force	18	25	29	34	30	33
Keeping house	5	12	13	15	11	14
Attending school	9	10	13	14	13	15
Other	4	3	3	5	6	4

1/ Includes for 1951, 8,000, for 1952, 18,000, for 1954, 49,000, and for 1956, 22,000 persons who reported looking for work was their chief activity. The comparable figures for 1947 and 1949 not available.

worked at least 25 days averaged 136 days of farm wage work in 1956, one of the lowest averages reported in this series (table 5). The decline from an average of 142 days reported for 1954 was brought about largely by an increase in proportion of women. Female farm workers tend to work for shorter periods of time than males and their group includes a larger proportion of marginal or short-term workers. Among hired farm laborers, average days worked by male and female workers considered separately were virtually unchanged from 1954.

Annual cash earnings from farm work averaged \$799 in 1956, the same as in 1954. Earnings of male workers at \$974 were up, however, continuing the general trend since 1947, when earnings of farm wage workers who worked 25 days or more during the year first became available. Farm wages reported in this survey are cash earnings only and do not include the value of perquisites sometimes furnished to hired workers such as board, lodging, milk, and eggs. The rise between 1947 and 1956 in annual cash earnings from farm wage work for male workers exceeded the rise in the cost of living. Adjusted on the basis of a 17 percent change between 1947 and 1956 in the AMS index of prices paid by farmers for items used in family living, ¹/_{the real annual farm wage earnings of male farm workers rose 28 percent between those years, or an average of a little over 3 percent per year.}

Figures on annual earnings do not take into account variations in average duration of employment. A different view of the change in cash earnings for the period 1947-1956 is obtained by computing an average daily wage from total days of work and annual cash earnings. Male farm workers' average cash daily wages rose 63 percent from 1947 to 1956, or 39 percent after adjusting for the increase in cost of living. Female farm workers have fared much worse in annual earnings and average daily earnings. After rising to \$4.05 in 1952 and 1954, the average daily farm wage earnings for female workers dropped to \$3.75 in 1956, the same rate reported in 1947.

Because time spent at farm work during the year varies greatly among farm wage workers, earnings also vary considerably. Workers who put in 250 or more days on farms for wages averaged \$1,911 in 1956 (table 6). They averaged 18 days more and earned an average of \$187 more at farm wage work in 1956 than in 1954. Length of time at farm wage work appeared to affect average daily earnings very little. Persons working 250 days or more at farm work for pay averaged only 30 cents a day more than those working 25 to 149 days on farms. Moreover, male hired workers who did between 25 and 150 days of farm

¹/_{Agricultural Prices, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, Supplement No. 1, October 1957, p. 45.}

Table 5. - Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work by farm workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, by sex, United States, 1947, 1949, 1951, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Year and sex	Farm and nonfarm		Farm			Nonfarm		
	Days worked	Wages earned	Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
				Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}
	Number	Dollars	Number	Dollars	Dollars	Number	Dollars	Dollars
1947								
Total	183	734	156	596	3.80	27	138	5.05
Male	198	803	170	648	3.80	28	155	5.50
Female	106	362	85	319	3.75	21	43	2.05
1949								
Total	166	702	140	557	3.95	26	145	5.65
Male	183	810	157	643	4.10	26	167	6.40
Female	98	280	74	219	2.95	24	61	2.55
1951								
Total	174	879	146	683	4.70	28	196	7.00
Male	197	1,035	165	797	4.85	32	238	7.55
Female	84	268	70	238	3.40	14	30	2.10
1952								
Total	162	908	132	684	5.15	30	224	7.45
Male	187	1,078	152	804	5.30	35	274	7.75
Female	67	264	57	232	4.05	10	32	3.15
1954								
Total	168	981	142	799	5.65	26	182	7.10
Male	185	1,124	158	916	5.80	27	208	7.70
Female	96	380	76	307	4.05	20	73	3.70
1956								
Total	159	989	136	799	5.85	23	190	8.30
Male	184	1,215	157	974	6.20	27	241	9.05
Female	86	320	74	279	3.75	12	41	3.35

^{1/} Rounded to nearest 5 cents.

Table 6. - Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for farm wage workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, by sex of worker and duration of farm wage work, United States, 1956

Sex of worker and duration of farm wage work	Number of farm wage workers	Farm and nonfarm				Farm			Nonfarm		
		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		
			Per year	Per day ^{1/} worked		Per year	Per day ^{1/} worked		Per year	Per day ^{1/} worked	
			Thousands	Number		Dollars	Dollars		Number	Dollars	Dollars
Total	2,078	159	989	6.20	136	799	5.85	23	190	8.30	
25 - 149 days	1,330	94	622	6.55	63	361	5.70	31	261	8.35	
150 - 249	305	211	1,239	5.90	192	1,090	5.70	19	149	7.95	
250 and over	443	318	1,917	6.05	317	1,911	6.00	1 ^{2/}	6	9.65	
Male	1,553	184	1,215	6.60	157	974	6.20	27	241	9.05	
25 - 149 days	856	106	828	7.75	65	447	6.85	41	381	9.20	
150 - 249	265	214	1,295	6.05	193	1,125	5.85	21	170	8.10	
250 and over	432	319	1,932	6.05	318	1,926	6.05	1 ^{2/}	6	9.70	
Female	525	86	320	3.70	74	279	3.75	12	41	3.35	
25 - 149 days	474	73	251	3.45	60	206	3.45	13	45	3.40	
150 - 249	40	188	857	4.55	184	850	4.65	4	7	1.80	
250 and over	11	297	1,349	4.55	296	1,346	4.55	1 ^{2/}	3	8.00	

^{1/} Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

^{2/} Less than 1 day.

work fared better than the year-round workers on a daily rate basis--\$6.85 compared with \$6.05. Reasons for the higher average daily earnings of shorter-term workers may be found by examining the typical wage structure on U. S. farms. Year-round hired workers, usually paid by the week or month, are more likely than the short-term or seasonal farm workers to receive perquisites in addition to a cash wage. On the other hand, seasonal workers are more likely to be paid on an hourly or piece-rate basis and seldom receive perquisites in addition to their cash earnings. Earnings reported in this study reflect only the cash wages paid to farm workers.

Despite slightly higher average earnings, the proportion of hired workers earning at least \$600 from farm work was lower in 1956 than in 1954 (table 7). Eleven percent of the hired farm working force earned \$2,000 or more in cash farm wages in 1956 compared with 13 percent who earned that much in 1954. Over 70 percent received less than \$1,000 in farm wages in 1956; the proportion making less than \$400 from such work increased from 45 to 50 percent compared with 1954. The lower farm wage earnings reported in 1956 chiefly reflect the shorter average duration of hired farm employment in 1956. In addition, they reflect the increased number of women, youths, and nonwhites in the 1956 hired farm working force, groups that generally receive lower than average wage rates.

Table 7. - Percentage distribution of farm wage workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work by wages earned at farm wage work, by sex, United States, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Cash farm wages earned	All workers			Male			Female		
	1952	1954	1956	1952	1954	1956	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Under \$100	10	8	11	7	6	6	24	16	22
100 - 199	20	15	17	15	11	13	38	33	30
200 - 399	20	22	22	19	18	19	24	34	29
400 - 599	11	10	10	13	11	11	5	5	9
600 - 999	15	14	12	16	16	14	7	7	5
1,000 - 1,999	17	18	17	21	22	22	2	4	4
2,000 and over	7	13	11	9	16	15	-	1	1

At nonfarm work.—About a fourth of all persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work also did some nonfarm work for wages (tables 8 and 9). The proportion of hired workers doing some nonfarm work has not changed materially in the years for which information is available. But the 23 days of nonfarm work reported in 1956 was the lowest average since the series began (table 5). Yet average earnings from nonfarm wages were higher than they were in most past years, and average daily earnings from nonfarm work were higher than those in any previous year. Average daily nonfarm earnings of male and female farm workers each increased about 64 percent during the same period, though female earnings from nonfarm work averaged far less than nonfarm earnings of male hired workers.

