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Interim Policy guidance not yet updated onto the main body of guidance:

Agricultural Minimum Wages – Current Rates

Under the SBS arrangements caseworkers need to ensure that posts for Mushroom Processors will receive a salary that complies with the levels set out by the Agricultural Wages Board, which are higher than the level of the National Minimum Wage.

On 01/10/2004, the minimum agricultural wages for England and Wales increased as follows:

Age 18 - £4.59 per hour or £179 per week

Age 19 & over - £5.40 per hour or £210.60 per week

Rates for Scotland remain the same as follows:

Age 18 - £4.38 per hour or £170 per week

Age 19 & over – £5.15 or £200 per week

Rates for Scotland will increase in January 2005

Rates for Northern Ireland remain the same as follows:

Age 18 - £4.33 per hour or £168 per week

Age 19 & over - £5.09 per hour or £198 per week

Rates for Northern Ireland will increase in April 2005.

The Ethnic Media table, and how to use it.

The purpose of the ethnic media table is to provide caseworkers with information to help in the consideration of the advertising requirement for work permit applications. The key messages about the use of the table and guidance were discussed in Policy Team presentations in September. Policy Team will keep the table under review to ensure its topicality and would welcome any information from Business Teams to update it.

Guidance:



Ethnic Media Table
Guide.doc

The table:



Ethnic media list, for
sending...

SBS salary guidance for Mushroom pickers and paragraphs to use.

There has been a change to the salary entitlement of mushroom pickers under the Agricultural Wages Order for England and Wales.

Mushroom pickers have always been and continue to be classed as agricultural workers under the current Agricultural Wages Order (AWO). The key change introduced from 1 October 2004 is to include mushroom harvesting within the scope of the Manual Harvest Worker category in the Wages Order.

A manual harvest worker rate can be paid where the individual is spending 100% of their time picking or packing consumable produce at the place it was grown.

The current **Manual Harvest Worker** rates for England and Wales are;

Age

18 £4.12 p/h

19 & over £4.85 p/h

Employers can pay mushroom pickers at this Manual Harvest Worker Rate for the first 30 weeks of employment (excluding holidays) in any 12 month period. After 30 weeks, the higher, standard worker rate of must be paid (see next page).

Caseworkers should seek confirmation from the employer that they will comply with the agricultural wages order by using enquiry paragraph **SB6M**. When approving such applications, paragraph **SB7A** should be used as a condition of approval.

If the worker undertakes any other duties, such as tending to crops, then the higher, standard worker rate of must be paid. caseworkers should be aware that the 12 month period is for one employer. If the worker changes employer, then a new 12 month period has started.

Further information can be obtained from the Defra Wages Team Tel: 020 7271 6132.

Scotland and Northern Ireland

Mushroom harvesting is covered by the standard agricultural wages pay rates for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Summary of current agricultural wages rates

England and Wales (due to be updated 01/10/2005)

Standard Workers

Age	Hourly Pay	Weekly Pay
18	4.59	179
19 & over	5.40	210

Manual Harvest Workers

Age	Hourly Pay	Weekly Pay
18	4.12	160
19 & over	4.85	189

Northern Ireland (due to be updated 05/04/2005)

Age	Hourly Pay	Weekly Pay
18	4.33	168
19 & over	5.09	198

Scotland (due to be updated 01/01/2006)

Age	1 st 10 weeks of employment	After 10 weeks of employment
18	4.10 p/h	4.46 p/h
19 & over	4.85 p/h	5.25 p/h