



# Demographic and Employment Characteristics of California's Crop Labor Force: Findings from the National Agricultural Workers Survey, 1989-2014

California Agriculture: Water, Labor,  
and Immigration Conference

U.C. Davis Law School

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Presenter: Daniel Carroll

Disclaimer: Views are solely those of the presenter



# Overview

- Who are California crop workers?
- How do California crop workers compare to crop workers in the US as a whole?
- How has the crop worker population changed in the last 25 years?





# National Agricultural Workers Survey

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)

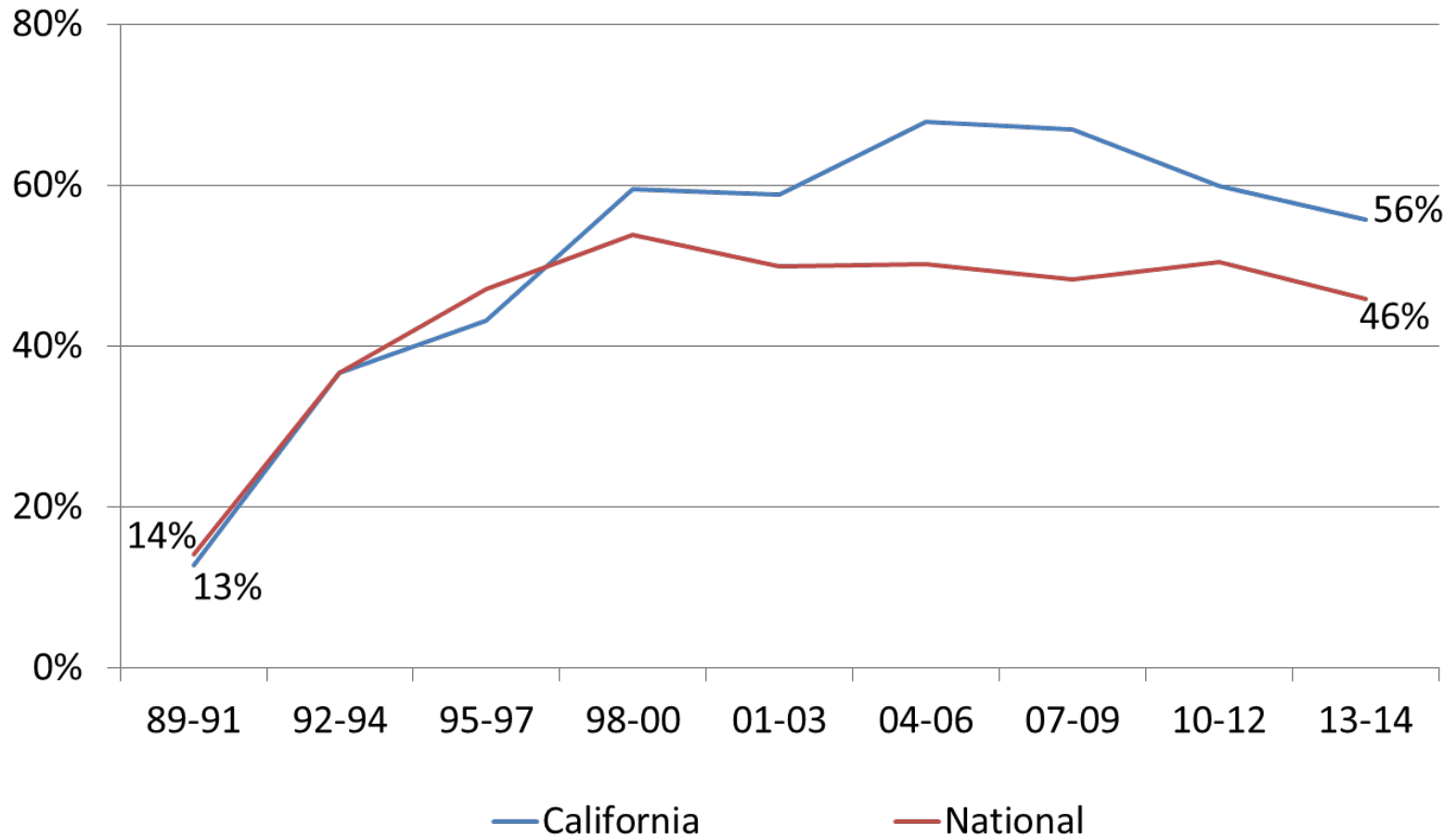
- National survey of crop workers, started fiscal year 1989
- Annual random sample survey of 1,500-3,000 workers
- Establishment survey – find workers at work
- Leading source of reliable information on crop worker demographics
- Limited regional coverage and no local numbers
- H-2A workers excluded

# NAWS Data Caveats

- This presentation uses data from FY1989 through FY2014. The FY2013-FY2014 data are preliminary and should not be cited.
- The data are grouped in multi-year intervals to get a large enough sample to make comparisons.
- Internal review of the data to account for the complex sampling design of the NAWS indicates that some of the estimates should be interpreted with caution because they have relative standard errors between 31 and 50 percent. These values are identified below with a superscript 'a'.

