



**Washington State
Employment Security Department**
Labor Market and Economic Analysis
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Labor Market Information Center
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Counties Within Agricultural Reporting Areas

- Area 1 = Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Snohomish, Thurston, Wahkiakum, and Whatcom
- Area 2 = Klickitat and Yakima
- Area 3 = Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, and Okanogan
- Area 4 = Adams and Grant
- Area 5 = Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla
- Area 6 = Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, and Whitman

Agricultural Labor Employment and Wages

June 2007

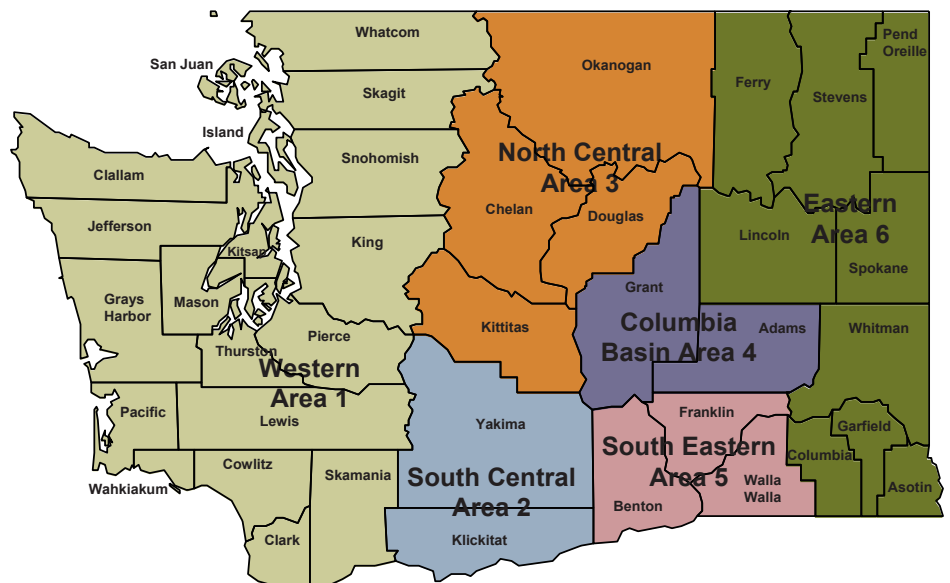
Executive Summary

In June total agricultural employment moved ahead by 3.0 percent over the year. The seasonal component of agricultural employment fell 0.6 percent from June 2006 to June 2007.

The large percentage increase in statewide seasonal employment from May 2007 to June 2007 (120.5 percent) can be attributed to the increase in cherry employment of 4,291. Likewise, this same crop was up 30.1 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. This over-the-year bump was due to the large seasonal shifts that frequently occur from year to year in the larger harvested crops. These are primarily driven by weather, as well as market and horticultural reasons. In 2006, the cherry harvest was down in June and peaked in July. This year the crop was earlier and larger in June than a year ago, thus causing the shift. The largest share of the seasonal cherry employment was concentrated in the South Central and North Central areas.

- Statewide, cherry employment led over-the-year crop growth (4,291) by 30.1 percent.
- Regionally, South Central (Area 2) experienced the largest annual growth rate of 16.8 percent.
- Eastern (Area 6) showed the greatest over-the-year loss at 23.0 percent.

Agricultural Reporting Areas in Washington State



Total Agricultural Employment Summary

Statewide total agricultural employment expanded by 3.0 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. Over the month total employment grew by 60.8 percent. Over the year regionally, Western (Area 1) total employment

fell by 2.5 percent. South Central (Area 2) total employment increased by 4.9 percent. North Central (Area 3) total employment inched up by 0.2 percent. Columbia Basin (Area 4) total employment moved forward by

4.5 percent. South Eastern (Area 5) total employment advanced by 5.4 percent. Eastern (Area 6) total employment moved forward by 8.0 percent.

