

Observatory monitoring framework – indicator data sheet

Process: Farm Business

Indicator B9: Labour profiles

This indicator presents the following labour force data on agricultural holdings.

- Total agricultural labour force;
- Number of farmers, managers and employees;
- Average labour force per holding.

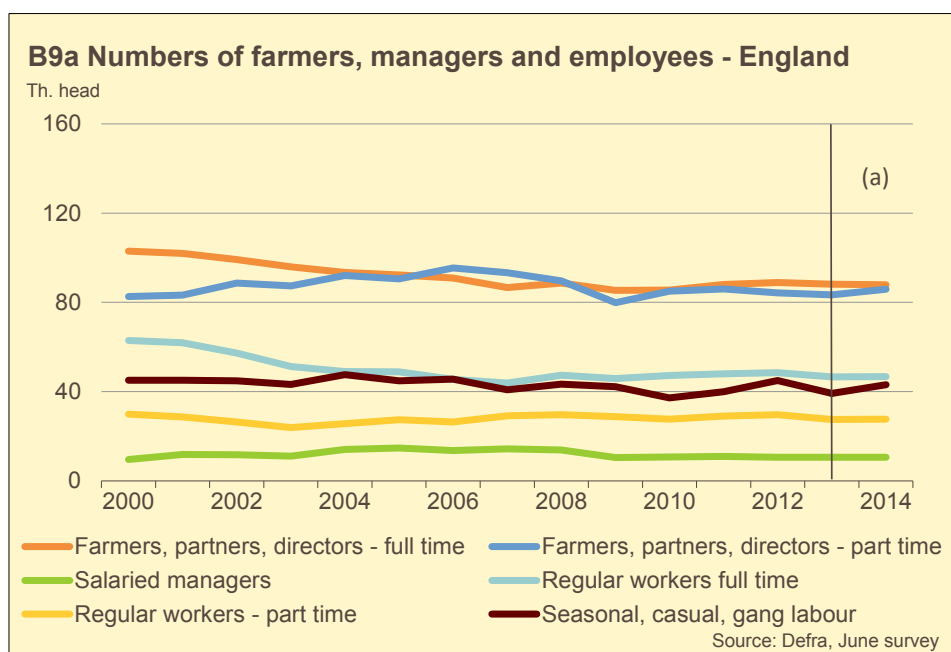


Between 2000 and 2014, the total agricultural labour force in England has declined by 9%.

(a) Standard outputs were previously based on a five year average centred around 2007. In 2013 the five year average was changed to centre on 2010. Results for 2013 are shown here on each basis for comparison.

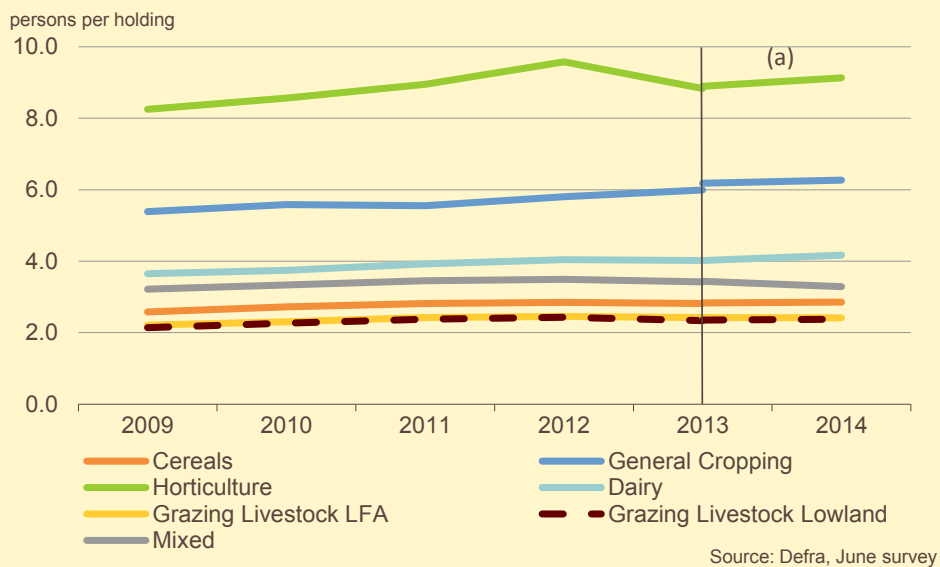
Between 2000 and 2014:

- The number of full time farmers, partners and directors has declined by 15%;
- The total number of registered workers fell by 20%; full time by 26% and part time by 8%;
- Seasonal, casual and gang workers were 5% lower.



(a) Standard outputs were previously based on a five year average centred around 2007. In 2013 the five year average was changed to centre on 2010. Results for 2013 are shown here on each basis for comparison.

B9b Average labour force per holding by farm type (holdings >= 0.25 SLR)



(a) Standard outputs were previously based on a five year average centred around 2007. In 2013 the five year average was changed to centre on 2010. Results for 2013 are shown here on each basis for comparison.