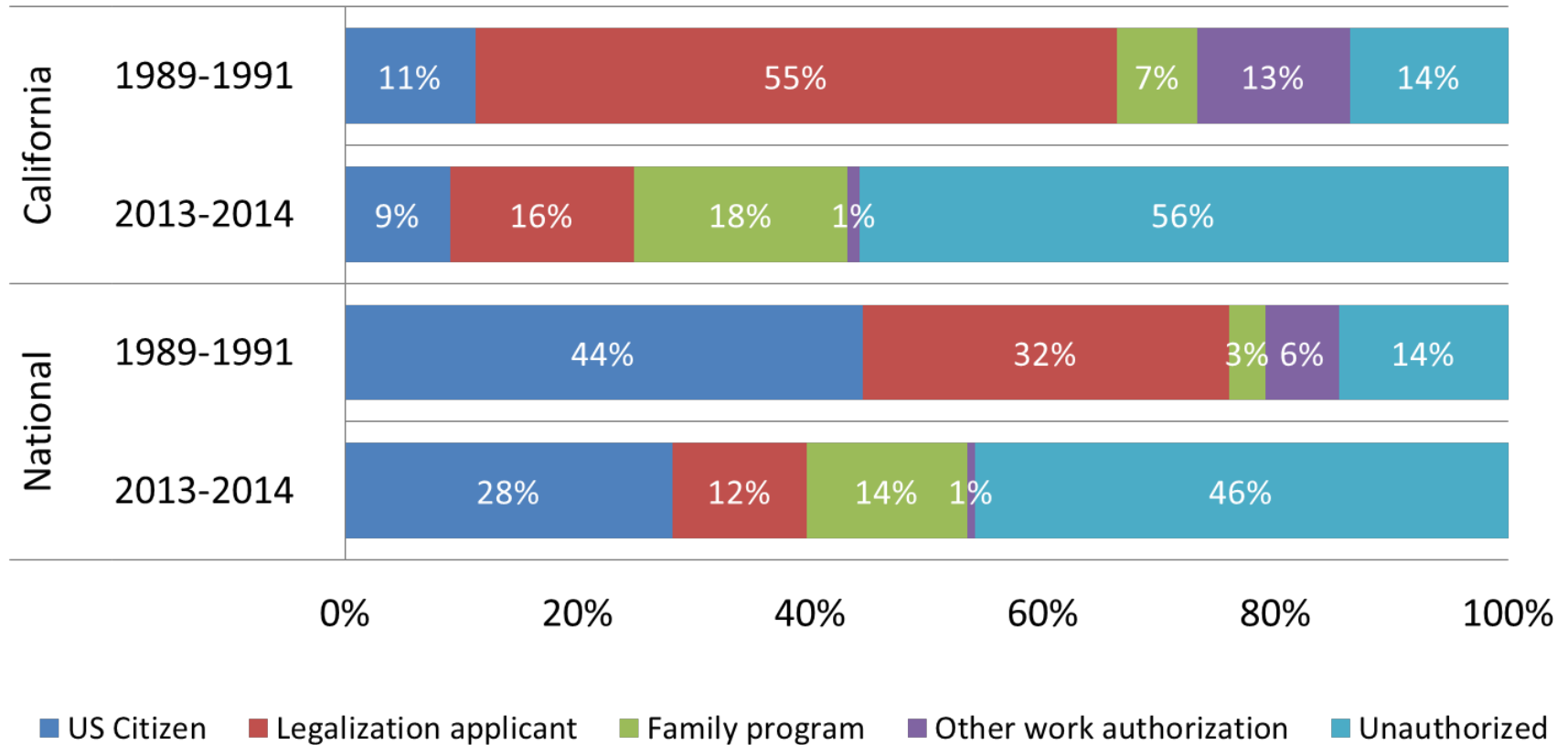
# Unauthorized

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



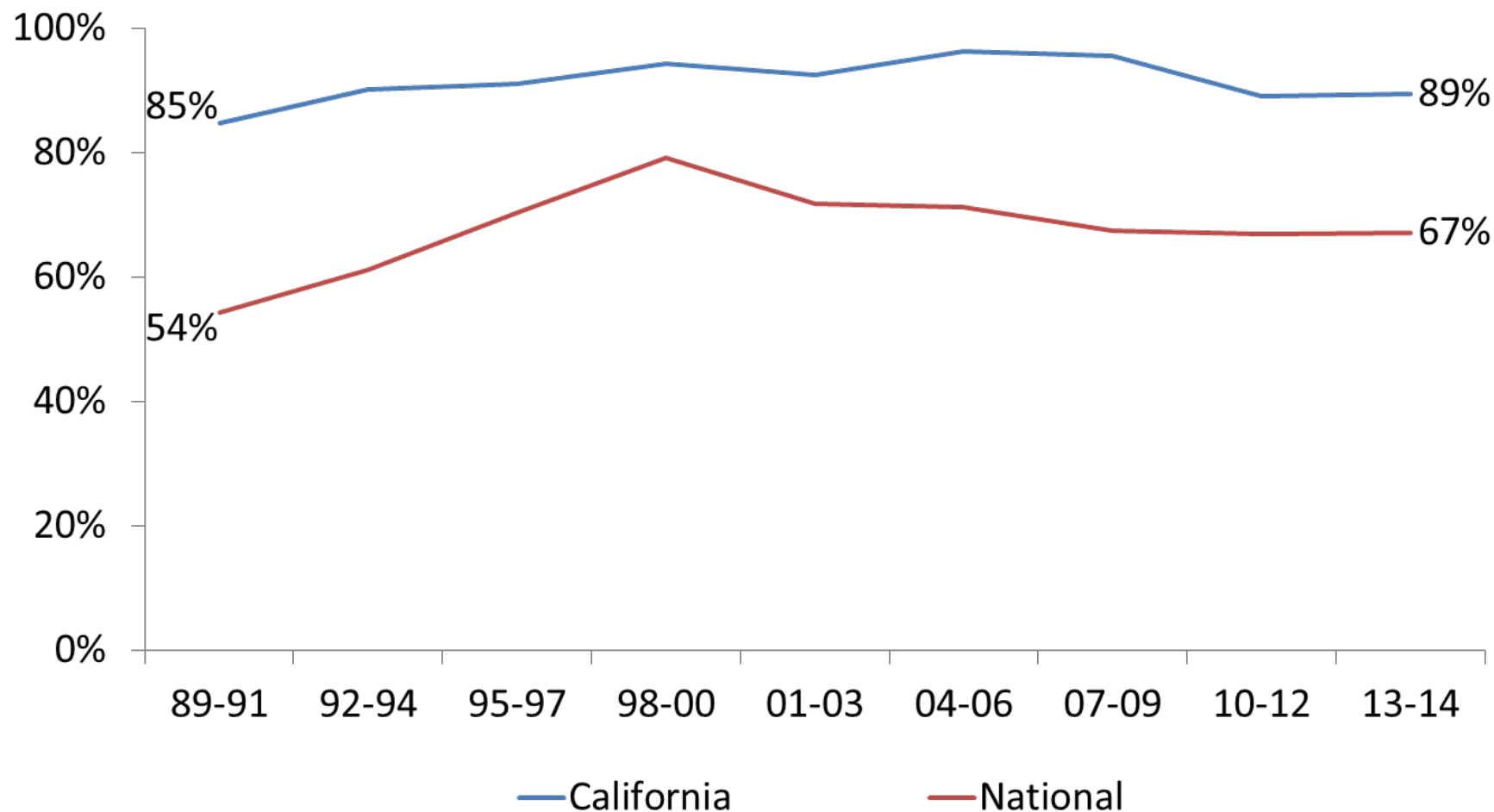
# Legal Application Status

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



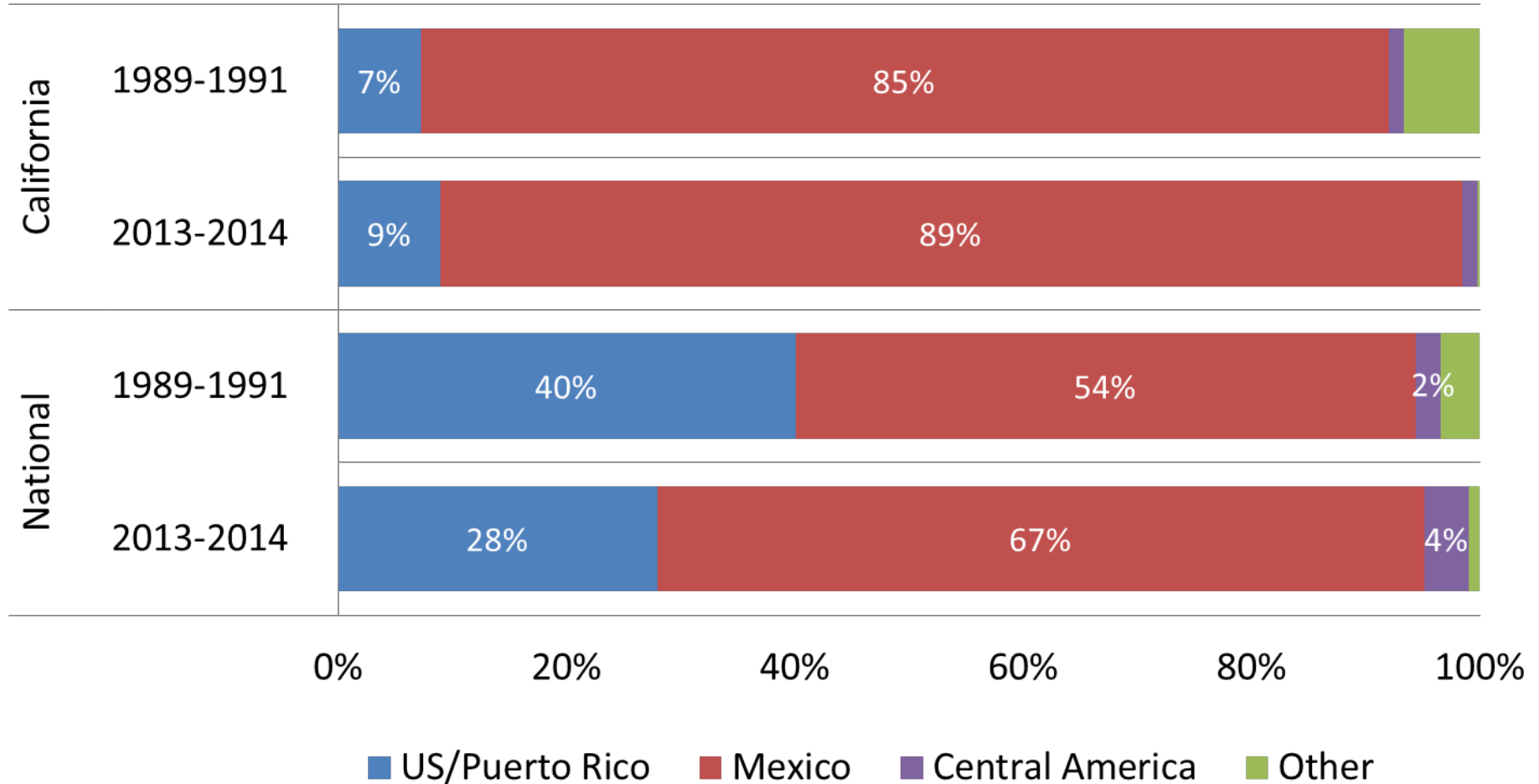
# Mexico-Born

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Place of Birth

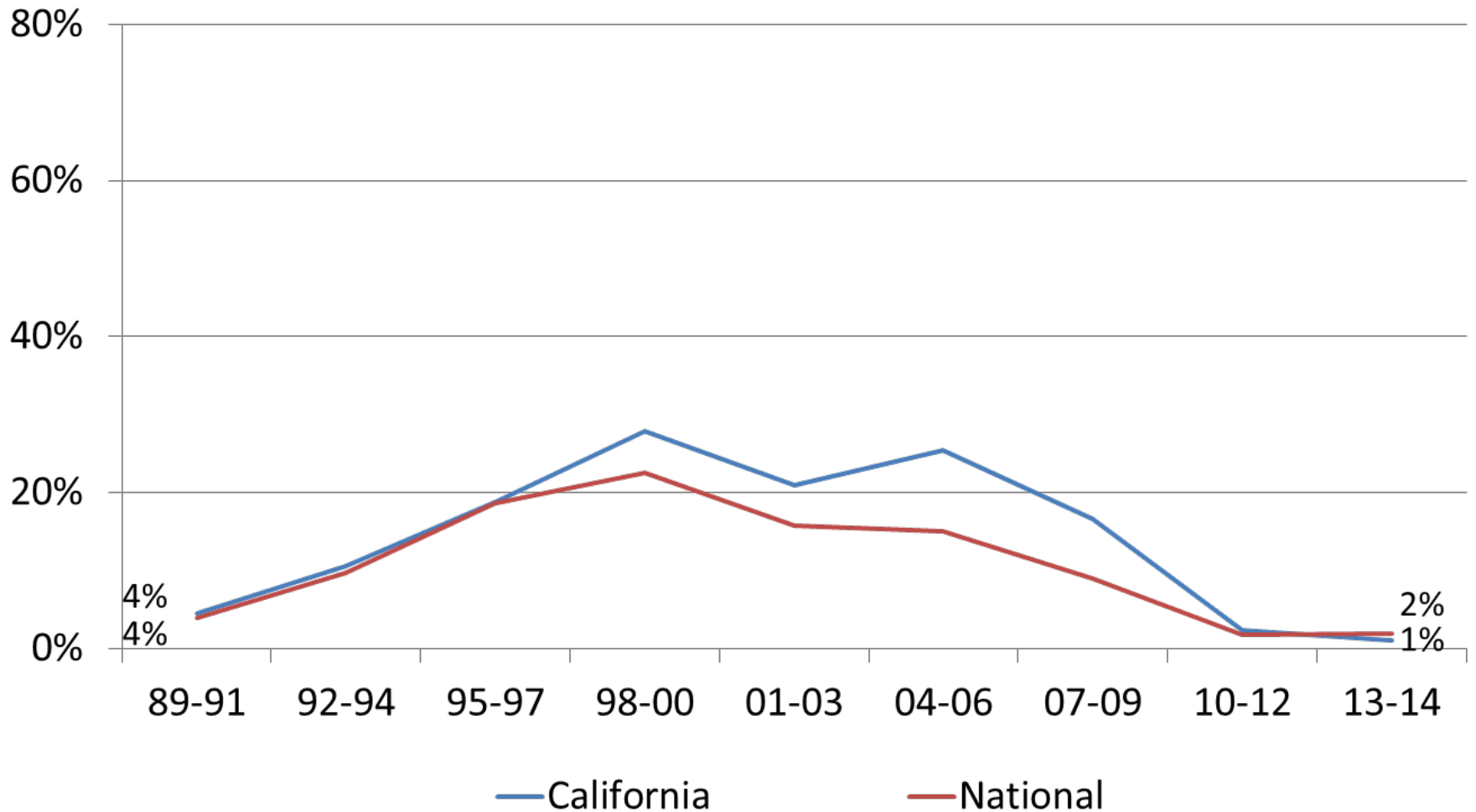
(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)