Total wage income of hired workers.—Average wage income of farm workers from all sources in 1956 was the highest reported for any year covered by these surveys, \$989 earned in 159 days of farm and nonfarm wage work. Despite the longer period of nonfarm work and greater income from nonfarm wages earned by farm workers with 25 to 149 days of farm wage work, year-round farm workers earned about three times as much in combined farm and nonfarm wage income. Most of the year-round farm workers' wage income, of course, was earned on farms. Combined wage income of male farm workers was about the same in 1956 and 1954 but earnings of female farm workers from farm and nonfarm wages were down, as both days of work and average daily earnings declined from 1954 to 1956. Total wage income of farm wage workers rose about 35 percent between 1947 and 1956. The increase from 1949 to 1956 amounted to more than 40 percent. But these increases are rather modest after adjusting for the rise in cost of living. With this adjustment, increase in real income from wages was about 15 percent from 1947 levels and about 20 percent from 1949 levels.

The distribution of farm wage workers by total farm and nonfarm income shown in table 10 indicates only slight shifts in proportion of workers earning various amounts in the years 1952, 1954, and 1956. Almost half of the male workers, but only 4 percent of the female workers, earned over \$1,000 from farm and nonfarm wages in 1956.

Chief activity during the year.—Classifying hired workers by their chief activity during the year provides a means of comparing the average earnings and duration of employment of regular hired workers with other persons in the total labor force whose primary activity is elsewhere but who work on farms for wages sometime during the year. Table 11 gives average days of employment and earnings for the principal labor force classifications in which hired farm workers are found.

Table 8. - Average days worked and wages earned at nonfarm wage work by farm wage workers who did any nonfarm wage work by duration of farm wage work, United States, 1949, 1951, 1954, and 1956

Year	Total farm wage workers who did any nonfarm wage work			Persons with 25 days or more of farm wage work who did any nonfarm wage work			Persons with less than 25 days of farm wage work who did any nonfarm wage work		
	Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
		Per year	Per day ^{1/}		Per year	Per day ^{1/}		Per year	Per day ^{1/}
Number	Dol.	Dol.	Number	Dol.	Dol.	Number	Dol.	Dol.	
1949	91	538	5.90	86	487	5.65	98	606	6.20
1951	99	725	7.30	103	716	6.95	93	743	8.00
1954	100	712	7.15	97	691	7.10	103	742	7.15
1956	94	811	8.65	90	747	8.30	97	877	9.00

^{1/} Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

Table 9. - Farm wage workers who had no nonfarm wage work, United States, 1949, 1951, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Year	Number of persons who did farm wage work only		
	Total	25 days or more	Less than 25 days
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>
1949	2,886	1,795	1,091
1951	2,410	1,596	814
1952		1,403	
1954	2,145	1,404	741
1956	2,544	1,549	994

Table 10. - Percentage distribution of farm wage workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work by wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work, by sex, United States, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Cash wage income	All workers			Male			Female		
	1952	1954	1956	1952	1954	1956	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Under \$100	7	6	8	5	4	5	18	13	19
100 - 199	17	12	14	11	8	10	38	28	29
200 - 399	17	18	19	13	14	15	28	34	30
400 - 599	8	9	10	9	10	9	5	6	11
600 - 999	16	14	12	18	15	14	7	11	7
1,000 - 1,399	11	11	11	14	12	13	3	6	2
1,400 - 1,999	11	12	10	14	15	13	1	1	1
2,000 and over	13	18	16	16	22	21	-	1	1

About half of all workers who worked 25 days or more at farm wage work reported such work as their chief activity in 1956. Average farm wage earnings for this group, shown in table 12, have risen steadily since 1949, the first year these data were available. Average days worked for farm wages, however, have declined in recent years. Both farm wage earnings and combined farm and nonfarm wage earnings for this group are consistently higher than average cash earnings for all workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work shown in table 5. Workers whose chief activity was farm wage work averaged \$1,421, of which \$1,333 was earned in farm wages and \$88 from nonfarm wages.

Of the 1 million whose chief activity in 1956 was working for wages on farms, 825,000 had no nonfarm work (table 4). The percentage in this group with earnings from nonfarm work declined slightly from 23 percent to less than 20 percent between 1947 and 1956. Farm wage workers in this group who had no nonfarm earnings had higher average annual incomes from wages than those who also did some nonfarm wage work, but they worked about 35 more days to earn their additional wage income. The average daily farm wage of hired workers who also did nonfarm work was higher than the average for hired workers who had no nonfarm wage earnings.

Table 11. - Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, by chief activity of worker, United States, 1956

Chief activity	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
	Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>
Total	159	989	6.20	136	799	5.85	23	190	8.30
In the labor force	204	1,356	6.65	175	1,090	6.25	29	266	9.05
Farm work	201	1,265	6.30	190	1,179	6.20	11	86	8.00
Farm wage work	226	1,421	6.30	215	1,333	6.20	11	88	8.10
Without non-farm work	233	1,435	6.15	233	1,435	6.15	-	-	-
With nonfarm work	198	1,364	6.90	143	918	6.40	55	446	8.10
Other farm work	67	446	6.60	57	369	6.45	10	77	7.50
Nonfarm work	233	2,053	8.80	62	414	6.70	171	1,639	9.55
Not in the labor force	70	259	3.70	60	219	3.65	10	40	3.90
Keeping house	65	220	3.40	59	207	3.50	6	13	2.05
Attending school	72	262	3.65	61	218	3.55	11	44	4.05
Other	77	363	4.75	58	260	4.50	19	103	5.50

^{1/} Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

Table 12. - Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for workers whose chief activity during the year was farm wage work, United States, 1949, 1951, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Year	Farm and nonfarm		Farm		Nonfarm	
	Days worked	Wages earned	Days worked	Wages earned	Days worked	Wages earned
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dollars</u>
1949	225	925	211	824	14	101
1951	249	1,230	236	1,142	13	88
1952	244	1,331	227	1,188	17	143
1954	232	1,384	219	1,274	13	110
1956	226	1,421	215	1,333	11	88

Farm workers whose chief activity was nonfarm work averaged more days of wage work of all kinds during the year than any other labor force group. This resulted from a 16-day gain in average days of nonfarm work from 1954 to 1956. Total wage earnings of hired workers whose chief activity was nonfarm work were higher than those for any other group. As was to be expected, the greater part of their combined wage earnings was earned at nonfarm work, but a substantial amount represented earnings from farm work for wages. Average daily earnings from farm wages of this group were higher than those of any other group.

Reasons for the higher daily farm wage rates for those labor force groups who also did nonfarm work for wages during the year may be found in certain characteristics of the farm wage structure and farm labor markets: (1) As pointed out earlier, year-round hired workers normally are paid a weekly or monthly cash wage, and this usually works out to a lower daily rate than that for seasonal farm workers who are generally paid by the hour or by the piece, and (2) farm wage rates tend to be higher in areas in which alternative employment opportunities are more plentiful. ^{2/} Note that a similar tendency is suggested in the average daily wages of hired workers whose chief activity was farm wage work. Hired workers in that group

^{2/} See Geographic Differentials of Agricultural Wages in the United States, Weatherford, Willis D., Jr., Harvard Univ. Press 1957; and Area Variations in the Wages of Agricultural Labor in the United States, Maitland, Sheridan T. and Fisher, Dorothy Anne, U. S. Department of Agriculture Technical Bulletin No. 1177, 1957.

who also had some nonfarm wage work earned a higher daily wage at farm work than did those without nonfarm wage work--\$6.40 compared with \$6.15 (table 11). Eliminating the marginal workers who were out of the labor force the greater part of the year, the rest of the hired farm working force averaged \$1,090 in cash earnings from farm wage work for the year, or \$6.25 per day worked.

Earnings of hired workers who had no income from self-employment.--The information on labor force activity given in table 4 indicates that a substantial number of hired workers also operate their own farms. Some farm wage workers also derive income from other types of self-employment. Many of the hired workers who did at least 25 days or more of farm work for wages also had income from operation of their own farms or other types of self-employment in 1956. When hired workers with self-employment are separated from the hired farm workers who depend for a livelihood solely on wages or salaries (table 13), the average earnings from farm wages of the latter are shown to be substantially higher, although still very low in terms of the 1956 cost of living. Hired farm workers without self-employment averaged \$1,289 in farm wages in 1956, over \$500 more than in 1954. Earnings from both farm and nonfarm wages for this group were higher in 1956 than in 1954, despite nonfarm wage earnings of less than half the amount received in 1954.

