



Farm Worker

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Job Description:

Farm and ranch workers help raise crops and livestock for market.

Wages:

Average median yearly pay is about \$26,000 a year in Utah.

Schedule: May work full or part time. Usually work more than eight hours per day, and six days a week. Work is heavier in the growing season.

Education & Experience:

- ◆ Short-term on the job training
- ◆ Have a driver's license

High

School Courses:

- ◆ Agricultural Production
- ◆ Agriculture Technology
- ◆ Animal Science
- ◆ Driver Education
- ◆ Horticulture
- ◆ Physical Education

Work Conditions:

- ◆ Often work outdoors. Generally work indoors only when working with farm animals.
- ◆ Often are exposed to hazardous equipment
- ◆ Sometimes are exposed to very hot or very cold temperatures while working outside
- ◆ Are exposed to diseases and infections from the animals on a daily basis.
- ◆ Repeat the same physical and mental activities
- ◆ Doesn't make a lot of decisions on own—takes input from supervisors

Travel: May cover large distances while at work.

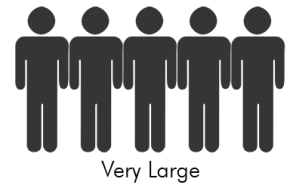
Gross Monthly Income:

\$2,100

Advancement: Farm and ranch workers have many opportunities for advancement. They may advance from working on small farms to working on larger ones. Those who have leadership skills may become agricultural worker supervisors. Those who are able to save money may rent or purchase land and run their own farm or ranch.

Ranch workers who enjoy working with animals may become animal breeders, caretakers, or trainers. They may need additional training to qualify for these occupations.

Job Outlook:



Very Large

Hours a Week:

50

Leisure Time:

Low

Knowledge:

- ◆ Food Production
- ◆ Mechanical

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Overview

According to the U.S. census, there are over two million farms in America. On average, each farm is about 430 acres in size. This represents nearly one billion acres of land.

Duties of farm and ranch workers vary with the type of farm and the season. Some work with food crops such as grains, fruits, nuts, or vegetables. They plow, plant, water, and fertilize plants to start their growth. Then workers cultivate and spray plants to reduce the number of weeds and bugs. Finally, they harvest and store crops. Depending on the size of the farm or what they are growing, farm workers may plant or harvest by hand or use machines. After the harvest, they sort and grade products for quality and package them for sale. Some farm workers may work only during the spring and summer months. Others, such as those on organic farms, may work all year because they grow cover crops during the winter months.

Other farm and ranch workers feed, water, groom, and care for livestock and poultry. They examine animals or birds for diseases. When necessary, they provide simple medical care, such as giving shots or cleaning wounds. Occasionally, they help with birthing animals. In addition, they tag or brand animals so owners can identify their livestock. Farm and ranch workers build or repair structures, such as fences or pens. They also keep barns, stables, pens, and kennels clean.

On larger farms, farm workers may operate equipment such as tractors, hay balers, and milking machines. They also may maintain and repair equipment that breaks down. For example, they may repair irrigation pipes or dig out trenches that are clogged. During busy times such as harvesting, farm workers may direct work crews. Farm and ranch workers keep records of farm production. For example, they record how the animals or crops grew, how much food they gave them, and how much they produced. By sharing this information with farmers, farm and ranch workers help improve future farm production.

Pathway:

Agriculture