Seasonal Agricultural Employment Summary

Statewide seasonal agricultural employment fell by 0.6 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. Agricultural activities displaying over-the-year losses were:

- apple work (-2,890)
- asparagus work (-2,299)
- nursery work (-1,276)
- strawberry work (-808)
- potato work (-134)
- blueberry work (-59)
- wheat/grain work (-57)
- cucumber work (-20)

Activities displaying gains were:

- cherry work (4,291)
- grapes work (1,211)

- other seasonal work (1,080)
- raspberry work (412)
- pear work (389)
- miscellaneous vegetables work (274)
- onion work (217)
- bulb work (154)
- hops work (81)
- other tree fruit work (68)

Across the state, Western seasonal employment fell back by 15.9 percent, caused by a decrease in nursery work (-919). South Central seasonal employment expanded by 16.8 percent, due to a surge in cherry

employment (3,099). North Central seasonal employment moved ahead by 2.9 percent, also due to an increase in cherry work (1,684). Columbia Basin seasonal employment declined by 7.4 percent, caused by a downturn in cherry work (-624). South Eastern seasonal employment slowed by 11.2 percent, caused by a drop in asparagus work (-1,562). Eastern seasonal employment slumped by 23.0 percent, thanks to a decrease in nursery work (-78).

Statewide and Regional Wage Trends

Statewide real (inflation-adjusted) seasonal agricultural wages increased by 3.0 percent from June 2005 to June 2007. Washington state real (inflation-adjusted) minimum wages advanced by 2.0 percent during this same time period. Statewide

real agricultural seasonal wages rose by 1.4 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. The state real minimum wage

increased by 0.8 percent during this same time period. Western real seasonal wages grew by 4.0 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. South Central seasonal wages inched forward 0.9 percent. North Central seasonal wages declined by 1.3 percent. Columbia Basin seasonal wages bumped up by 3.1 percent. South Eastern seasonal wages crept up by 1.2 percent.

Statewide nominal seasonal agricultural wages grew by 9.0 percent from June 2005 to June 2007. Washington state nominal minimum wages expanded by

7.9 percent during this same time period. Statewide nominal agricultural seasonal wages grew by 4.7 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. The state nominal minimum wage expanded by 3.9 percent during this same time period. Western seasonal wages advanced by 7.3 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. South Central seasonal wages increased by 4.2 percent. North Central seasonal wages expanded by 1.9 percent. Columbia Basin seasonal wages ramped up by 6.3 percent. South Eastern seasonal wages also rose by 4.4 percent.



Statewide and Regional Employment Trends

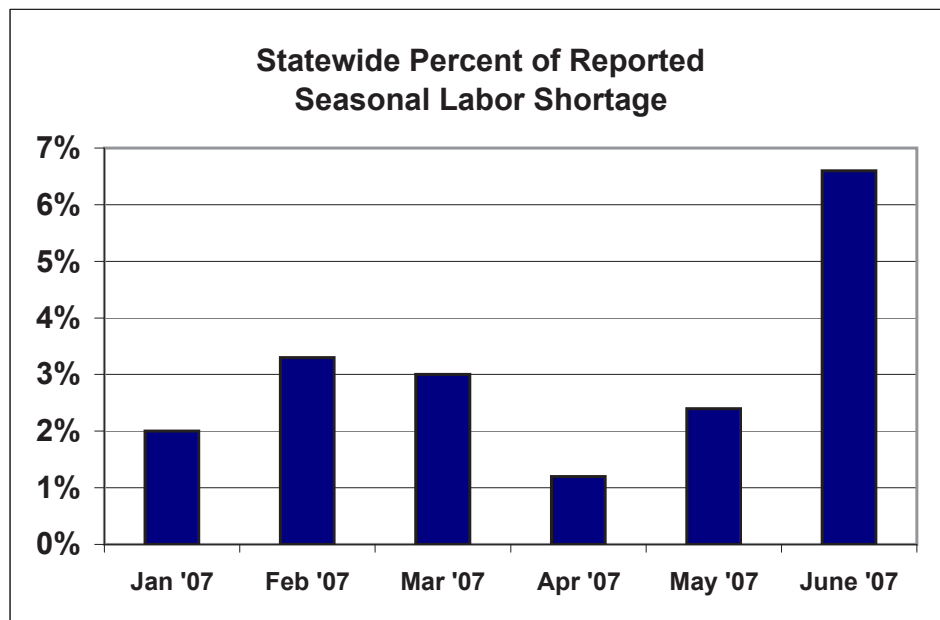
Statewide seasonal agricultural employment fell by 11.2 percent from June 2005 to June 2007. Statewide seasonal agricultural employment also declined by 0.6 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. Western seasonal employment contracted by 16.1 percent from June 2006 to June 2007. South Central seasonal employment