A breakdown by residence at the time of the survey of hired workers whose sole income was from wages is given in table 13. Workers are further classified as to whether they had both farm and nonfarm wage work or worked for farm wages only during the year. Urban residents worked fewer days but earned more than either of the other residence groups at hired farm work during the year. Rural nonfarm residents (persons who live in the open country but not a farm) also averaged more than farm residents in farm wage earnings for the year and on a daily basis. Persons who lived in towns or cities at the end of the year averaged about \$1,600 in combined earnings from farm and nonfarm wage earnings during 1956. Their annual and daily earnings from farm wage work were also comparatively higher than the earnings of other residence groups. Further speculation on these findings would be of doubtful value because of the smallness of the urban residence sample.

The difference between farm wage earnings of white and nonwhite workers was marked, reflecting in part the regional variations in farm wage rates. Most nonwhite farm workers are in the South--farm rates are generally lower in the South than in other sections of the country. White farm workers averaged considerably more days of farm wage work and higher earnings than nonwhite workers (table 14). But the discrepancy between earnings of whites and nonwhites was far greater for nonfarm earnings than it was for farm wage earnings. White workers' average daily earnings from nonfarm wages were

Table 13. - Average days worked and cash wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for workers who did 25 days or more of farm wage work and who had no income from self-employment, by residence, United States, December 1956

Residence and type of wage work	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
	Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}
	Number	Dollars	Dollars	Number	Dollars	Dollars	Number	Dollars	Dollars
All residence groups	225	1,372	6.10	214	1,289	6.05	11	83	7.70
Farm	231	1,404	6.10	231	1,404	6.10			
Farm and nonfarm	199	1,245	6.25	145	827	5.70	54	418	7.70
Rural-farm	234	1,306	5.60	225	1,241	5.50	9	65	7.45
Farm	241	1,324	5.50	241	1,324	5.50			
Farm and nonfarm	200	1,218	6.10	149	838	5.65	51	379	7.45
Rural-nonfarm	214	1,393	6.50	203	1,308	6.45	11	85	7.60
Farm	217	1,429	6.60	217	1,429	6.60			
Farm and nonfarm	202	1,237	6.15	142	783	5.50	60	454	7.60
Urban	205	1,634	7.95	186	1,474	7.90	19	160	8.30
Farm	211	1,802	8.55	211	1,802	8.55			
Farm and nonfarm	195	1,318	6.75	139	858	6.15	56	460	8.30

^{1/} Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

Table 14. - Farm wage workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work, by race and sex of worker, United States, 1956

Race and sex of worker	Number of workers	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
			Per Year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per Year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per Year	Per day worked ^{1/}
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dol.</u>	<u>Dol.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dol.</u>	<u>Dol.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Dol.</u>	<u>Dol.</u>
Total	2,078	159	989	6.20	136	799	5.85	23	190	8.30
White	1,393	169	1,195	7.05	144	954	6.60	25	241	9.80
Male	1,171	186	1,349	7.25	158	1,073	6.75	28	276	9.85
Female	222	77	378	4.95	70	325	4.65	7	53	7.85
Nonwhite	685	140	572	4.10	120	484	4.00	20	88	4.50
Male	382	176	805	4.55	154	673	4.35	22	132	5.95
Female	303	94	278	2.95	78	246	3.15	16	32	2.00

^{1/} Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

over twice as much as nonfarm wage earnings of nonwhite hired farm workers. Nonwhite males earned somewhat more at nonfarm wage work than farm wage work--the usual pattern--but nonwhite females earned a higher average daily wage at farm wage work than they did at nonfarm wage work. The chief nonfarm wage work done by nonwhite females is domestic service, which pays even lower rates than farm labor, whereas males can obtain higher paying industrial work.

MIGRATORY FARM WORKERS

Agricultural employment levels fluctuate from one season to the next to a degree unmatched by those in any other major industry. In recent years, the introduction of harvesting machines in high labor-use crops and other technical advances have reduced farm labor requirements substantially. At the same time, new production methods, and particularly new food processing methods, have tended to shorten the over-all harvest time for many crops. Consequently, the seasonal demand for farm labor surges to a high peak for a shorter period of time. In the major fruit and vegetable producing areas and in some cotton areas, local labor supply cannot meet demand for farm workers at critical periods of the growing season. To meet this demand, migratory farm workers, mainly from the southeastern States, Texas, and California, move from one area to another "following the crops" and providing harvest and other seasonal farm labor in localities in which local labor is not sufficient to meet the need. As in certain earlier years, information was obtained in this survey concerning the number of workers who left their homes temporarily in 1956 to work at cultivating or harvesting crops in another county or counties. 3/

3/ Workers who commuted daily across a county line to do farm wage work and persons who made a more or less permanent move to take a steady farm job in another county are not considered migratory farm workers under this definition. Farm wage workers who had no usual place of residence (no regular home, no regular living quarters elsewhere) were considered as migratory if they did farm wage work in two or more counties in 1956. This definition excludes from the migratory work force some persons who actually leave their homes to do farm wage work. For example, in some large western counties, workers may move from their homes temporarily to do farm work without leaving their home county. The number of such cases is doubtless small. A more precise definition would be difficult to administer effectively in the Current Population Survey.

The survey estimate of migratory farm workers in 1956 was about 427,000. The 1954 estimate of the migratory work force was 365,000. Although the CPS sample--the Current Population Survey sample of the Bureau of the Census--has been enlarged since the 1954 survey, it is likely that, as in earlier years, some underenumeration occurred in covering this group in 1956. If allowance is made for underenumeration and for children of migrants under 14 years of age who worked in the fields during some part of the year, the domestic migratory work force may have reached 500,000 in 1956. In addition, approximately 460,000 foreign nationals worked on farms in the United States in 1956, most of them Mexicans contracted under international agreement. About 78,000 of these were still in this country in December and are presumed to have been included in the survey. Adding the remainder to the estimated number of domestic migrants brings to 880,000 the number of persons who did migratory farm work in the United States in 1956. 4/

Characteristics of migratory farm workers.--Distribution of the 1956 migratory farm working force by sex and age is shown in tables 15 and 16, with comparisons for 1949, 1950, 1952, and 1954. These estimates relate to all such workers who did any farm wage work during the year. As with the entire hired farm working force, data on migratory workers refer to those who did at least 25 days or more of farm wage work unless otherwise indicated. Of the 427,000 migratory workers, 301,000 worked 25 days or more on farms for cash wages.

As in 1954, age distributions of migratory and nonmigratory workers did not differ significantly in 1956 (table 17). This is a departure from earlier years; migratory workers have tended to be younger than nonmigratory farm workers in the past.

Nearly 60 percent of the migratory workers reported farm wage work as their chief activity in 1956 as compared with less than 50 percent of nonmigratory workers (table 18). For migratory workers this represented an increase over 1954 in the proportion reporting farm wage work as their chief activity. The proportion of migratory farm workers whose chief activity was nonfarm work was slightly less than that of nonmigratory farm workers in 1956, a reversal of all previous reports since 1949. The percentage of migratory workers who were outside the labor force the greater part of the year 5/ remained the same in 1956 as in 1954; for nonmigratory workers this proportion increased over 1954, returning to the 1952 level.

4/ Findings in this survey concerning migratory farm workers are based only upon the estimated 427,000 migratory workers covered by the CPS sample.

5/ Includes a small number of workers who reported looking for work as their chief activity.

Table 15. - Number of persons who did any work as migratory farm workers, by sex, United States, 1949, 1950, 1952, 1954, and 1956 1/

Sex	1949	1950	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Thousands</u>
Total	422	403	352	365	427
Male	291	285	234	273	314
Female	131	118	118	92	113

1/ For definition of migratory farm workers and coverage of survey, see text, page 21.

Table 16. - Percentage distribution of persons who did any work as migratory farm workers by age groups, United States, 1949, 1950, 1952, 1954, and 1956 1/

Age group	1949	1950	1952	1954	1956
<u>Years</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100
14 - 17	21	21	22	14	21
18 - 24	23	31	18	24	18
25 - 34	16	18	24	24	22
35 - 44	16	14	19	12	17
45 - 54	13	10	8	12	14
55 - 64	9	3	5	12	7
65 and over	2	3	4	2	1

1/ For definition of migratory farm workers and coverage of survey see text, page 21.

Table 17. - Percentage distribution of migratory and nonmigratory workers who did 25 days or more of farm wage work, by age groups, United States, 1949, 1952, 1954, and 1956 1/

Age group	Migratory workers				Nonmigratory workers			
	1949	1952	1954	1956	1949	1952	1954	1956
<u>Years</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
14 - 17	22	21	13	16	21	17	15	18
18 - 24	23	17	21	19	20	18	19	18
25 - 34	16	26	27	23	18	23	22	20
35 - 44	16	22	12	20	16	14	17	17
45 - 54	13	9	13	13	12	13	13	13
55 - 64	8	3	12	7	8	12	10	9
65 and over	2	2	2	2	5	3	4	5

1/ For definition of migratory farm workers and coverage of survey see text, page 21.

Table 18. - Percentage distribution of migratory and nonmigratory workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, by chief activity, United States, 1949, 1952, 1954, and 1956 1/

Chief activity	Migratory workers				Nonmigratory workers			
	1949	1952	1954	1956	1949	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Farm work	48	48	59	65	67	56	61	58
Farm wage work	38	39	50	57	52	46	51	48
With nonfarm work	10	12	14	14	12	11	11	9
Without nonfarm work	28	27	36	43	40	35	40	39
Other farm work	10	9	9	8	15	10	10	10
Nonfarm work	13	17	12	6	10	10	9	8
Nongainful activity <u>2/</u>	39	35	29	29	23	34	30	34

1/ For definition of migratory farm workers and coverage of survey see text, page 21.

2/ Includes a small number of workers who reported looking for work as their chief activity during the year.

About 8 percent of migratory farm workers did 250 days or more of farm wage work in 1956. This was the same as in 1952, but less than 1954. Nearly a third of the migratory workers worked 150 days or more on farms for pay in 1956, slightly less than the proportion of nonmigratory workers (table 19). The percentage of nonmigratory farm workers who worked 150 days or more at farm wage work declined between 1954 and 1956.

About a sixth of all migratory workers accumulated 250 days of farm and nonfarm wage work combined during 1956, again the same as in 1952 but lower than 1954. The proportion of nonmigratory farm workers with 250 days or more of wage work was about double the migratory proportion. Only about 5 percent of the migratory workers had 300 days or more of farm and nonfarm wage work in 1956 as compared with 11 percent in 1954. The percentage of migratory workers who worked only 25-74 days had declined substantially between 1952 and 1954, then rose again in 1956 but not to the 1952 level (table 20).

Employment and earnings.--Average employment of farm wage work by migratory workers dropped 8 days between 1954 and 1956 compared with a drop of 5 days for nonmigratory farm workers (table 21). While some part of the rather wide year-to-year swings in average duration of farm employment of migratory workers reported in these surveys can be attributed to sampling error, the fact that migratory workers represent, in some areas, a labor reserve called upon only when the supply of local labor has been exhausted, contributes to the wide year-to-year variation in their average farm wage employment. Since 1949, average hired farm employment of migratory workers has ranged between 87 and 124 days; farm wage employment of nonmigratory workers during the same period varied between 140 and 148 days.

Although male migratory workers averaged fewer days at farm wage work in 1956 than in 1954, their annual farm wage earnings were higher because of a sharply increased daily rate, \$8.50 compared with \$6.65. Female migratory workers also averaged higher annual and daily earnings than in 1954 for the same number of days of farm wage work. As in all earlier surveys, migratory workers had higher daily farm wage earnings than nonmigratory workers; but in 1956, for the first time, migratory workers earned a higher annual income from cash farm wages than nonmigratory workers. The spread of \$2.50 between migratory and nonmigratory average daily cash earnings from farm wages in 1956 was greater than in any previous year for which this information is available. Some of the disparity between migratory and nonmigratory daily farm wage earnings can be explained by the trend in earnings of female workers in both groups. Average daily farm wage earnings of female migratory workers have steadily increased since the first survey covering such workers in 1949. Daily farm wage earnings of female nonmigratory workers, on the other hand, have declined since 1952.

Table 19. - Percentage distribution of migratory and non-migratory workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work by duration of farm wage work, United States, 1949, 1952, 1954, and 1956 ^{1/}

Days of farm wage work	Migratory workers				Nonmigratory workers			
	1949	1952	1954	1956	1949	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
25-74 days	61	60	43	44	38	45	39	44
75-149	20	23	18	25	21	15	16	19
150-249	13	10	26	23	16	16	18	13
250 and over	6	7	13	8	25	24	27	24

^{1/} For definition of migratory farm workers and coverage of survey see text, page 21.

Table 20. - Percentage distribution of migratory and non-migratory workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work by duration of farm and nonfarm work, United States, 1949, 1952, 1954, and 1956 ^{1/}

Days of farm and nonfarm work	Migratory workers				Nonmigratory workers			
	1949	1952	1954	1956	1949	1952	1954	1956
	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
25-74 days	40	40	26	34	29	34	30	35
75-149	29	31	21	22	19	16	16	19
150-249	22	13	33	28	23	18	20	16
250 and over	9	16	20	16	29	32	34	30

^{1/} For definition of migratory farm workers and coverage of survey see text, page 21.

Table 21. - Average days worked and wages earned at farm and non-farm wage work by workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, by migratory status and sex of worker, United States, 1949, 1952, 1954, and 1956

Item	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
	Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
		Per year	Per day ^{1/}		Per year	Per day ^{1/}		Per year	Per day ^{1/}
	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.
1949									
Migratory	119	594	4.95	89	448	5.00	30	146	4.80
Male	135	739	5.50	98	549	5.60	37	190	5.20
Female	82	234	2.85	67	198	2.95	15	36	2.35
Nonmigratory	173	719	4.15	148	574	3.85	25	145	5.85
Male	190	818	4.30	165	655	3.95	25	163	6.65
Female	102	291	2.85	76	224	2.95	26	67	2.55
1952									
Migratory	124	884	7.15	87	600	6.90	37	284	7.75
Male	144	1,101	7.60	99	731	7.35	45	370	8.15
Female	65	259	4.00	53	222	4.20	12	37	3.10
Nonmigratory	169	911	5.40	140	698	5.00	29	213	7.40
Male	195	1,074	5.50	161	815	5.05	34	259	7.70
Female	68	265	3.90	58	234	4.00	10	31	3.20
1954									
Migratory	156	1,033	6.60	124	794	6.40	32	239	7.35
Male	166	1,160	6.95	135	899	6.65	31	261	8.30
Female	117	565	4.80	81	410	5.05	36	155	4.25
Nonmigratory	169	972	5.75	145	800	5.50	24	172	7.05
Male	187	1,119	5.95	161	919	5.70	26	200	7.60
Female	91	344	3.75	75	287	3.80	16	57	3.45
1956									
Migratory	143	1,178	8.25	116	935	8.05	27	243	9.15
Male	157	1,369	8.70	126	1,069	8.50	31	300	9.55
Female	90	500	5.55	81	458	5.70	10	42	4.35
Nonmigratory	162	957	5.90	140	776	5.55	22	182	8.10
Male	189	1,188	6.30	163	958	5.90	26	230	8.95
Female	86	295	3.40	73	254	3.45	13	41	3.25

^{1/} Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

In all of these surveys for which separate information by migratory status is available, average number of days worked and annual earnings from nonfarm work have been greater for migratory workers than for nonmigratory workers. In all survey years except 1949, migratory workers also have had higher average daily earnings from nonfarm wages than nonmigratory farm workers.

