

Employment of seasonal workers from overseas on farms in Herefordshire – 2009

Final version, August 2009

Seasonal Migrant Workers 2009

Summary

This report presents the analysis of information obtained from farmers in Herefordshire about their expected employment of seasonal workers from overseas during the course of 2009.

The results are based on the information provided by 19 farmers in Herefordshire, including three of the largest growers in the county, S & A (Brierley), Haygrove (Ledbury) and Hommes Farm (Ross-on-Wye).

The total number of individual seasonal workers from overseas expected to be employed during the course of 2009 is 5,600, which is a 16% decrease compared to 2008 (6,700).

The maximum number of seasonal workers expected to be working on the farms at a time is 4,500 in June, dropping to 4,000 in July.

More men (58%) were expected than the women (42%) and no dependents were expected to come with the overseas workers during the course of 2009. These seasonal workers are expected to come mainly from Bulgaria (47%), Poland (27%) and Romania (14%). The proportions of Bulgarians and Romanians have increased over the last 3 years since the SAWS is exclusively for Bulgaria and Romania from January 2008.

The highest proportion of overseas workers are expected to arrive during May (40%) and June (35%).

17 farms stated that they provide accommodation for the seasonal workers, mainly in caravans (71%). 8 farms directly sourced their seasonal overseas work force or recruit through an agency.

Background

Information about the numbers of seasonal workers from other countries employed on Herefordshire farms is required to help local organisations plan their service provision. West Mercia Constabulary has gathered some information from farmers about numbers that they expected to employ since 2006. Herefordshire Council Research Team has provided support (data entry and analysis) since 2007.

It was agreed that it was important to get an indication of the total number of individuals who were employed during the course of the year (i.e. allowing for turnover); in addition to numbers employed each month which would highlight peak periods. Both measures have implications for service provision.

Methodology

A revised form to gather the information from farmers was designed by the Research Team (See Appendix). The forms were posted to farms in Herefordshire in (month) by West Mercia Constabulary and returned to them. 19 farms including S & A (Brierley), Haygrove (Ledbury) and Homme Farm (Ross-on-Wye) had responded by end of July 2009.

Results

Total number expected

A total of 5600 individual workers from overseas are expected to be employed by 19 farms in Herefordshire during the course of 2009, which is a 16% decrease compared to the total expected in 2008 (6700).

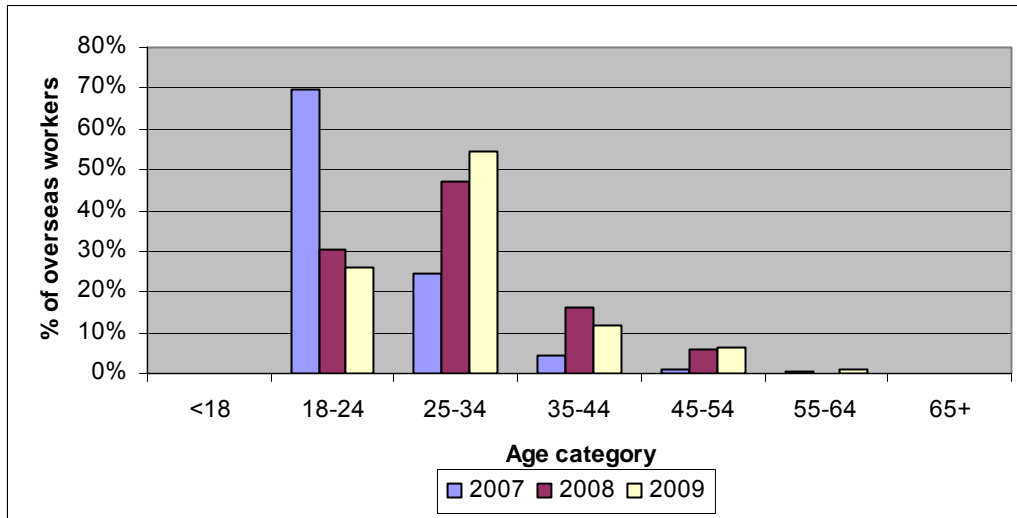
Gender

58% of seasonal workers are expected to be men while 42% women.

