

AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ACT, 1936, AND SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT, 1919, ALSO SHARE-MILKING AGREEMENTS ACT, 1937

REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Rates of wages for adult agricultural workers employed on dairy-farms were increased from £4 a week to £4 5s. a week on 1st August, 1945 (where board and lodging is not provided by the employer an additional amount of £1 a week is payable to the worker): see Agricultural Workers Wage Fixation Order 1945 (Serial number 1945/125). Rates of wages for adult agricultural workers employed on farms and stations were increased from £3 15s. per week to £4 5s. per week from 1st April, 1946 (where board and lodging is not provided by the employer an additional amount of £1 is payable to the worker): see Agricultural Workers Extension Order 1942, Amendment No. 2 (Serial number 1946/35).

For comparison purposes the minimum rates prescribed for the several classes of agricultural workers are given in tabular form:—

Class.	Rate for Adult Worker.	Date from which payable.	Authorizing Measure.	Reference in Statutory Regulations Series.
Dairy-farms ..	£4 5s. per week (plus board and lodging)	1/8/45	The Agricultural Workers Wage Fixation Order 1945	1945/125
Farms and stations ..	£4 5s. per week (plus board and lodging)	1/4/46	The Agricultural Workers Extension Order 1942, Amendment No. 2	1946/35
Orchards ..	Male, *£5 5s. per week ; 2s. 7½d. per hour Female, †£3 15s. per week 1s. 10½d. per hour	28/9/45	The Agricultural Workers Extension Order 1940, Amendment No. 3	1945/139
Tobacco ..	Male, 2s. 7½d. per hour ; Female, 1s. 9d. per hour	1/10/45	The Agricultural Workers Extension Order 1945	1945/194
Market gardens ..	Male, £4 per week ; 2s. per hour Female, £2 4s. and £2 8s. per week	1938 and 1939	Various	1938/53, 1938/74, 1938/92, 1938/184, 1939/58.

* Less £1 if board and lodging is provided.

† Less 13s. 9d. if board and lodging is provided.

NOTE.—Higher rates than some of those above quoted were payable from 1st April, 1946, under the Minimum Wage Act, 1945, which fixes minimum rates as follows: Males, 2s. 9d. per hour, £1 2s. per day, £5 5s. per week; females, 1s. 8d. per hour, 13s. 4d. per day, £3 3s. per week.

INSPECTION, ETC.

During the year, 805 inspections were made, 289 being of a general nature and the remainder in respect of accommodation, as follows: farms and stations, 100; dairy-farms, 38; shearers, 283; sawmills, 78; orchards, 10; and others, 7.

One hundred and twelve breaches were discovered by Inspectors, whilst 543 complaints of alleged breaches were received. In 139 cases it was found that no breach had been committed. Warnings were issued in 384 cases, and 8 prosecutions, resulting in 5 convictions, were instituted. Fines imposed amounted to £9 10s.

Permits to accept less than the minimum rates prescribed by Act or Extension Orders were issued in 304 cases (part-time employment, 9 males and 105 females; inexperience, 29 males and 1 female; disability, 151 males and 1 female; other reasons, 8 males).

No serious disputes arose during the year under the Share-milking Agreements Act, 1937. Many inquiries were, however, made of officers of the Department, who, in a number of cases where disputes arising out of the terms of the contract were referred to arbitration, assisted in the appointment of arbitrators. Civil proceedings for recovery of moneys were taken in 2 cases. In each, judgment was in favour of the defendant.