Differences in earnings become more pronounced when workers are classified by chief activity and migratory status. Migrants whose chief activity during 1956 was farm wage work earned about \$1,400 at an average of \$8.45 per day worked on farms (table 22). Nonmigratory workers in the same activity status worked 225 days at farm wage work to earn \$1,319, or an average of \$5.85 per day. Differences in nonfarm earnings are even greater--\$11.30 for migratory workers, \$7.05 for nonmigratory workers. The size of the sample of migratory workers whose chief activity was farm wage work and who also worked at a nonfarm wage job is too small to merit further investigation of the apparent disparity between nonfarm wage rates of migratory and nonmigratory farm workers. However, daily rates at nonfarm wages of all migratory workers (regardless of chief activity) was \$1.05 above the average rate for all nonmigratory farm workers. Perhaps migratory workers, because of their travels, have a better knowledge of the general labor market, and are better able to take advantage of higher paying nonfarm job opportunities, than the less mobile nonmigratory workers.

Distance traveled by migratory workers.--Migratory farm workers follow a great variety of routes. Distances they travel during the course of a year range from a few miles to thousands. Some workers, for example, travel from Florida to New York or from Texas to Michigan and back, following the harvest northward in the summer and returning to their homes to spend the winter. Others may go only as far as the next county during the course of their migratory farm work. To obtain an over-all picture of the extent of the annual travels of seasonal farm workers, the 1956 survey asked each migratory worker how far he had traveled to do farm work for wages. About three-fourths of all migratory workers who did 25 days or more of farm wage work in 1956 traveled 75 miles or more from their homes for farm jobs. ^{6/} Almost a fifth of these workers traveled 1,000 miles or more.

^{6/} In 1956, Congress amended the Interstate Commerce Act to provide Federal regulation of interstate transportation of migratory farm workers by other than common carrier. Regulations were stipulated with respect to comfort of passengers, qualifications and maximum hours of service of operators, and safety of operation and equipment. The regulations apply to all interstate travel involving the transport of migrants 75 miles or more.

Table 22. - Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for farm wage workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, by migratory status and chief activity, United States, 1956

Migratory status and chief activity	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
	Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}
	Number	Dollars	Dollars	Number	Dollars	Dollars	Number	Dollars	Dollars
Migratory	143	1,178	8.25	116	935	8.05	27	243	9.15
Farm work ^{2/}	168	1,473	8.75	152	1,302	8.55	16	171	10.50
Farm wage work	182	1,584	8.70	166	1,403	8.45	16	181	11.30
Nonfarm wage	256	2,441	9.50	59	478	8.05	197	1,963	9.95
Nonmigratory	162	958	5.90	140	776	5.55	22	182	8.10
Farm work ^{2/}	207	1,226	5.95	197	1,156	5.85	10	70	7.20
Farm wage work	235	1,388	5.90	225	1,319	5.85	10	69	7.05
Nonfarm wage	230	2,004	8.70	62	406	6.55	168	1,598	9.50

^{1/} Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

^{2/} Includes persons for whom operation of farm or unpaid family work was chief activity during the year.

Average daily earnings from farm wage work appeared to be roughly commensurate to distance traveled. Migratory workers who traveled 1,000 miles or more earned the highest average daily wage at farm work. Migrants who traveled less than 75 miles had the lowest average daily farm wage.

Although daily and annual earnings of migrants who traveled the greatest distance were highest, the greater distance traveled appears to have restricted somewhat their opportunities for farm employment. Migrants who traveled between 75 and 399 miles put in the greatest number of days at farm wage work, averaging 12 more days than migrants who traveled 1,000 miles or more. As most migrants pay their own travel expenses, and living expenses are often higher while migrants are away from home, the actual difference between cash earnings of migrants and nonmigrants - after these additional expenses are taken into account - may be insignificant.

PERSONS WITH LESS THAN 25 DAYS OF FARM WAGE WORK IN 1956

About 1.5 million persons, or 42 percent of all persons in the hired farm working force, worked less than 25 days at farm wage work in 1956. This is somewhat higher than the number of such workers found in all previous years except 1949 (page 2). Average earnings and days of farm and nonfarm wage work for workers with less than 25 days of hired farm work in 1956 are shown in table 23.

Table 23. - Average days worked and wages earned at farm and non-farm wage work for workers with less than 25 days of farm wage work, by migratory status, United States, 1956

Migratory status	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
	Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}		Per year	Per day worked ^{1/}
	Number	Dol.	Dol.	Number	Dol.	Dol.	Number	Dol.	Dol.
Total	47	433	9.25	11	78	7.25	36	355	9.85
Migratory	42	369	8.70	10	80	8.00	32	289	8.95
Nonmigratory	43	375	8.75	10	80	7.95	33	295	9.00

^{1/} Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

To obtain a clear picture of the composition of this part of the hired farm working force, all persons who did any farm work for wages were classified by labor force status at the time of the survey. Labor force status during an off-season should provide an indication of the typical, or perhaps chief, activity of seasonal farm workers during the year. Fewer than 75,000 persons who worked less than 25 days at farm wage work during the year were employed for wages on farms at the time of the survey, December 1956 (table 24). About a fifth of the entire group were farm operators and 22 percent were employed in nonagricultural industries at the end of the year. The importance of housewives and children in the seasonal farm work force is indicated by the fact that almost half of all persons who did less than 25 days of hired farm work during the year were out of the labor force in December mainly keeping house or attending school.

About two-fifths of the 3.5 million persons who did any farm wage work in 1956 were heads of households in December of that year. Thirty-eight percent of all persons with less than 25 days of hired farm work were household heads; 44 percent of all workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work were so classified in December. About a third of the 1.5 million household heads who worked as hired farm laborers at some time during 1956 were employed as farm wage workers in December of that year.

MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT OF HIRED FARM WORKERS

Information on the monthly employment of farm wage workers was obtained for the first time in the 1956 survey. Data on the level of monthly employment of farm wage workers are of special interest because of the wide seasonal variations in farm work. The monthly reports of farm employment published by the AMS and the CPS ^{7/} provide estimates of the number of hired workers on farms during a specified survey week each month. This survey gives annual estimates of the number of different persons doing farm work for wages during an entire year. By questioning respondents concerning the number of days of farm and nonfarm wage work they did each month in the past year, a comparative estimate of monthly employment was obtained, as well as an estimate of the distribution of days of work each month over the year. Monthly employment of hired farm workers in 1956 as reported by the AMS farm employment series and the Current Population Survey are compared with the monthly estimates, as reported in this survey in table 25. Although based on data from

^{7/} Farm Labor, Agricultural Marketing Service, and Current Population Reports, Labor Force, P-57, Bureau of the Census.

Table 24. - Percentage distribution of persons reporting farm wage work during 1956 by employment status, December 1956

Employment status	Workers with less than 25 days	Workers with 25 days or more
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total	100	100
Employed in agriculture	27	48
Wage and salary workers	5	42
Self-employed workers	20	5
Unpaid family workers	2	1
Employed in nonagricultural industries	22	16
Manufacturing	4	4
Forestry, fishing, mining or construction	3	2
Transportation, communication and other public utilities	1	2
Trade	6	3
Private households	4	2
Other	4	3
Unemployed	5	7
Not in the labor force	46	29
Keeping house	18	13
Attending school	23	11
Other	5	5

the same sample and collected during one of the CPS monthly surveys, the monthly estimates developed in this survey are lower than those of the CPS.

Table 25. - Average employment of hired farm workers as estimated by the Agricultural Marketing Service, the Current Population Survey and the Hired Farm Working Force Survey, by months, United States, 1956

Month	Agricultural Marketing Service <u>1/</u>	Current Population Survey <u>2/</u>	Hired Farm Working Force
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>
January	912	1,319	769
February	1,002	1,211	807
March	1,254	1,247	864
April	1,526	1,324	993
May	2,005	1,607	1,346
June	2,411	2,071	1,695
July	2,503	2,202	1,891
August	2,705	2,122	1,947
September	2,926	2,092	1,824
October	2,372	2,206	1,830
November	1,586	1,751	1,426
December	1,011	1,151	1,141
Annual average	1,851	1,692	1,378

1/ From Farm Labor, Crop Reporting Board, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S.D.A., 1956.

2/ From Labor Force, Current Population Reports, Bureau of the Census, Series P-57, 1956.

For definitions and procedures used in these series, see appendices of indicated reports.