moved ahead by 16.8 percent during that same time period. North Central seasonal employment increased by 2.8 percent. Columbia Basin seasonal employment contracted by 7.4 percent. South Eastern seasonal employment pulled back by 11.2 percent. Eastern seasonal employment softened by 23.5 percent.


Labor Supply

New survey questions were inserted into the June survey. The first question asked growers was if they failed to complete some work due to lack of available seasonal labor. For June, 350


usable surveys were returned. The result of those surveys are shown below. These statistics are weighted based on reported seasonal employment.



The first question asked growers was if they failed to complete some work due to lack of available seasonal labor.



The Seasonal Farm Labor Survey of 600 agricultural growers in the state reports monthly, the number of total and seasonal workers by crop, activity, and wage.



Methodology

The *Agricultural Labor Employment and Wages* report uses data from the monthly Seasonal Farm Labor Survey. This is a survey of 600 agricultural growers in the state. They report monthly the number of total and seasonal workers by crop, activity, and wage. Both hourly and piece rates are used. *Seasonal* workers for the purpose of the survey are those working less than 150 days per year. The state is grouped into six areas based on agricultural economic similarity. The tables and charts presented in this report compare the seasonal agricultural employment for the state and the six areas for the current month, previous month and year ago. Percentage increases as well as raw numbers are given. The weighted monthly wage for seasonal employment is given for the state and the six areas. Each crop activity having significant employment is noted as a percentage change for previous month and year ago. The crops having the high-

est gain and highest decline in employment are highlighted in the narrative.

The Seasonal Labor Abstract is also included. This contains the top four crop activities by employment and wage for each of the six areas. Piece rates are given in addition to hourly wages when available and disclosable. Some variation in the reporting of the seasonal data can be attributed to the requirement that employment be reported in the pay period including the 12th of the month. Due to the fact that the timing of a given crop's harvest and other activities can be affected by weather and other conditions, periods of peak employment do not always fit precisely within this reporting period. This can lead to some variation of estimated employment by crop when comparing activity in similar time periods. The report is intended for economists, growers' associations, educators, state agencies, labor unions, and outreach workers.

Related Ag Links

Washington crop harvest and weather information: www.nass.usda.gov/wa.

What's new in agricultural employment: www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome

Agricultural Labor Report

Washington State Employment Security, Labor Market and Economic Analysis

Seasonal Labor Abstract June 2007

A mid-month survey of farm labor employment and wages is conducted by the Washington State Employment Security Department. At least five percent of all growers are surveyed for employment data about seasonal workers, type of crop, work activity, wages, and their residence. Based on these data, the Washington Employment Security Department develops estimates on the size of the workforce, average wages for each crop activity, and whether workers commute, live within the state, or come in from outside of Washington state. These data are reported for each agricultural area identified as having similar farm labor characteristics and a significant supply/demand for seasonal hired workforce.

Western (Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Snohomish, Thurston, Wahkiakum, and Whatcom counties)

Estimated seasonal workforce: 4,334 (1,417 local, 64 intrastate, 318 interstate, 16 foreign, 2,519 unknown origin)

Strawberry Worker	965	Not Available
Nursery Worker	473	\$ 8.67/hr
Raspberry Planter	334	\$ 7.93/hr
General Farm Harvester	237	\$ 9.09/hr

South Central (Klickitat and Yakima counties)

Estimated seasonal workforce: 19,904 (17,297 local, 299 intrastate, 374 interstate, 362 foreign, 1,572 unknown origin)