Age groups

Over half (55%) of the workers are expected to be in the age group 25 – 34, a further 26% aged between 18 – 24 and 12% in the age group 35 – 44 years. Over the last 3 years, age profile of the seasonal workers has changed significantly. In 2007, 70% of the seasonal workers were in the age group 18 – 24 years and 24% were aged 25 -34 years, while in 2009 26% of the seasonal workers expected to be in the age group 18 – 24 years and 55% to be aged 25 -34 years. Chart 1 shows the age distribution of the overseas workers expected to be employed in the Herefordshire farms in 2009 compared with the figures from 2 previous years.

Chart 1: Age groups for seasonal workers from overseas expected to be employed on farms in Herefordshire in 2009.

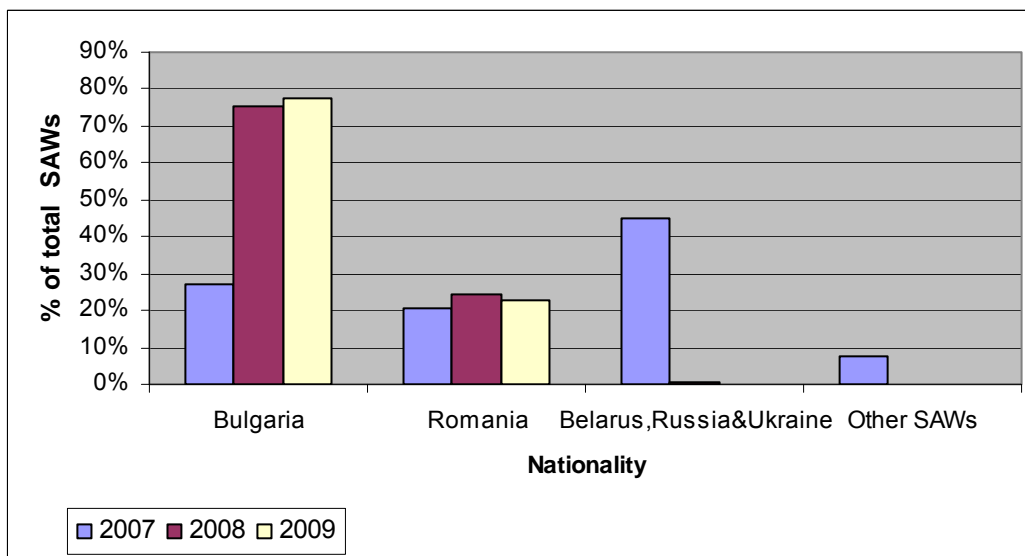


Dependents

From the information received, there no dependents were expected to come with the overseas workers during the course of 2009. In 2008, 17 dependents were expected to accompany the overseas workers and in 2007, there were 5 dependents were expected.

Nationality

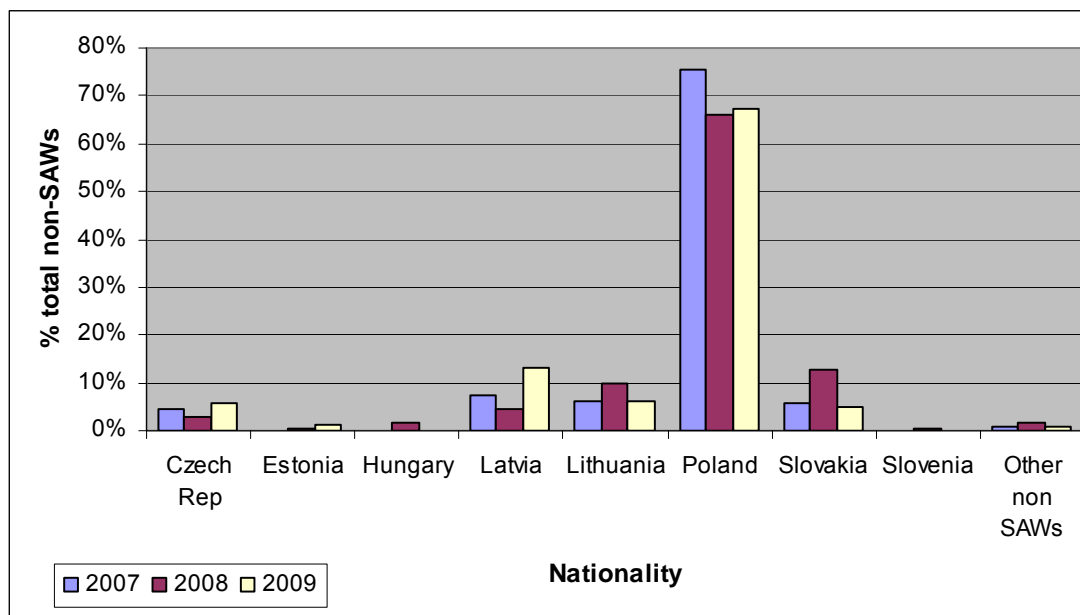
Chart 2: Nationality of seasonal workers expected to be employed on farms in Herefordshire through SAWS over last 3 years.