Conceptually, the hired farm working force estimates should be higher than the CPS. The hired farm working force estimate includes all persons who did any farm wage work, whereas the CPS estimate includes only persons who did farm wage work on the longest job held during the survey week. For example, persons who did 15 hours or more of unpaid family work and less than 15 hours of farm wage work during the survey week would be classified as farm wage workers by this survey, but would be classified as unpaid family workers by the CPS. In addition, estimates in this survey include all persons who did any farm wage work at any time during the month, whereas CPS estimates relate only to the survey week. One balancing factor is the inclusion of farm workers with a job but not at work (during the survey week) in the CPS. Only workers who reported days worked during the month were counted as employed for that month in the hired farm working force survey. The average monthly CPS estimate of farm workers with a job but not at work in 1956 was 192,000. Although these workers did not work during the CPS survey week, most of them probably worked some time during the month and, therefore, were also included in the hired farm working force monthly estimates. A small number of persons who did farm wage work during the year and were in institutions at the time of the survey or had died before the end of the year also were not included in this survey.

The differences between this survey and the CPS estimates for months prior to December can be accounted for largely by the fact that most foreign nationals who were brought into the country to do farm wage work during the year had left the United States by the time of the survey. In table 26, the number of foreign farm workers in this country at the end of each month is shown separately and combined with the monthly estimates of hired farm workers developed in this survey. The foreign workers who were still in the country in December were presumably here for varying lengths of time throughout the year. Some duplication is involved in adding the Department of Labor count of foreign workers to the monthly estimates from this survey. Foreign workers picked up in this survey (in December) who also report farm employment in preceding months will inflate somewhat the monthly estimates of all workers in table 26. The number of such cases will never be more than the number of foreign workers still in this country in December 1956.

Except for August and September, the monthly levels for the CPS are still above the estimates of the hired farm working force survey. Note that the differences in level of employment between the CPS and this survey are largest for the earlier months of the year, indicating a progressively greater loss of recall for the earlier months of the year.

Table 26. - Average employment of hired farm workers including foreign nationals, by months, 1956

Month	All workers	Foreign agricultural workers	Hired farm working force survey	
			Migratory	Nonmigratory
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Thou.</u>
January	865	96	93	676
February	901	94	107	700
March	961	97	98	766
April	1,101	108	118	875
May	1,504	158	208	1,138
June	1,832	137	247	1,448
July	2,069	178	258	1,633
August	2,141	194	248	1,699
September	2,133	309	232	1,592
October	2,047	217	257	1,573
November	1,589	163	161	1,265
December	1,141	1/	115	1,026

1/ Included in survey.

Foreign agricultural workers compiled from reports of U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Security.

The monthly estimates of hired farm employment based on the responses of wage workers at the end of the year exhibit more moderate seasonal variation than the CPS estimates. In addition to the reasons cited earlier to explain the higher CPS monthly employment level, it is likely that some persons who worked a few days during the peak months of July and October failed to report such work in the year-end hired farm working force survey. When

nonmigrants are shown separately the characteristic bimodal curve of farm employment almost disappears (table 27). Note that average days worked are lower during the summer months, when farm activity is greatest, and higher during the winter months, when farm work (except in the southern specialty crop areas) consists largely of chores and maintenance work.

Table 27. - All farm wage workers by migratory status and average days worked at farm wage work by months, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Migratory		Nonmigratory	
	Number workers	Average days worked	Number workers	Average days worked	Number workers	Average days worked
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>
January	769	22	93	18	676	22
February	807	21	107	18	700	21
March	864	22	98	18	766	22
April	993	20	118	18	875	20
May	1,346	19	208	17	1,138	19
June	1,695	18	247	17	1,448	18
July	1,891	17	258	18	1,633	17
August	1,947	17	248	17	1,699	17
September	1,824	17	232	17	1,592	17
October	1,830	17	257	16	1,573	17
November	1,426	17	161	15	1,265	18
December	1,141	17	115	17	1,026	17
Annual average	1,378	18	179	17	1,199	18

Among workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, July was the month of highest employment (table 28). Employment of migratory workers in this group also reached a peak in July; peak employment of nonmigrants occurred in August, though the difference in employment levels in the months of July, August, and September were insignificant. August was the peak month of employment for persons with less than 25 days of farm wage work (table 29). Both migrants and nonmigrants in this group show a strong secondary employment peak in October, the October level for migratory workers being even higher than the August peak.

Table 28. - Farm wage workers who did 25 days or more of farm wage work by migratory status and average days worked at farm wage work by months, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Migratory		Nonmigratory	
	Number workers	Average days worked	Number workers	Average days worked	Number workers	Average days worked
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>
January	747	22	91	19	656	23
February	775	21	103	18	672	22
March	827	22	93	18	734	23
April	940	21	113	18	827	21
May	1,207	20	192	17	1,015	21
June	1,418	20	214	19	1,204	20
July	1,478	20	228	19	1,250	20
August	1,473	20	215	19	1,258	20
September	1,460	19	205	19	1,255	20
October	1,435	20	218	17	1,217	21
November	1,223	19	149	16	1,074	20
December	1,015	19	109	18	906	19
Annual average	1,167	20	161	18	1,006	21

Table 29. - Farm wage workers who did less than 25 days of farm wage work by migratory status and average days worked at farm wage work by months, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Migratory		Nonmigratory	
	Number workers	Average days worked	Number workers	Average days worked	Number workers	Average days worked
	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Thou.</u>	<u>Number</u>
January	22	5	2	2	20	5
February	32	6	4	11	28	5
March	37	4	5	6	32	3
April	53	5	5	6	48	5
May	139	6	16	7	123	6
June	277	5	33	5	244	5
July	413	6	30	5	383	6
August	474	6	33	7	441	6
September	364	6	27	8	337	6
October	395	6	39	7	356	6
November	203	6	12	7	191	6
December	126	5	6	5	120	5
Annual average	211	6	18	6	193	6

Tables 30, 31 and 32 show the percentage distribution of employment and days of hired farm work each month by migratory status.

Peak employment months were August for male workers and October for females (table 33). The bimodal pattern of employment was present in the seasonal trends for both male and female migratory workers but, whereas peak employment months for male migrants were July and August, more female migrants were doing farm wage work in June and October. Nonmigrant males averaged more days of farm wage work per month than male migrants, but female migrants

Table 30. - Percentage distribution of farm wage workers and days of farm wage work by months, for all persons who did any farm wage work during the year, by migratory status, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Migratory		Nonmigratory	
	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
January	22	6	22	5	21	6
February	23	6	25	5	22	6
March	24	6	23	5	24	6
April	28	7	28	6	28	7
May	38	8	49	10	36	8
June	47	10	58	11	46	10
July	53	11	60	12	52	11
August	54	11	58	12	54	11
September	51	10	54	11	51	10
October	51	10	60	11	50	10
November	40	8	38	7	40	8
December	32	7	27	5	33	7
Total	--	100	--	100	--	100

worked an average of 2 more days per month at farm wage work than female nonmigrants. Most of the year-round farm work force are numbered among the male nonmigrant workers, a condition that would account for their higher average monthly working time. Among female farm wage workers, school-age and elderly workers--groups that tend to work for shorter periods during the year--are found in greater numbers in the nonmigrant work force.

Table 31. - Percentage distribution of farm wage workers and days of farm wage work by months, for persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work, by migratory status, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Migratory		Nonmigratory	
	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
January	36	6	31	5	37	6
February	37	6	34	5	38	6
March	40	6	31	5	41	7
April	45	7	38	6	47	7
May	58	9	64	10	57	9
June	68	10	71	11	68	10
July	71	11	76	12	70	10
August	71	10	71	11	71	10
September	70	10	68	11	71	10
October	69	10	72	11	69	10
November	59	8	49	7	60	8
December	49	7	36	6	51	7
Total	--	100	--	100	--	100

Table 32. - Percentage distribution of farm wage workers and days of farm wage work by months, for persons who did less than 25 days of farm wage work, by migratory status, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Migratory		Nonmigratory	
	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
January	1	1	1	1/	1	1
February	2	1	4	4	2	1
March	2	1	4	2	2	1
April	4	2	4	2	4	2
May	9	6	13	9	9	6
June	19	10	26	12	18	10
July	28	16	24	12	28	16
August	32	20	26	16	32	20
September	24	15	22	15	25	15
October	26	16	31	20	26	16
November	14	8	9	6	14	8
December	8	4	5	2	9	4
Total	--	100	--	100	--	100

1/ Less than one percent.

Monthly employment at nonfarm wage work.--The proportion of the total hired farm working force employed at nonfarm wage work showed less variation from month to month than the proportion of such workers engaged in farm wage employment. At least two-fifths of all hired farm workers reported some nonfarm work for wages each month in 1956 (table 34). Among short-term farm wage workers, the percentage

Table 33. - All farm wage workers by migratory status, sex, and average days worked at farm wage work, by months, United States, 1956

Month	All workers				Migrant				Nonmigrant			
	Number of workers		Average days worked		Number of workers		Average days worked		Number of workers		Average days worked	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.
January	711	58	22	15	84	9	18	17	627	49	23	15
February	741	66	21	15	95	12	18	16	646	54	22	15
March	781	82	22	13	89	9	18	17	692	73	23	12
April	880	113	21	13	104	14	19	13	776	99	21	13
May	1,058	288	20	13	160	48	17	15	898	240	21	13
June	1,298	398	19	13	192	55	18	14	1,106	343	19	13
July	1,463	428	18	13	203	54	18	15	1,260	374	18	13
August	1,490	458	18	13	198	50	17	17	1,292	408	18	13
September	1,303	521	18	14	179	53	18	15	1,124	468	18	14
October	1,307	523	19	13	195	62	16	13	1,112	461	19	13
November	1,121	305	18	13	136	25	16	13	985	280	19	13
December	985	156	19	10	107	8	18	7	878	148	19	10
Annual Average	1,095	283	19	13	145	33	17	15	950	250	20	13

reporting nonfarm wage earnings ranged as high as 62 percent in some months and averaged over 50 percent for the year. Among workers with 25 days or more of farm wage work, an average of 46 percent reported some nonfarm wage work during the year. November and December were the months of peak employment at nonfarm wage work for both groups.

Table 34. - Percentage distribution of farm wage workers and days of nonfarm wage work for persons who did any nonfarm wage work, by months, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Persons with 25 days or more of farm wage work		Persons with less than 25 days of farm wage work	
	Persons reporting nonfarm wage work	Days of nonfarm wage work	Persons reporting nonfarm wage work	Days of nonfarm wage work	Persons reporting nonfarm wage work	Days of nonfarm wage work
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
January	41	8	40	8	43	7
February	42	8	42	9	42	7
March	44	8	43	9	45	8
April	42	8	38	8	46	8
May	40	7	35	7	46	8
June	42	8	35	7	50	8
July	44	8	38	8	51	9
August	46	9	40	8	52	9
September	46	8	41	8	52	8
October	49	9	44	9	55	9
November	57	10	53	10	61	10
December	58	9	54	9	62	9
Total	--	100	--	100	--	100

Monthly employment of youths at hired farm work.--As was to be expected, the peak months of employment for young persons 16 and 17 years of age was during the school vacation months of June, July and August. Over a third of all youths of that age in the hired farm working force were employed on farms during September and October 1956 (table 35). The proportion of migratory youths aged 16 and 17 working during May, September, and October--months during which most schools are in session--was the same or higher than for nonmigratory youths of the same age. For the balance of the year, however, a higher proportion of nonmigrant youths reported farm wage earnings each month than migrant youths 16 and 17 years of age.

Table 35. - Percentage distribution of all farm wage workers 16 and 17 years of age, by months, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Migratory		Nonmigratory	
	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
January	8	4	6	3	9	4
February	8	3	6	3	8	3
March	9	3	6	3	10	3
April	12	4	9	4	12	4
May	20	7	25	8	20	6
June	43	13	53	12	42	14
July	54	17	61	19	53	17
August	55	17	65	20	53	17
September	34	9	38	11	33	9
October	35	9	35	10	35	9
November	23	8	18	6	23	8
December	19	6	6	1	20	6
Total	--	100	--	100	--	100

Among children 14 and 15 years of age, the youngest group for which information is available, no more than half of the total group reported farm wage work in any one month (table 36). Over a third worked on farms for wages in September 1956 and over a fourth had farm wage earnings in October. Although these are months in which public elementary and secondary schools are normally in session, school vacations are permitted in many farm areas during the harvest season to allow the young people to help with the harvest. As in the case of older youths, children 14 and 15 years of age were more likely to report farm wage work in November and December if nonmigratory than if migratory.

Table 36. - Percentage distribution of all farm wage workers 14 and 15 years of age, days of farm wage work and migratory status, by months, United States, 1956

Month	All workers		Migratory		Nonmigratory	
	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked	Persons reporting farm wage work	Days worked
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
January	5	2	4	1	5	2
February	5	2	4	3	5	2
March	6	3	4	2	7	3
April	8	4	4	2	8	4
May	19	8	27	11	18	7
June	38	14	46	18	37	13
July	47	17	42	19	47	17
August	51	18	45	14	52	19
September	38	13	35	15	38	12
October	28	10	26	11	28	10
November	19	6	7	3	20	7
December	10	3	3	1	11	4
Total	--	100	--	100	---	100

COVERAGE OF HIRED FARM WORKERS UNDER THE
OLD AGE AND SURVIVORS INSURANCE PROGRAM

Hired farm workers were first brought under the Social Security Act in 1951. Only regular farm workers with at least five months of continuous employment with one farm employer and a stipulated amount of employment and earnings in each calendar quarter with this employer could qualify for coverage under the 1950 amendments. The Social Security Act amendments of 1954 and 1956 extended coverage to some of the less regular farm wage workers. Under the present provision, a farm worker qualifies for coverage if his cash earnings from one farm employer are \$150 during the calendar year, or, if his cash wages were less than \$150, he qualifies for coverage if he has worked 20 days or more for one employer during the year and was paid on other than a piece-rate basis. Data were collected in this survey which provided a basis for estimating the number of farm wage workers meeting the OASI coverage requirements. Table 37 shows that an estimated 1.8 million or about 50 percent of the farm wage workers were covered. Nearly 300,000 of these workers were covered because they worked for one employer for 20 days or more at farm wage work on a time basis although their annual cash earnings fell short of the \$150 minimum. All of the approximately 1.6 million wage workers who failed to meet the coverage requirements earned less than \$150 in cash wages and about 7 out of 8 had less than 25 days of farm wage work on their longest farm job. Slightly more than 200,000 workers in the survey were custom workers ^{8/} whose remuneration is considered for social security purposes as net earnings from self-employment instead of wages. These individuals would qualify for social security only if their total net earnings from self-employment during their taxable year were \$400 or more.

Many farm workers, particularly migratory workers, are hired and work under the direction of crew leaders or labor contractors. These crew leaders negotiate with the farm operator regarding the amount and type of work to be done and the rate of pay. They sometimes arrange for travel and housing accommodations for their crews. Frequently, doubt existed as to whether the crew leader or the farm operator was the employer under arrangements of this kind.

Under the 1956 amendments the crew leader was designated as the employer for social security purposes if he furnished a crew of workers to do farm work and paid the workers (either for himself or for the farmer), unless there was a written agreement between the farmer and the crew leader stating that the crew leader was an employee of the farmer. This amendment did not become effective until January 1, 1957. Nevertheless an attempt was made in the 1956 survey to determine the number of workers who would have been employees of a crew leader if the 1956 amendment had been in effect.

8/ Farm work in which the worker furnishes a machine (tractor, combine, sprayer, etc.) in addition to his labor.