Cherry Harvester	6,166	\$ 9.33/hr or \$ 2.50 - \$ 3.50 per bucket
Apple Hand Thinner	3,753	\$ 8.01/hr or \$ 0.20 - \$ 2.15 per tree
Cherry Sorter/Grader/Packer	2,818	\$ 7.93/hr
Apple Trainer	1,342	\$ 7.96/hr

North Central (Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, and Okanogan counties)

Estimated seasonal workforce: 11,650 (3,710 local, 88 intrastate, 272 interstate, 44 foreign, 7,536 unknown origin)

Apple Hand Thinner	4,617	\$ 7.93/hr or \$ 0.13 - \$ 4.00 per tree
Cherry Harvester	3,860	\$ 8.04/hr
Cherry Sorter/Grader/Packer	1,872	\$ 8.49/hr
Apple Preparation	332	\$ 8.03/hr

Columbia Basin (Adams and Grant counties)

Estimated seasonal workforce: 6,271 (5,011 local, 0 intrastate, 407 interstate, 216 foreign, 637 unknown origin)

Apple Hand Thinner	3,173	\$ 8.14/hr or \$ 0.33 - \$ 3.35 per tree
Cherry Harvester	1,449	\$ 7.93/hr
Asparagus Harvester	319	Not Available
Apple Pruner	180	\$ 8.08/hr

South Eastern (Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla counties)

Estimated seasonal workforce: 9,053 (5,632 local, 0 intrastate, 711 interstate, 1,369 foreign, 1,341 unknown origin)

Apple Hand Thinner	3,887	\$ 8.05/hr or \$ 0.25 - \$ 1.75 per tree
Cherry Harvester	1,670	\$ 7.94/hr or \$ 4.50 - \$ 6.00 per lug
Grapes Trainer	1,174	\$ 8.15/hr
Asparagus Harvester	531	\$ 8.01/hr

Eastern (Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, and Whitman counties)

Estimated seasonal workforce: 392 (339 local, 11 intrastate, 5 interstate, 37 foreign, 0 unknown origin)

Barley Mechanic	103	\$11.67/hr
Nursery Worker	50	\$ 8.44/hr
Wheat Tractor Operator	34	\$13.50/hr
Bulbs Weeder	28	\$ 8.50/hr

Washington State Agricultural Crop Areas Harvest Periods



Washington state crop harvest timetables are listed below by agricultural areas. The dates may vary considerably due to weather or other conditions.

Note that the five area groupings in the following timeline charts do not directly match with the six agricultural area groupings that are used in the Seasonal Farm Labor Survey data used in this report.

Washington State Agricultural Crop Areas												
Major Crops	Okanogan and Wenatchee Crop Areas											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Apples												
Cherries												
Pears												
Golden Delicious												
Red Delicious												

Washington State Agricultural Crop Areas												
Major Crops	Moses Lake Crop Areas											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Asparagus												
Apples												
Cherries												
Peaches												
Potatoes												

Washington State Agricultural Crop Areas												
Major Crops	Tri-Cities and Walla Walla Crop Areas											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Asparagus												
Apples												
Cherries												
Apricots												
Peaches												
Pears												
Onions												
Strawberries												

Washington State Agricultural Crop Areas												
Major Crops	Bellingham and Mount Vernon Crop Areas											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowers												
Cucumbers												
Broccoli												
Cauliflower												
Spinach												
Blueberries												
Raspberries												
Strawberries												

Washington State Agricultural Crop Areas												
Major Crops	Bingen, Sunnyside, and Yakima Crop Areas											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Asparagus												
Apples												
Cherries												
Peaches												
Pears												
Grapes												
Hops												
Vegetables												



June 2007
Agricultural Farm Labor Report, Washington State
Estimated Number of Seasonal Hired Workers by Place of Origin

Agricultural Reporting Area	Local	Intra-state	Inter-state	Foreign	Unknown	Seasonal Area Total	Permanent Area Total	Total Area Total
1. Western	1,420	60	320	20	2,520	4,330	7,360	11,700
2. South Central	17,300	300	370	360	1,570	19,900	12,480	32,390
3. North Central	3,710	90	270	40	7,540	11,650	10,870	22,520
4. Columbia Basin	5,010	0	410	220	640	6,270	6,110	12,380
5. South Eastern	5,630	0	710	1,370	1,340	9,050	11,850	20,900
6. Eastern	340	10	10	40	0	390	960	1,350
State Totals	33,410	460	2,090	2,040	13,610	51,600	49,630	101,240
% State Seasonal	64.7%	0.9%	4.0%	4.0%	26.4%	100.0%		