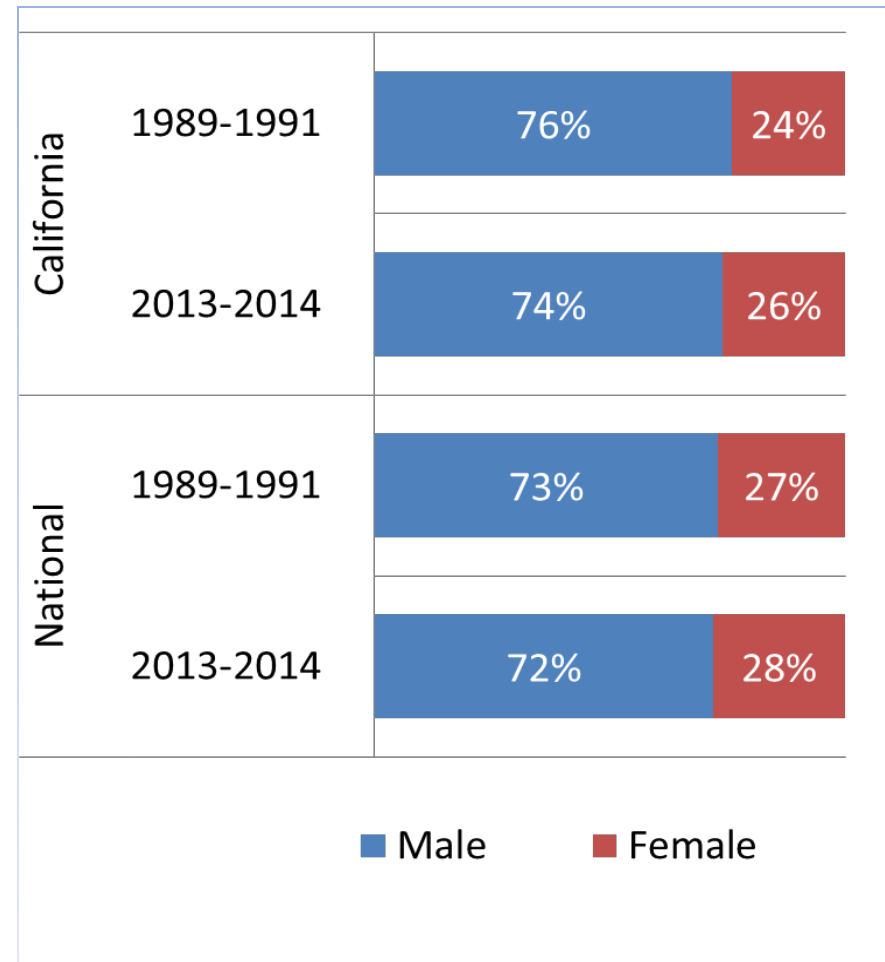
# Newcomers to the US

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



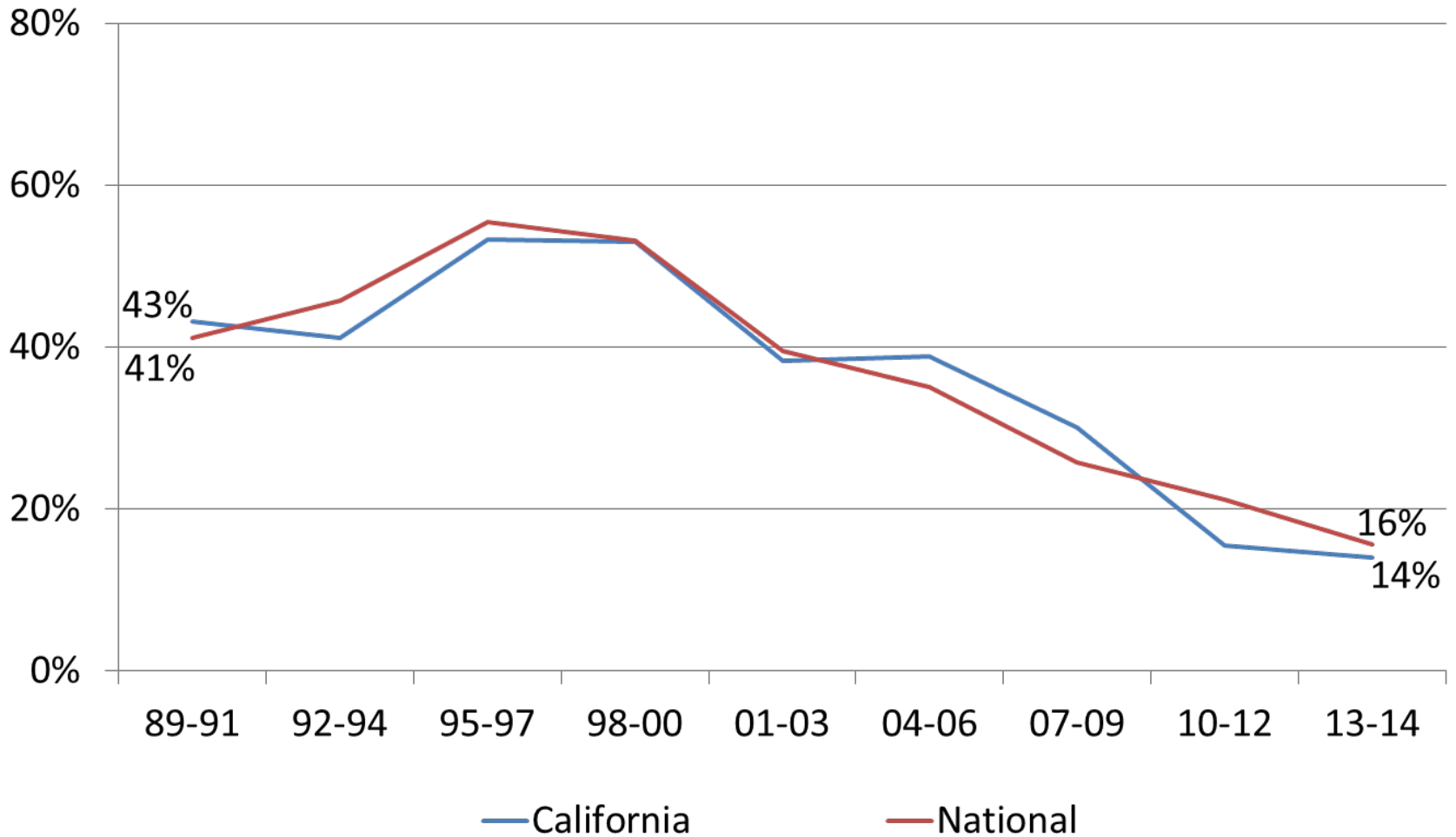
# Gender

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Migrants Trent Chart

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Age

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)

From 1989 to 2014, the crop labor force became older.

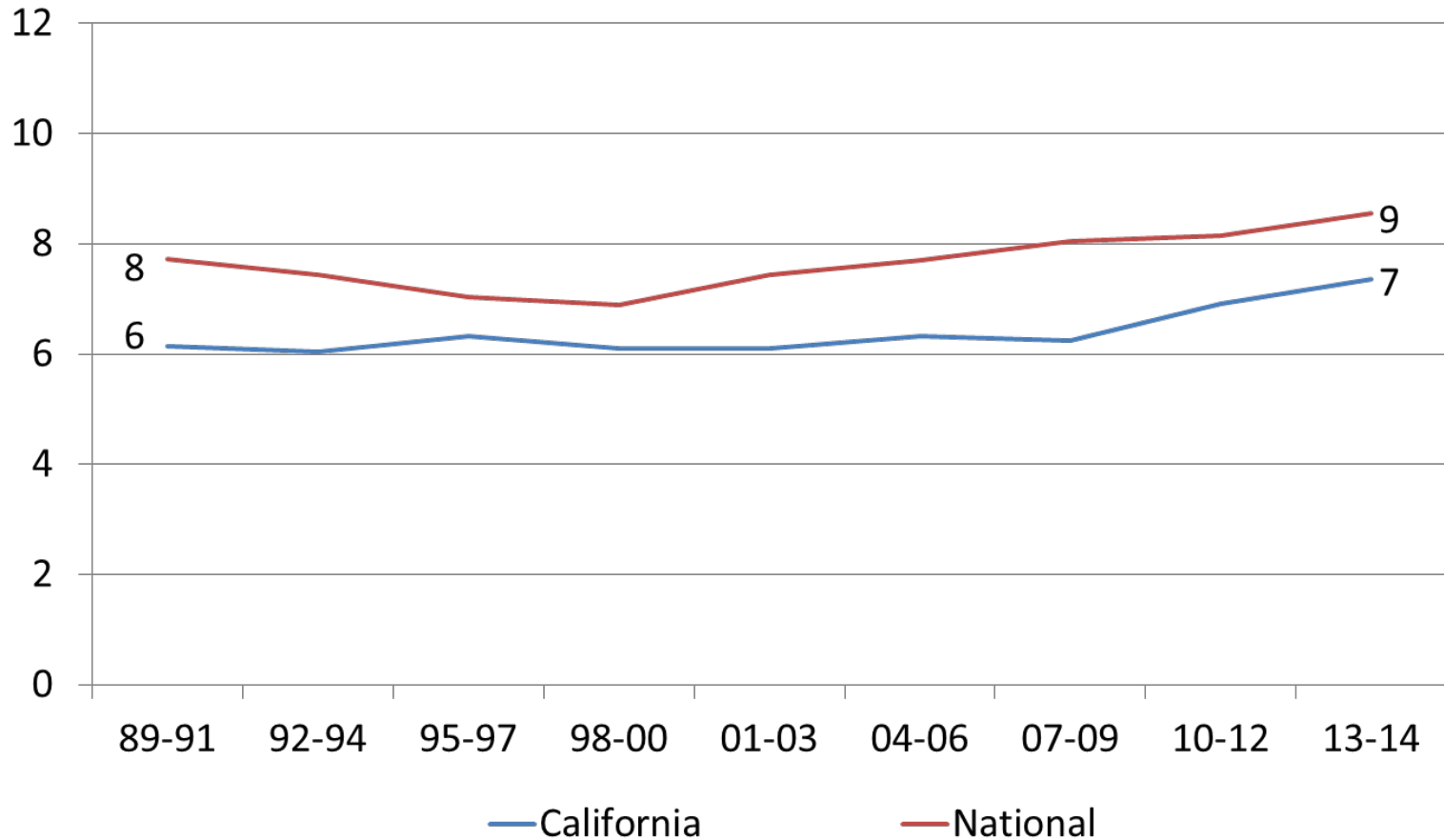
- Average age of workers in California increased from 34 in 1989-1990 to 39 in 2013-2014.
- Nationally, the average age of workers increased from 33 in 1989-1990 to 38 in 2013-2014.