60% of the expected seasonal workers from overseas would be recruited through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS), which is significantly higher than 2008 (43%) and 2007 (39%). This quota base system (SAWS) covers workers from outside the European Area in previous years and from January 2008 SAWS is exclusively for Bulgaria and Romania.

As shown in the chart 2, 77% of the SAWS workers are expected to come from Bulgaria which is similar to 2008 (75%) and significantly higher than 2007 (27%). There are slight differences of the proportion of SAWS workers expected from Romania in last 3 years (23% in 2009, 24% in 2008 and 21% in 2007).

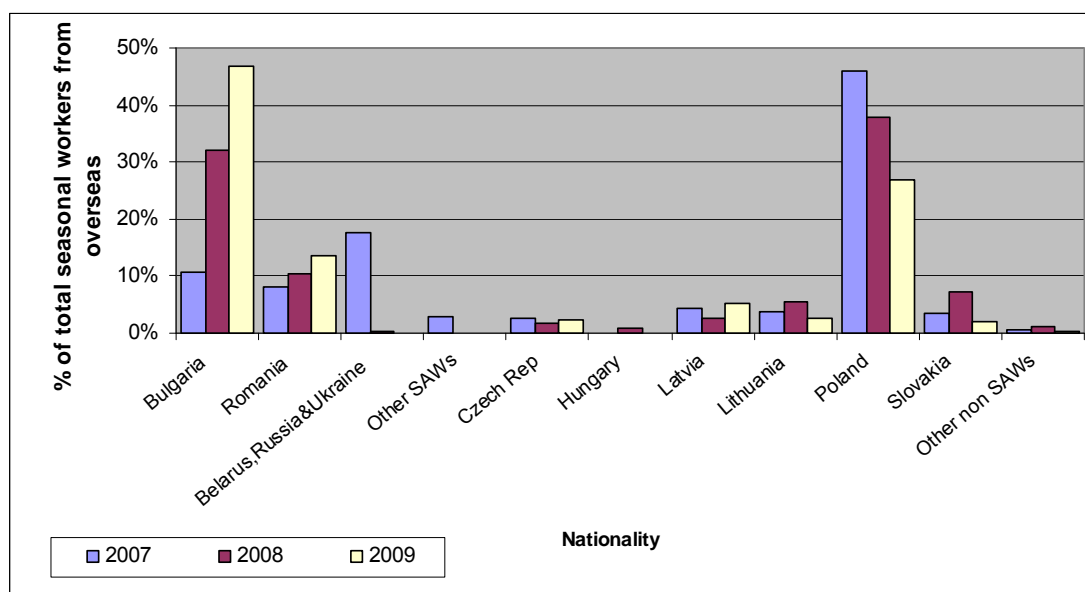
Chart 3: Nationality of seasonal workers expected to be employed on farms in Herefordshire via other means (non-SAWS) over last 3 years.



The seasonal workers expected via schemes not covered by SAWS – probably Worker Registration Scheme – were mostly from Poland (67%) which is almost similar to 2008 (66%). Further 13% from Latvia, 6% from Czech Republic and Lithuania and 5% from Slovakia are expected to come during the course of 2009.

Chart 3 shows the changes in proportions of expected workers from countries other than under SAWS during the previous 3 years. Seasonal workers expected to be employed on Herefordshire farms come from Poland has decreased from 75% in 2007 to 67% in 2009. Proportion of expected workers from Latvia has increased from 5% in 2008 to 13% in 2009 while the proportion from Slovakia has decreased from 13% in 2008 to 5% in 2009. Number of seasonal workers expected from Czech Republic (6% in 2008, 3% in 2009) and Lithuania (10% in 2008, 6% in 2009) has not changed significantly.