Total Agricultural Employment

	June 07	May 07	June 06	Change		Percent Change	
				May 07- June 07	June 06- June 07	May 07- June 07	June 06- June 07
State	101,240	62,990	98,300	38,270	2,950	60.8%	3.0%
Western	11,700	9,970	12,000	1,730	-300	17.4%	-2.5%
South Central	32,390	18,590	30,870	13,800	1,510	74.2%	4.9%
North Central	22,520	12,480	22,480	10,040	40	80.4%	0.2%
Columbia Basin	12,380	8,110	11,860	4,280	530	52.8%	4.5%
South Eastern	20,900	12,550	19,840	8,350	1,070	66.5%	5.4%
Eastern	1,350	1,290	1,250	70	100	5.4%	8.0%

Seasonal Agricultural Employment

	June 07	May 07	June 06	Change		Percent Change	
				May 07- June 07	June 06- June 07	May 07- June 07	June 06- June 07
State	51,600	23,400	51,910	28,200	-300	120.5%	-0.6%
Western	4,330	3,110	5,160	1,220	-820	39.4%	-16.1%
South Central	19,900	6,940	17,040	12,960	2,860	186.8%	16.8%
North Central	11,650	3,120	11,330	8,530	320	273.9%	2.8%
Columbia Basin	6,270	3,200	6,770	3,070	-500	95.8%	-7.4%
South Eastern	9,050	6,570	10,190	2,480	-1,140	37.7%	-11.2%
Eastern	390	460	510	-70	-120	-15.0%	-23.5%

For more data and a sample of the Agricultural Labor Report survey, go to [June 2007 Agricultural Labor Employment and Wages Tables on Workforce Explorer](#)

Agricultural Labor Report
Factors Affecting the Farm Labor Supply and Demand Situation
Crop, Market, and Weather Conditions by Area
Washington State, June 2007



Western (Area 1)

Weather conditions were cooler and wetter than normal for the reporting period. Sweet corn growers continued to report slow growth due to the unseasonably cool temperatures. Strawberry harvest continued and raspberries and blueberries were ripening up. Corn, beans, and potatoes were showing healthy growth.



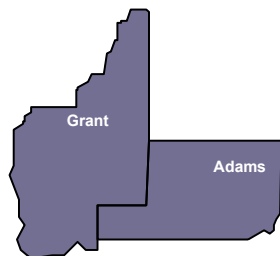
South Central (Area 2)

Weather conditions were cooler and wetter than normal for the reporting period. Harvest picked up with Bing and Rainier cherries ripening. This year's cherry harvest will be a bit short in areas that experienced late-season frosts, but the overall harvest promises to yield high quality and large fruit. The size of the apple crop was progressing nicely with Red Delicious fruit measuring 40 to 55 mm in diameter in the mid- to lower-Yakima Valley.



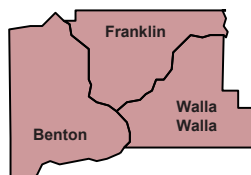
North Central (Area 3)

Weather conditions were cooler and wetter than normal for the reporting period. Primary agricultural activities were cherry harvest, apple hand thinning, cherry warehouse work, and apple training.



Columbia Basin (Area 4)

Weather conditions were cooler and wetter than normal for the reporting period. Winter and spring crops were advancing as harvest was quickly approaching. Apple hand thinning continued. The first cutting of alfalfa was nearly complete, with the first cutting of Timothy hay in full swing. Cherry harvest began. Bean planting continued. Fresh pea harvest was to begin soon.



South Eastern (Area 5)

Weather conditions were cooler and wetter than normal for the reporting period. Green pea harvest was in full swing. Most grain looked average to above average. Some second cutting hay was started. Primary agricultural activities were apple hand thinning, cherry harvest, grapes training, and asparagus harvest.