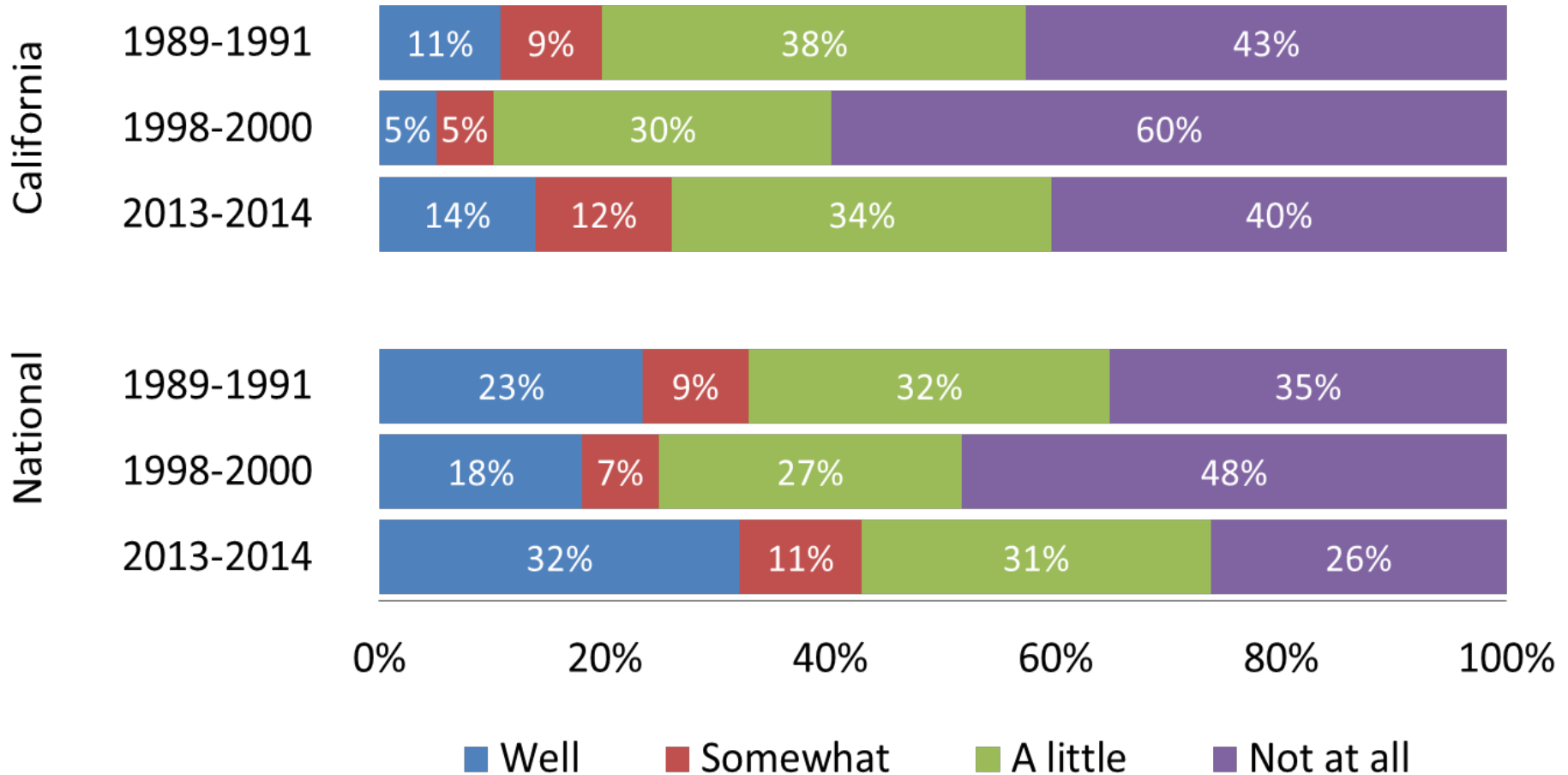
# Education

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



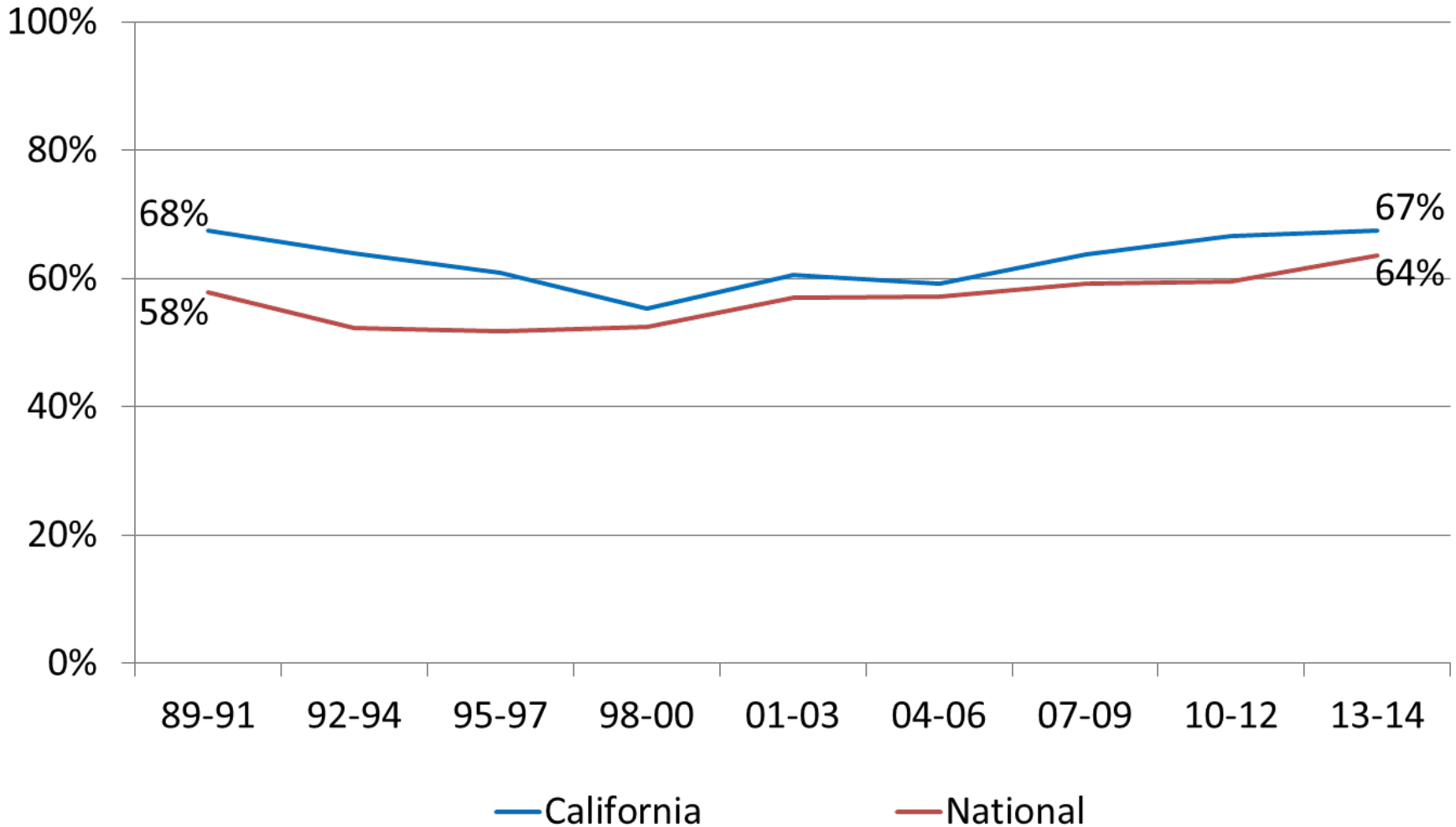
# English Language Proficiency

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Married

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)





# Average Family Income Range

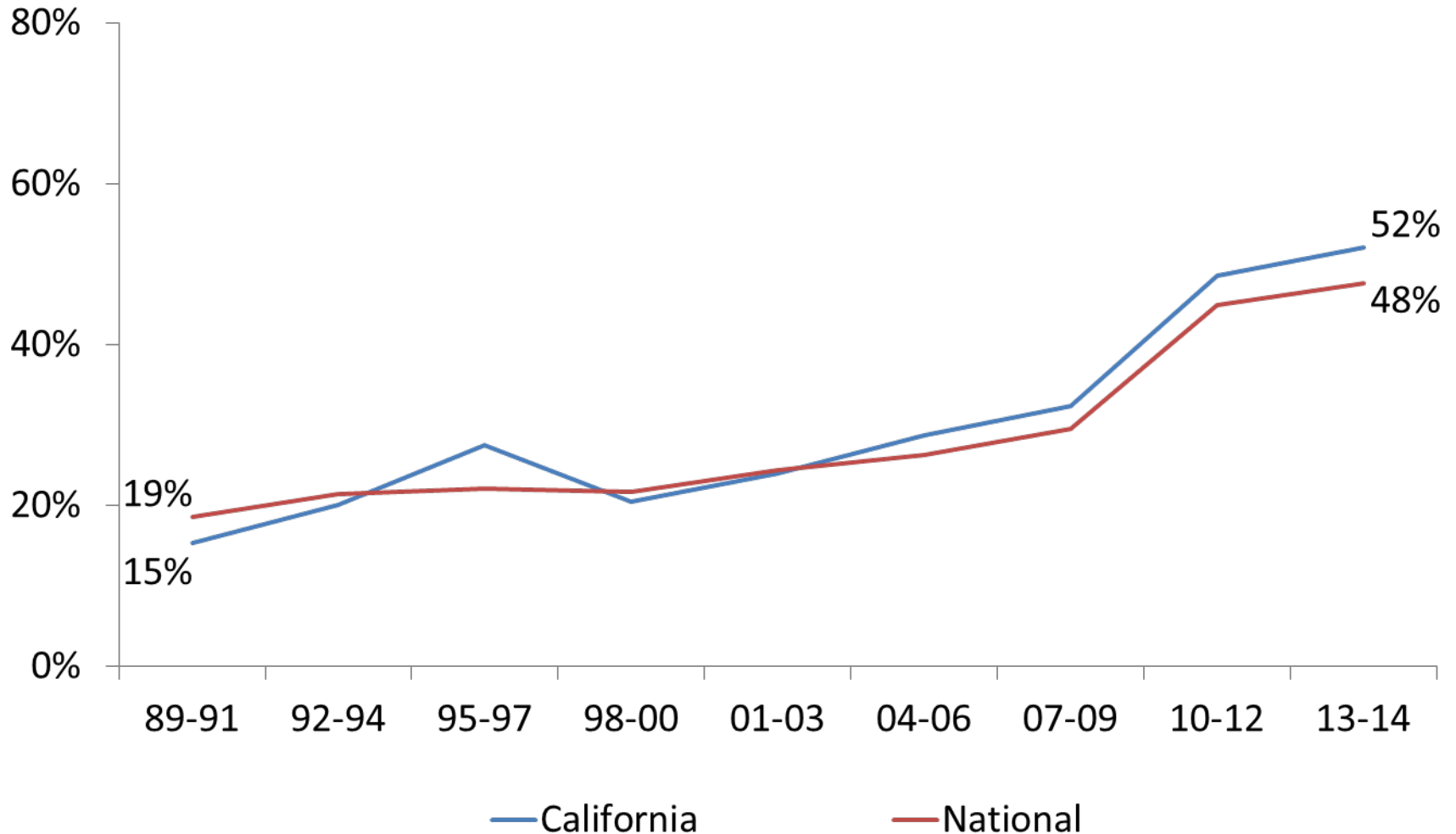
(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)

Fiscal Years	California	National
1989-1991	\$10,000-\$12,499	\$10,000-\$12,499
1992-1994	\$10,000-\$12,499	\$10,000-\$12,499
1995-1997	\$7,500-\$9,999	\$10,000-\$12,499
1998-2000	\$10,000-\$12,499	\$10,000-\$12,499
2001-2003	\$15,000-\$17,499	\$15,000-\$17,499
2004-2006	\$15,000-\$17,499	\$15,000-\$17,499
2007-2009	\$17,500-\$19,999	\$17,500-\$19,999
2010-2012	\$17,500-\$19,999	\$17,500-\$19,999
2013-2014	\$20,000-\$24,999	\$20,000-\$24,999



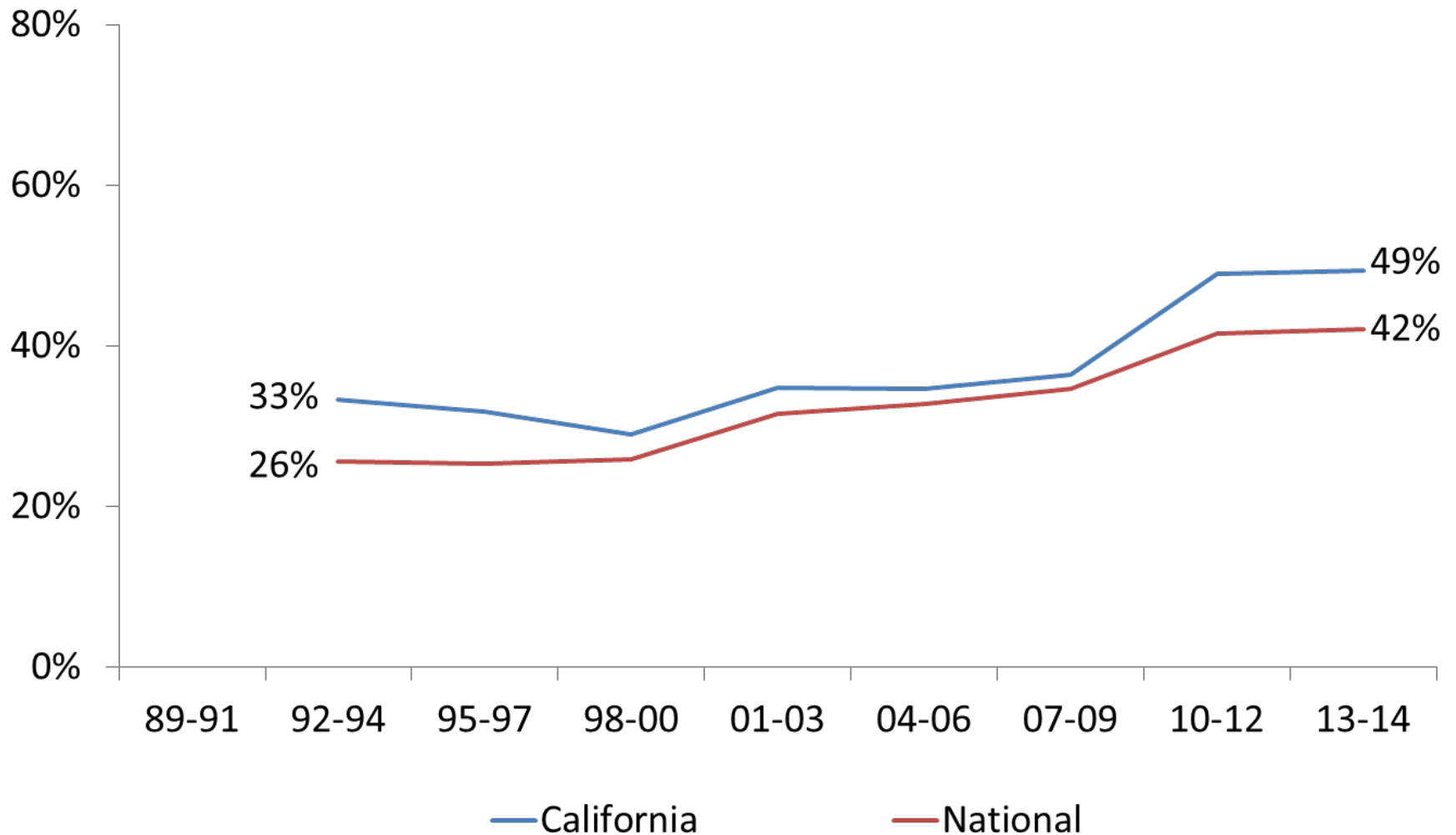
# Families Receiving Public Assistance

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



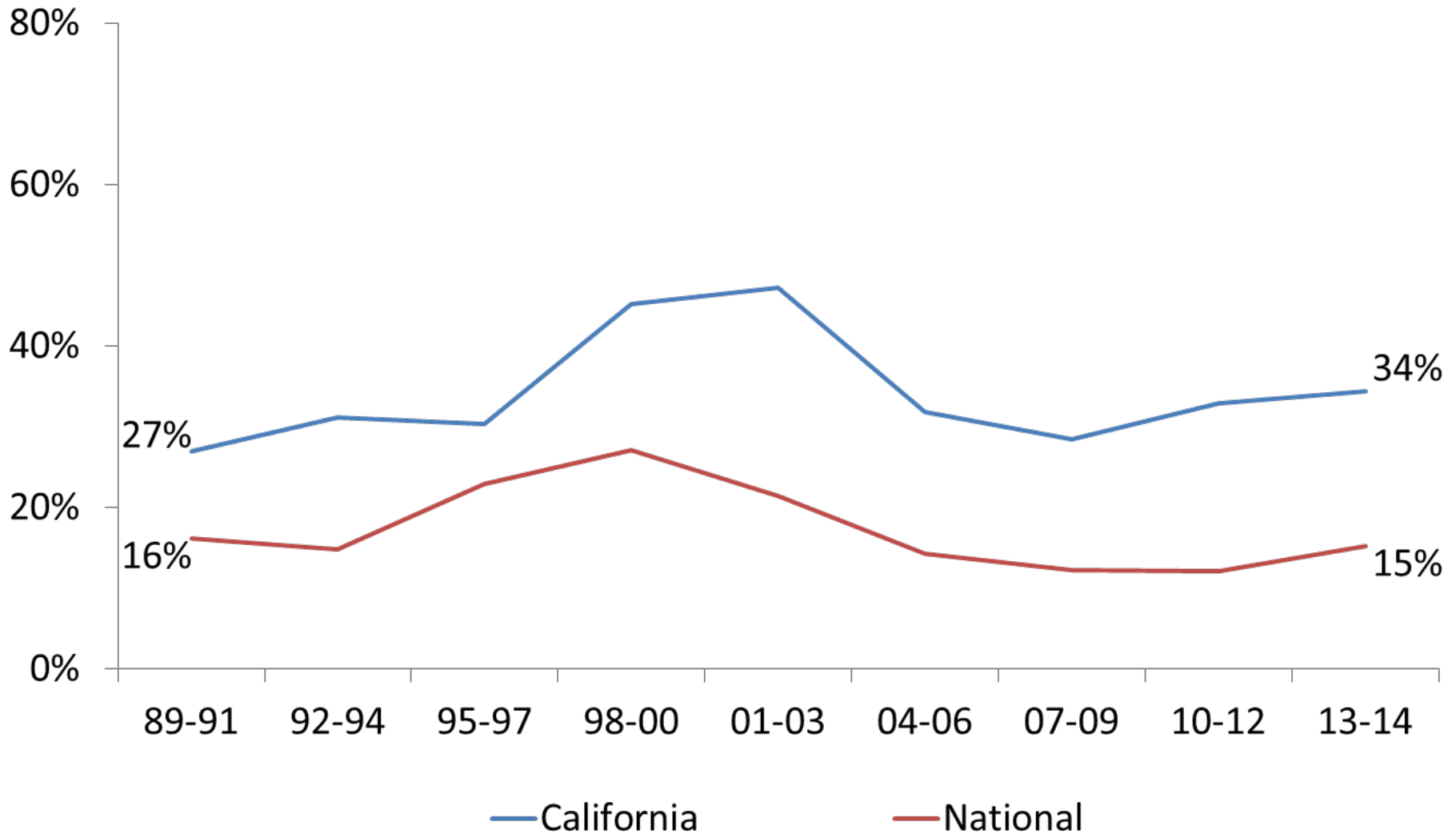
# Has Children Under Age 18

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



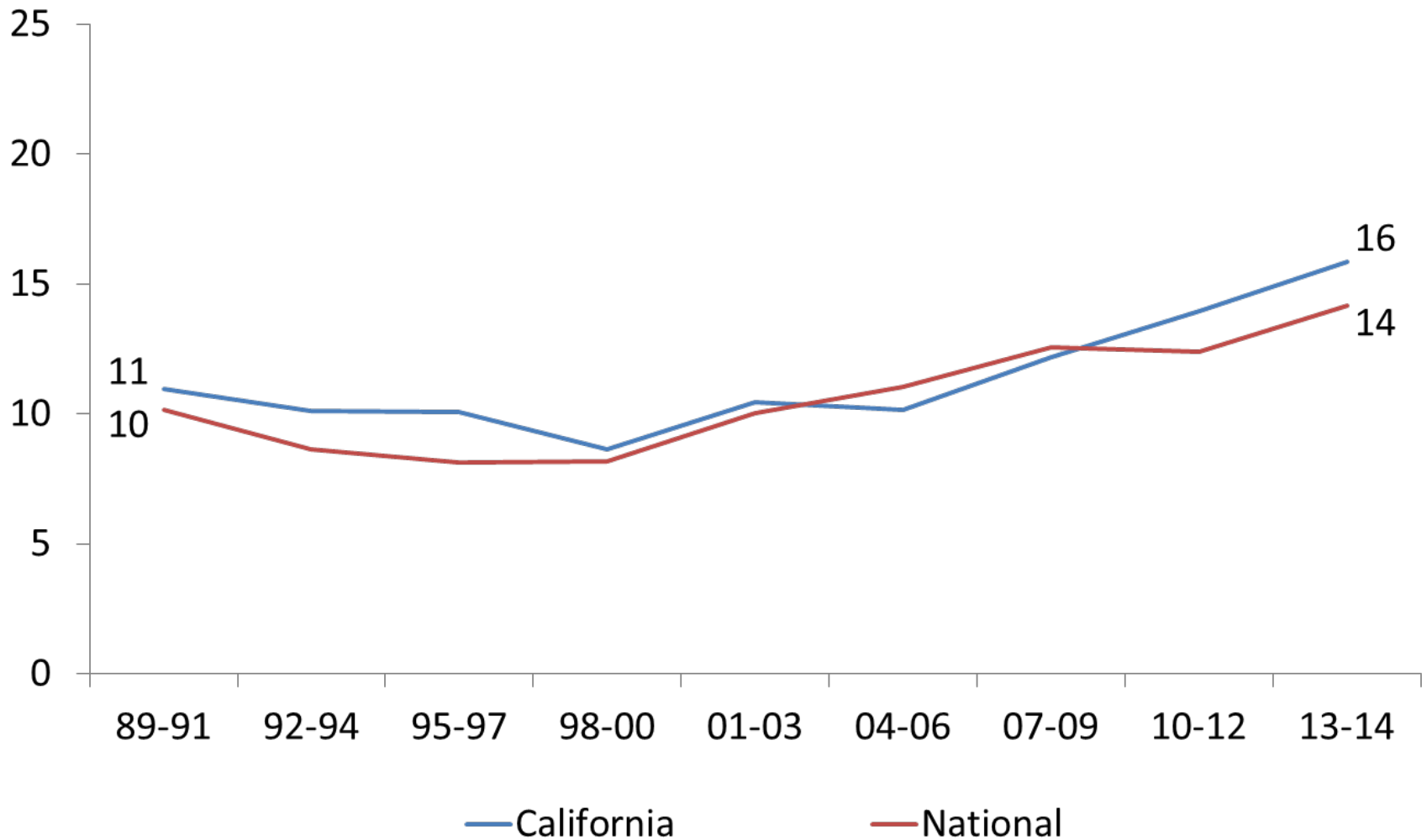
# Employed By Farm Labor Contractors