Chart 4: Nationality of all seasonal workers expected to be employed on farms in Herefordshire (SAWS +non- SAWS)



According to the chart 4, regardless of the scheme permitting work the highest proportion of workers are expected from Bulgaria (47%), followed by Poland (27%). In 2008, the proportions of workers expected from Bulgaria and Romania were 32% and 10% respectively while 2007 figures were 11% and 8%.

The numbers of seasonal workers expected from Bulgaria and Romania have increased continuously over the last 3 years while workers from Poland have decreased compared to 2007.

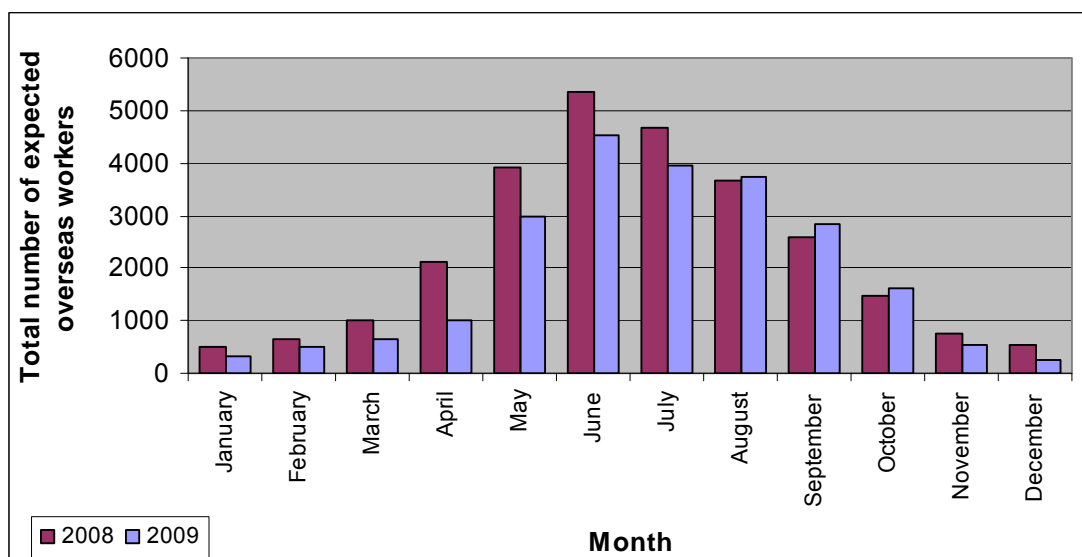
A total of 5 workers are expected under “other work permits” during the course of 2009, their nationality is not specified.

Seasonality

In order to identify the peak months for employment of seasonal agricultural workers, farmers were asked to estimate:

- a) The maximum number of seasonal workers that they expected to employ at any one point in the month
- b) The total arrivals of seasonal workers that they expected during the course of the month.

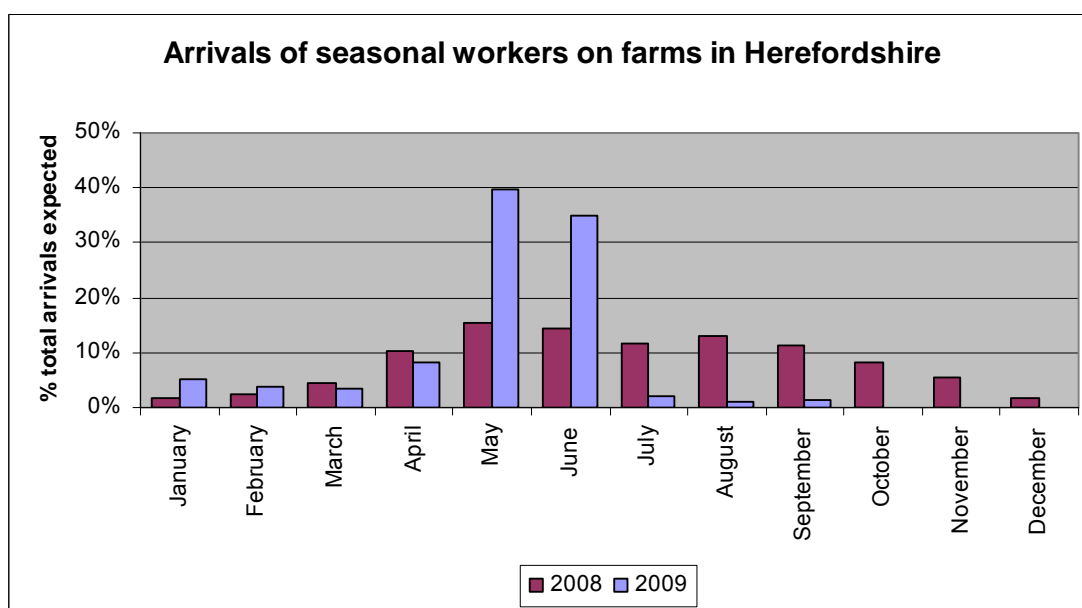
Chart 5: Maximum number of seasonal workers from overseas expected to be working on Herefordshire farms per month in 2008 and 2009