- Horticulture has the highest labour requirements in terms of number of regular workers per holding. Grazing livestock holdings have the lowest, averaging less than half a regular worker per holding;
- The average number of farmers, partners, directors and spouses per holding has remained relatively constant at approximately 2 for all holding types between 2000 and 2014.

This indicator was updated in September 2015. It will next be updated in 2016.

Between 2009 and 2014:

- With the exception of horticulture and general cropping, there has been little change in the average labour force per holding by types;
- Increases for horticulture and general cropping are largely driven by increases in the average number of seasonal, casual and gang workers per holding;

Further information and contact

Background information can be found in the accompanying fact sheet.

For further queries or information on this indicator contact Defra's Observatory team on +44 (0) 1904 455058 or email Observatory@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Observatory monitoring framework – indicator fact sheet

Process: Farm business

Indicator B9: Labour profiles

<i>Indicator</i>	Labour Profiles														
<i>Data</i>	Numbers of agricultural workers and average labour force per holding														
<i>Geographic coverage</i>	England														
<i>Years</i>	2000-2014 (Total labour force) 2000-2014 (Farmers, Managers, Employees and Casual Labour) 2009-2014 (Labour force per holding by farm type)														
<i>Source</i>	Defra														
<i>Origin of data</i>	June survey														
<i>Updates</i>	Labour results from the June survey are usually published in October each year. More detailed data at a farm type level are usually available in the spring of the year following the survey. Detailed data by farm type for 2015 will be updated in 2016.														
<i>Background</i>	Increased mechanisation and a drive to increase efficiency are the main drivers leading to a reduction in the need for farm labour. However, patterns may change as the relative profitability of enterprises alters and some land passes to owners with other sources of income who may be prepared to support higher levels of labour input than may be justified by agricultural income alone. Levels of labour input are likely to affect the impact of farming operations on the environment. Where labour is minimised to obtain economies of scale, management practices could become standardised over large areas of land. Time for labour intensive management of habitats may be limited. Alternatively, for farms diversifying, or where agri-environment schemes are seen as an important source of income, higher levels of labour input may be supported. The labour recorded is that present on the holding at the beginning of June each year.														
<i>Statistical & methodological information</i>	The June Survey is an annual sample survey of agricultural holdings in England. A census is undertaken every decade to meet EU requirements. The sample is stratified by farm size with the sampling rate increasing with farm size (measured by Standard Labour Requirement (SLR)). In 2005, holdings of less than 0.25 SLR were sampled at a rate of just 10% whilst all holdings over 5 SLR received a form. Overall sampling rates, since sampling was introduced in 1995, have been:														
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>1994</th> <th>1995</th> <th>1996</th> <th>1997</th> <th>1998</th> <th>1999</th> <th>2000</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>100%</td> <td>82%</td> <td>82%</td> <td>73%</td> <td>74%</td> <td>75%</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	100%	82%	82%	73%	74%	75%	100%
1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000									
100%	82%	82%	73%	74%	75%	100%									

(a) 2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
21%	41%	39%	25%	38%	31%	28%

(a) reduced sample due to Foot and Mouth Disease

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
19%	19%	100%	29%	28%	48%	28%

Response rates in recent years have been approximately 70%.

Results for each question are produced using ratio raising techniques.

Changes in survey methodology have resulted in breaks in the series in 1998 (affecting the classification of labour to individual categories to a greater extent than the overall total) and 2000 (non-commercial agricultural holdings no longer included).

In 1998, fundamental changes were introduced to the labour questions on the June Agricultural and Horticultural Survey in England. It appears that this change in questions may have led to the recording of additional Labour not previously included in the returns. The change in questions has also led to a redistribution of labour between the various categories, most notably for salaried managers. Furthermore, a revised methodology was introduced in 2001 and backdated to 1998. The net effect of this methodological change was to reduce the level of the labour series by about 5,000 in 1998.

A revised typology system was introduced in June 2010 (to meet EU requirements) and backdated to June 2009. This has resulted in a widespread reclassification of farms. In particular, 12,500 farms previously classified as specialist grass and forage within robust farm type "other" are now classified as robust farm type "general cropping".

In 2010 the June survey methodology changed to give a clearer picture of the year on year trends in commercial farming structures. To do this, the smallest "non-commercial" holdings have been excluded from our estimates and we now only report on the numbers of people employed on larger "commercial" holdings. As this has an impact on the statistics, particularly for labour force estimates, a backdated set of results has been produced from 2001 to 2009 so users can see the trends on a comparable basis. At the same time a revised typology for assigning farms to robust farm types was also introduced. Further details about the typology change can be found in the fact sheet for Observatory indicator B2.

The 2010 June Census also provided a good opportunity to ensure our statistical register of agricultural holdings were up to date and accurate. We identified a large number of holdings with whom we have not had contact for a number of years and do not appear recently on any other Defra administrative system. This suggests these holdings are very small, inactive or in non-agricultural use and so we have removed them from the register and, as these holdings have been inactive for a number of years, adjusted the 2009 June Survey results to reflect this.

Standard outputs were based on a five year average centred around 2007. In 2013 the five year average was changed to centre on 2010. Results for 2013 are shown on each basis for comparison.

Further information

Defra June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture information and data can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/series/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry>