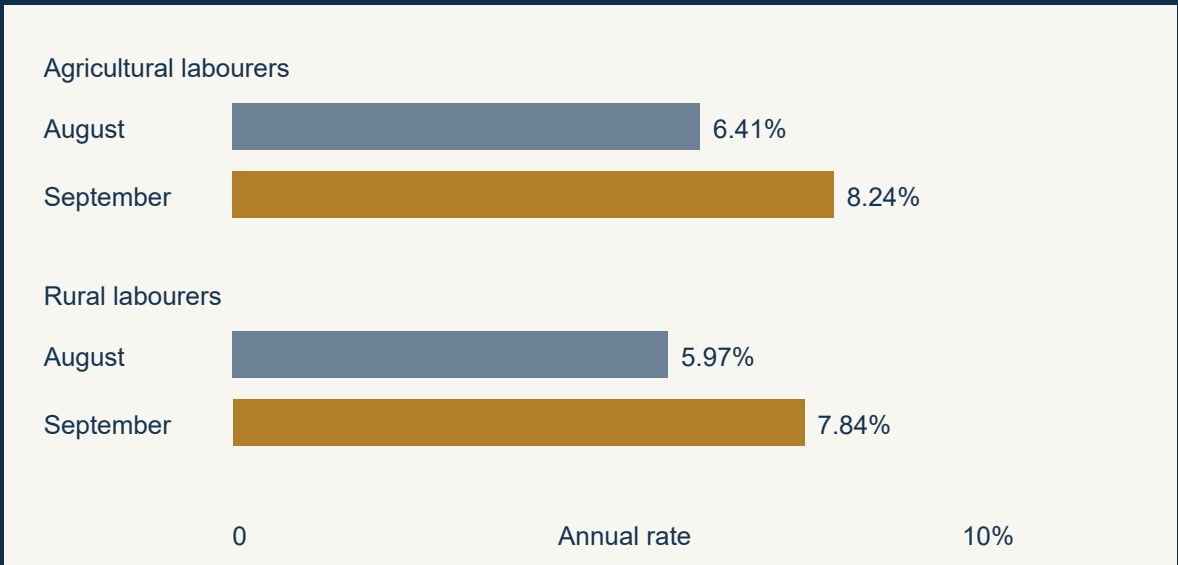


Food inflation rises for agricultural and rural labourers

Food inflation for agricultural labourers reached 8.24 per cent in September 2026, up from 6.41 per cent in August 2026. For rural labourers it rose from 5.97 per cent in August 2026 to 7.84 per cent in September 2026.



The Government should prioritise food-price relief for agricultural and rural labourer families. As food inflation rises, the cost of their food basket becomes a direct policy concern.

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Sources: [Labour Bureau, August 2026, released 18 September 2026](#); [Labour Bureau, September 2026, released 19 October 2026](#). Rates are per cent, year on year; indices use base 2019=100.

Food inflation rose for both groups

Between August and September 2026 the annual food-inflation rate rose by 1.83 percentage points for agricultural labourers and by 1.87 percentage points for rural labourers. In both groups the September food-inflation rate ran above the overall inflation rate for the same labourers.

Each inflation rate compares the index with the same month a year earlier. The increases of 1.83 and 1.87 percentage points are the change in the annual food-inflation rates between August and September 2026, and not the percentage increases in food prices during that one month.

Annual food inflation

Group	August 2026 %	September 2026 %	Rise, percentage points
Agricultural labourers	6.41	8.24	1.83
Rural labourers	5.97	7.84	1.87

Sources: [Labour Bureau, August 2026, released 18 September 2026](#); [Labour Bureau, September 2026, released 19 October 2026](#). Rates are per cent, year on year; indices use base 2019=100.

The wider basket also became dearer

Overall annual inflation for agricultural labourers rose from 5.18 per cent in August 2026 to 6.30 per cent in September 2026. For rural labourers, it rose from 4.83 per cent in August 2026 to 5.98 per cent in September 2026. These rates come from the all-items indices, which cover food and other consumer expenses.

Annual all-items inflation

Group	August 2026 %	September 2026 %
Agricultural labourers	5.18	6.30
Rural labourers	4.83	5.98

Index levels, base 2019=100

Group	Index	August 2026	September 2026
Agricultural labourers	All items	143.40	144.82
Agricultural labourers	Food	145.85	147.86
Rural labourers	All items	143.20	144.58
Rural labourers	Food	145.58	147.52

Sources: [Labour Bureau, August 2026, released 18 September 2026](#); [Labour Bureau, September 2026, released 19 October 2026](#). Rates are per cent, year on year; indices use base 2019=100.

Who and what the indices cover

The Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour and Employment, released the September 2026 figures on 19 October 2026. The CPI-AL and CPI-RL use the base 2019=100 and draw on data collected from 787 sample villages across 34 States and Union Territories. CPI-AL covers agricultural labourers; CPI-RL covers rural labourers.

The Government should prioritise food-price relief for agricultural and rural labourer families. As food inflation rises, the cost of their food basket becomes a direct policy concern.

The source and its coverage

Coverage	September 2026 release
Publisher	Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour & Employment
Base year	2019=100
Sample villages	787
States and Union Territories	34
Released	19 October 2026

Sources: [Labour Bureau, August 2026, released 18 September 2026](#); [Labour Bureau, September 2026, released 19 October 2026](#). Rates are per cent, year on year; indices use base 2019=100.

Annexure: sources and method

Source: Labour Bureau, All-India Consumer Price Index Numbers for Agricultural and Rural Labourers, September 2026, released on 19 October 2026. Coverage and base: PDF page 1, paragraph 1. Annual rates and August comparators: PDF page 2, paragraph 3 and the Inflation (%) table. The percentage-point changes are September rates minus August rates. The coverage counts describe the survey sample; the release does not measure wages, real income or the food bill of each individual household.

Change in the annual food inflation rate

Step	Calculation
Agricultural labourers	8.24 minus 6.41 = 1.83 percentage points
Rural labourers	7.84 minus 5.97 = 1.87 percentage points

Sources: [Labour Bureau, August 2026, released 18 September 2026](#); [Labour Bureau, September 2026, released 19 October 2026](#). Rates are per cent, year on year; indices use base 2019=100.