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Years of US Farm Work Experience

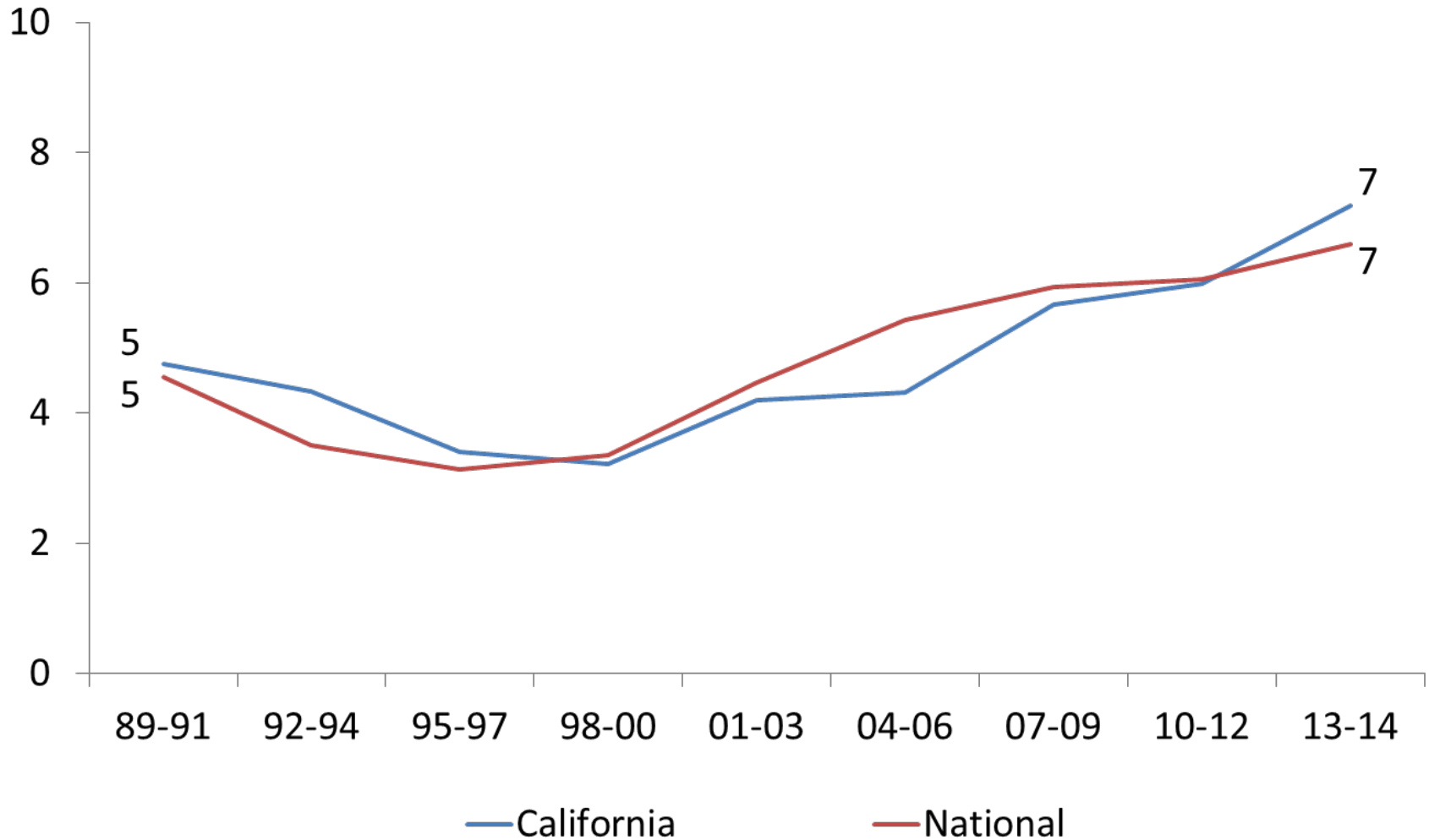
(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)





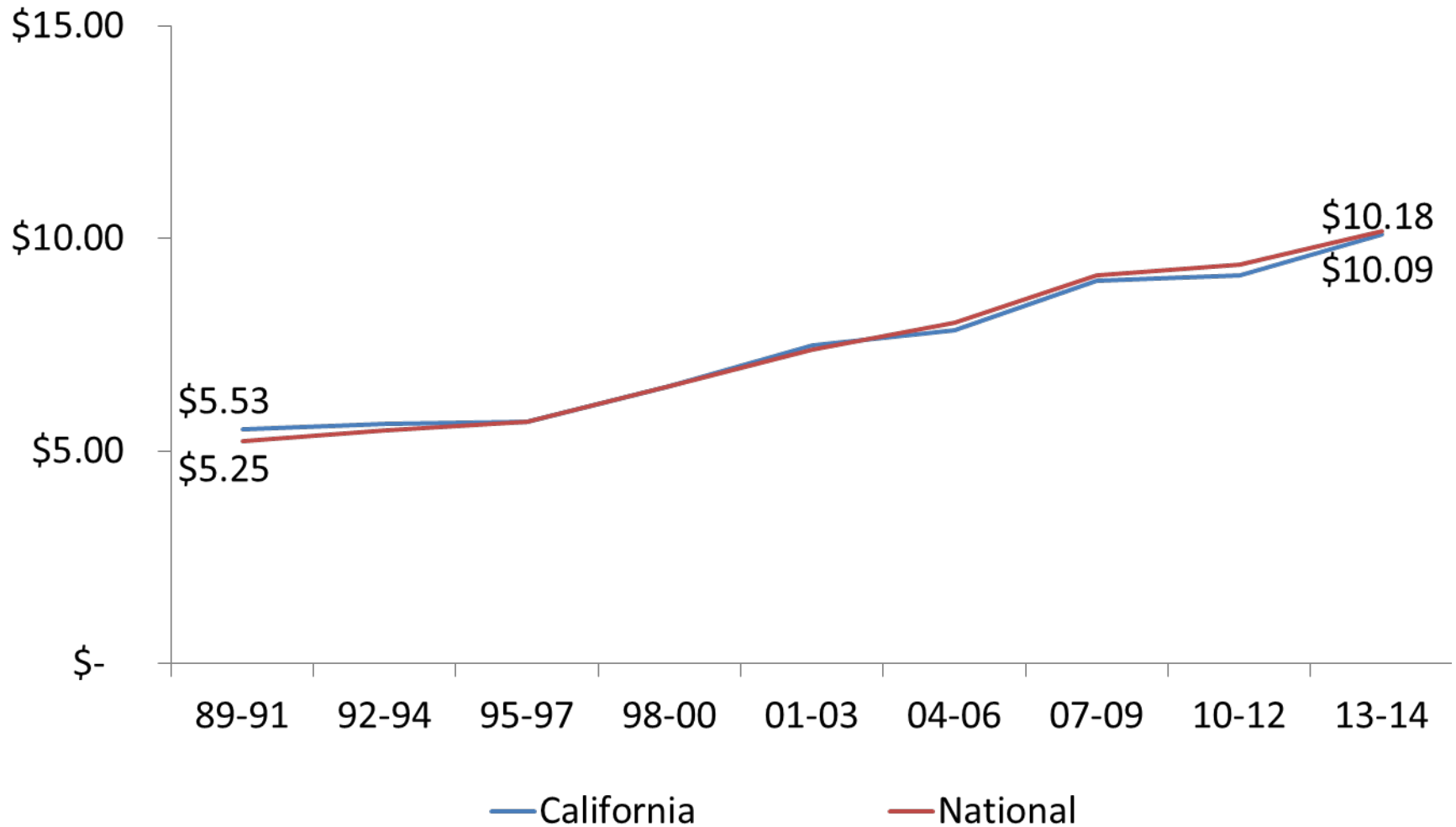
# Years With Current Farm Employer

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Hourly Wage

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)