Table 37. - Farm wage workers by days of farm wage work on longest job, OASI coverage and basis of coverage, United States, 1956

OASI status	Total workers	Number of days of farm work on longest job							
		Under 25	25-49	50-74	75-149	150-199	200-249	250-299	300 and over
	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.
Total	3,359 ^{1/}	1,627	524	265	322	119	106	129	266
<u>Covered</u>	1,786	177	422	252	313	119	106	129	266
\$150 or more in farm wages	1,490	94	253	228	296	119	106	129	265
Under \$150 farm wages; 20 days or more farm work on a time basis	296	84	169	25	17	-	-	-	2/
<u>Not covered</u>	1,573	1,449	102	13	9	-	-	-	-
Under \$150 farm wages; 20 days or more farm work not on a time basis	203	80	102	13	9	-	-	-	-
Under \$150 farm wages; under 20 days farm work	1,369	1,369	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

^{1/} Does not include custom workers who were not eligible for OASI coverage as wage workers.

^{2/} Less than 2,000 workers.

Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

About 130,000 hired workers, including 72,000 migratory workers, reported that they had worked on farms under crew leaders at some time during 1956. About two-fifths of these workers reported a crew leader as their only farm employer, and over one-third had worked for a crew leader on their longest farm job during the year. These estimates are admittedly subject to considerable error in view of the difficulty mentioned earlier of determining, for social security purposes, whether the worker was an employee of the farmer or the crew leader. Almost two-thirds of the entire hired farm working force had worked for only one farm employer during the year. The situation was reversed among farm migratory workers; about two-thirds of all migrants worked for more than one farm employer in 1956. There was very little difference in average daily wages earned by farm workers employed by crew leaders and farmers.

APPENDIX

Method of Survey

Estimates in the series of reports on the hired farm working force are based on information obtained for the Agricultural Marketing Service by the Bureau of the Census in supplementary questions on its regular Current Population Survey. The data for this report were obtained in December 1956. 1/ Before 1956, the survey was made on a national sample of approximately 25,000 households. In 1956 the Current Population Survey sample was expanded by about two-thirds, with an average of 35,000 households interviewed. Comparable estimates tabulated from both the old and the new samples indicated that, for all practical purposes, the data from the expanded sample can be used as a continuous series with the statistics from previous surveys. 2/ It is possible, however, that the new expanded sample provides better enumeration of the number of different persons who did any farm wage work during the year, especially of those who worked less than 25 days at farm wage work.

As the estimates are based on a sample, they are subject to sampling variability. Small figures, and small differences in figures, should be used with care. Information on time worked and wages earned during the year is subject to errors in the memory of those who reported.

The questions upon which this report is based were added to the regular questions pertaining to personal characteristics and employment status asked each month by the Bureau of the Census. The special questions, reproduced at the end of this section, were asked for each person 14 years old and over in the households included in the survey who indicated that he had farm wage work during 1956, in both urban and rural areas.

In 1956 the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance cooperated on this special questionnaire to obtain information on social security coverage of farm wage workers. Questions 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8 were designed to obtain information on monthly variations in farm and nonfarm wage work done by persons who did any farm wage work. Questions 12 and 13 provided information on migratory workers and the distance they traveled to do farm wage work. Question 14 provided information on farm wage workers who worked for more than one employer. Questions 16, 17, 21, 22, and 23 provided information on those who worked for crew leaders or labor contractors as compared with those who were hired directly by the farmer or a person acting for the farmer.

1/ Robert Pearl of the Bureau of the Census handled the survey operations and tabulations.

2/ A detailed discussion of the expansion may be found in Current Population Reports, Series P-23, No. 3, "Expansion of the Current Population Survey Sample: 1956," July 15, 1956.

CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY
SPECIAL SCHEDULE FOR FARM WAGE WORKERS

Control No. of Household Control Card Line No.

If Yes in Item 31 of December 1956 Schedule

① What was ... doing most of 1956- working keeping house going to school or something else?	② In which months did ... do farm work for cash wages during 1956? (Check each calendar month worked)	③ (Ask for each month checked in item 2.) On how many days did ... do farm work for wages during _____? (Enter number of days)	④ (Ask for each month for which the entry in item 3 is 1-12 days.) Was farm work for cash wages ...'s chief kind of work for pay or profit in _____?	⑤ How much did ... earn in cash wages from farm work during 1956? \$ (Enter to nearest dollar) (Proceed to item 6)	⑥ During 1956 did ... do any nonfarm work for cash wages or salary? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (Ask items 7-9) 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No (Skip to item 10)	If Yes in item 6				
						⑦ In which months did ... do nonfarm work for cash wages or salary during 1956? (Check each calendar month worked)	⑧ (Ask for each month checked in item 7) On how many days did ... do nonfarm work for cash wages during _____? (Enter number of days)	⑨ How much did ... earn in cash wages or salary at nonfarm work during 1956? \$ (Enter to nearest dollar) (Proceed to ite. 10 on other side)		
1 <input type="checkbox"/> Farm work for cash wages	Jan. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Jan. <input type="checkbox"/>				
2 <input type="checkbox"/> Other farm work	Feb. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Feb. <input type="checkbox"/>				
3 <input type="checkbox"/> Nonfarm work	Mar. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Mar. <input type="checkbox"/>				
4 <input type="checkbox"/> Looking for work	Apr. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Apr. <input type="checkbox"/>				
5 <input type="checkbox"/> Keeping house	May <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			May <input type="checkbox"/>				
6 <input type="checkbox"/> Going to school	June <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			June <input type="checkbox"/>				
7 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	July <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			July <input type="checkbox"/>				
	Aug. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Aug. <input type="checkbox"/>				
	Sept. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Sept. <input type="checkbox"/>				
	Oct. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Oct. <input type="checkbox"/>				
	Nov. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Nov. <input type="checkbox"/>				
	Dec. <input type="checkbox"/>		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No			Dec. <input type="checkbox"/>				
	(Proceed to item 3)		(Proceed to item 5)			(Proceed to item 8)				
		(Proceed to item 4)					(Proceed to item 9)			

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<p>10 During 1956, did ... operate a farm?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>(Proceed to item 11)</p>	<p>12 Some workers leave home to harvest crops or do other seasonal farm work in a different county. Did ... do this in 1956?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (Ask item 13)</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> No (Skip to item 14)</p>	<p>14 During 1956, for how many different employers did ... do FARM work for cash wages?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> One (Ask items 15-17) ↗</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> More than one (Skip to item 18) ↘</p>	<p>If ONE in Item 14</p>		
<p>11 During 1956, did ... operate his own nonfarm business or profession?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>(Proceed to item 12)</p>	<p>13 (If Yes in item 12) How many miles away from home did ... go to do farm work for wages in 1956?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 75 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 600-799</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> 75-199 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 800-999</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> 200-399 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 1,000 or more</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> 400-599</p> <p>(Proceed to item 14)</p>		<p>15 How did this employer figure ...'s wages - by the hour, the day, the week, the piece, or some other way?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Hour</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Day</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Week</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> Month</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> Year</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> Piece</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>(Proceed to item 16)</p>	<p>16 How did ... get this job - through the farmer himself (or a person acting for the farmer) or through a crew leader or labor contractor?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Crew leader or labor contractor (Ask item 17)</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer or person acting for him (End of questions)</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify in notes) (End of questions)</p>	
<p>I would like to get some information about ...'s farm work for the employer for whom he worked longest during 1956.</p>				<p>17 Did the crew leader or labor contractor also give ... the money he earned on this job?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>(End of questions)</p>	
<p>18 On how many days did ... do farm work for cash wages for this employer?</p> <p>(Number of days)</p> <p>(Proceed to item 19)</p>	<p>19 How much did ... earn in cash wages from farm work for this employer?</p> <p>\$</p> <p>(Enter to nearest dollar)</p> <p>(Proceed to item 20)</p>	<p>20 How did this employer figure ...'s wages - by the hour, the day, the week, the piece, or some other way?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Hour</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Day</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Week</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> Month</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> Year</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> Piece</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>(Proceed to item 21)</p>	<p>21 How did ... get this job - through the farmer himself (or a person acting for the farmer) or through a crew leader or labor contractor?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Crew leader or labor contractor (Skip to item 23)</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer or person acting for him (Ask item 22)</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) (Ask item 22)</p>	<p>22 About ...'s farm jobs other than his longest job - did he get any of them through a crew leader or labor contractor rather than through the farmer directly or someone acting for him?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (Ask item 23)</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> No (End of questions)</p>	<p>23 Did the crew leader or labor contractor also give ... the money he earned on this job?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Notes</p>