The peak months in terms of the maximum number of expected workers from overseas employed at any point of the month is June (4,523) and July (3,949). This shows a similar pattern to 2008 but with the number of expected workers higher than 2009 (5,350 in June 2008 and 4,650 in July)

The workers were mainly expected to be employed from April to October, though some are expected to be employed on the farms during the winter months too.

Chart 6: Arrivals of seasonal workers expected per month as a proportion of total arrivals expected on farms in Herefordshire in 2008 and 2009.



Information on total new arrivals of seasonal workers that are expected during the course of the month was collected in order to estimate those who are already on the farms and how many left the farm during the month.

According to chart 6, the highest proportion of arrivals are expected in May (40%) followed by 35% in June. The pattern of arrivals in 2009 is different to 2008 where there were new arrivals expected through out the year, but in 2009 new arrivals are hardly expected after September.

Length of stay expected

4 farms have stated that they expect some of their overseas workers will stay for more than one year.

Variation during the course of the year in terms of the gender, age group or nationality

2 farms responded to this question (Q7), saying that there will be more workers from Bulgaria expected to arrive in May and more workers from Poland expected in June. This information might be useful to service providers in relation to a specific farm but not enough to make overall conclusions.

Provision of accommodation for the overseas workers

17 farms responded to this question (Q8 and Q9) saying that they will provide accommodation for the expected overseas workers. The commonly selected type of accommodation is "Caravans" by 12 farms and "Cabins", "Hostels" and "Mobile homes" are among the other types of accommodation that they provide for the expected overseas workers.

Method of recruitment of overseas workers

From the 17 farms who responded to this question (Q10);

- 8 farms recruit their staff through an agency and directly by themselves
- 6 farms only directly sourced their work force
- 3 farms recruit only through an agency.

The most commonly stated agencies by these farms are "HOPS", "CONCORDIA" and "FRUITFULL".

Appendix: Survey form sent out to farms (next page)

4. Would you expect any of these seasonal workers to bring **dependents** with them? If so, what numbers would you expect over the course of 2008 in each of the age groups in the table below?

< 5	5-11	12-16

5. Based on the total from Q1, what number would you expect over the course of 2007 **from each of the countries** listed below?

Bulgaria	Romania	Total SAWs	Other work permits

Czech Rep.	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania

Poland	Slovakia	Slovenia	Other non-SAWs	Total non-SAWs

6. Now thinking about each month in turn, please use the table below to give estimates for:
- The maximum number of workers from overseas that you expect to employ **at any point in the month**.
 - The number of individual workers from overseas that you expect to arrive for work on your farm(s) **during the course of the month** (*please allow for any turnover*)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Maximum (a)												
Arrivals (b)												

- c) Do you expect that any of these workers from overseas will **stay for more than a year**? If so, how many?

7. Would you expect there to be any marked variation during the course of the year in terms of the gender, age group or nationality? (e.g. An influx of students from a particular country in particular months). If so, please use the space below to give details
8. Do you provide accommodation for the workers you employ Y/N

9. If you have answered yes to the above question please provide details of the numbers you do provide accommodation for, and the types of accommodation you provide.

Caravans	
Pods	
Cottage/ house	
Other (please specify)	
TOTAL	

10. Do you recruit your staff through agencies or direct by yourselves

Agency	
Directly sourced	
Total	

11. If you use an agency please provide the details below.

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Finally, please provide address of farm and contact details for someone who could answer any queries about the figures (if necessary):

Name:

Tel. No:

Address:

Post-code:

Do the seasonal workers from overseas work at this address?

Yes No

If no, please give postcode(s) for farm(s) where they work:

Many thanks for taking the time and trouble to complete this form.