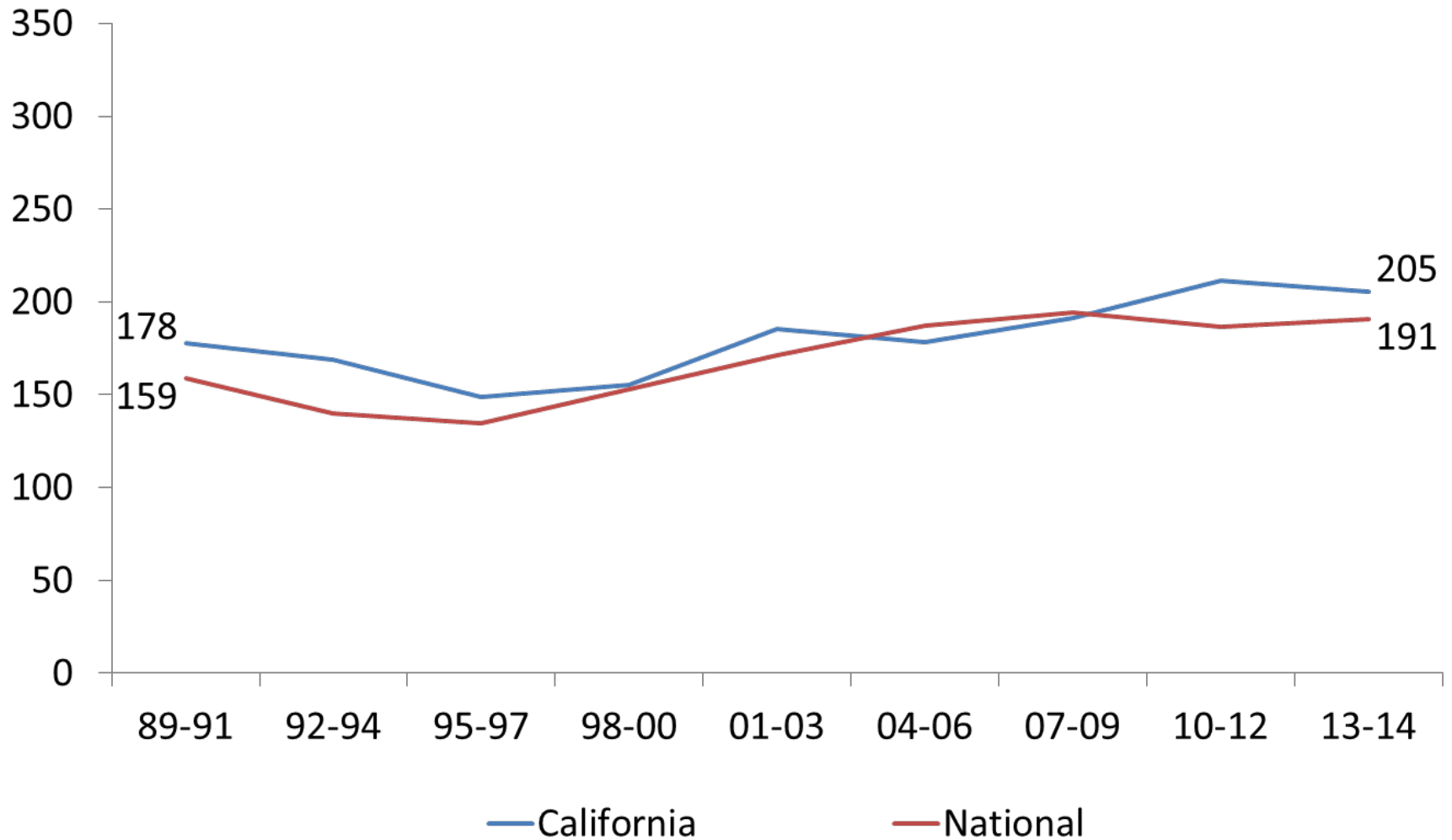
# Hourly Wage

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)

Fiscal Years	California	National
1989-1991	\$5.53	\$5.25
1992-1994	\$5.64	\$5.48
1995-1997	\$5.69	\$5.69
1998-2000	\$6.54	\$6.52
2001-2003	\$7.50	\$7.39
2004-2006	\$7.85	\$8.01
2007-2009	\$9.00	\$9.14
2010-2012	\$9.14	\$9.38
2013-2014	\$10.09	\$10.18

# Days of Farm Work the Previous Year

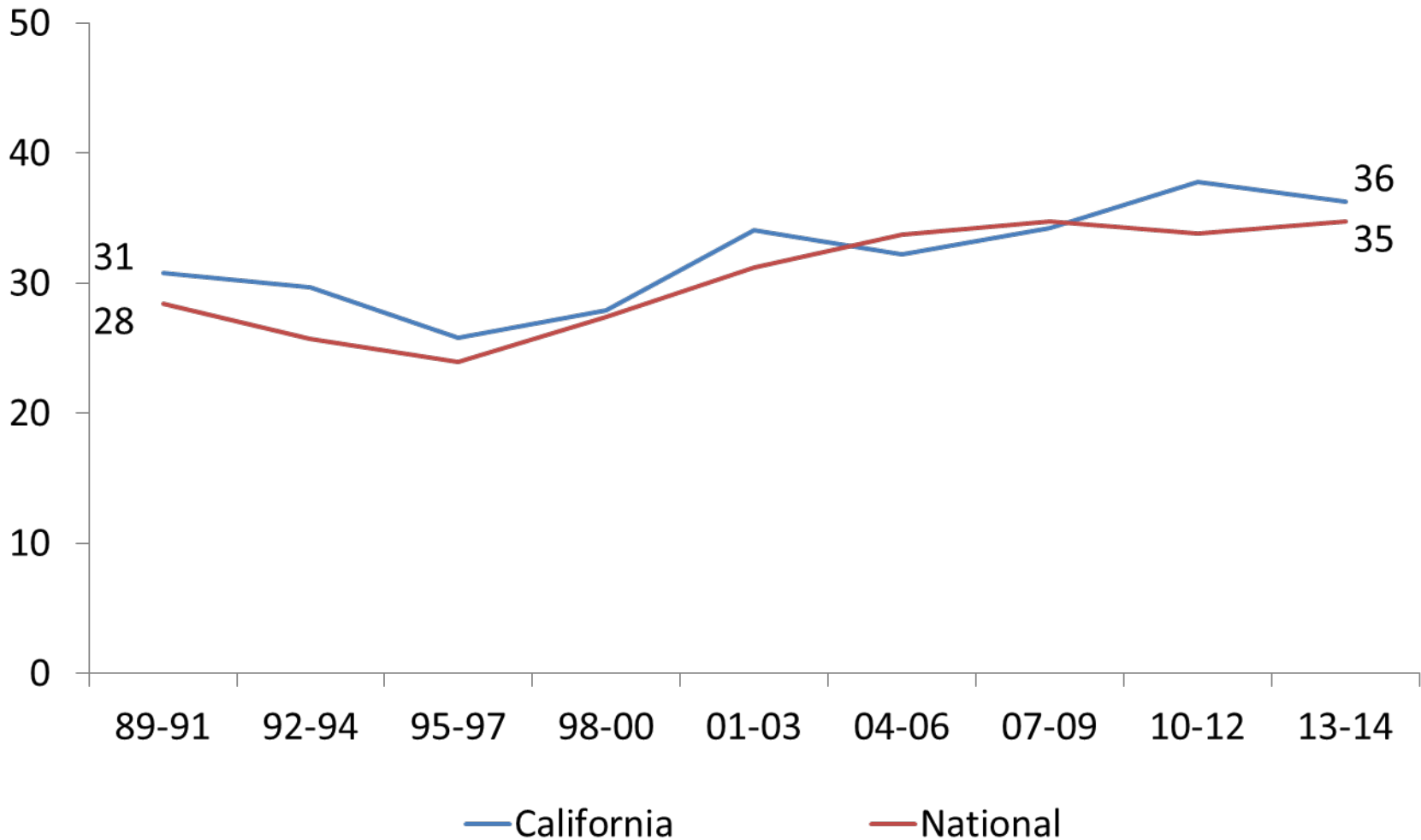
(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)





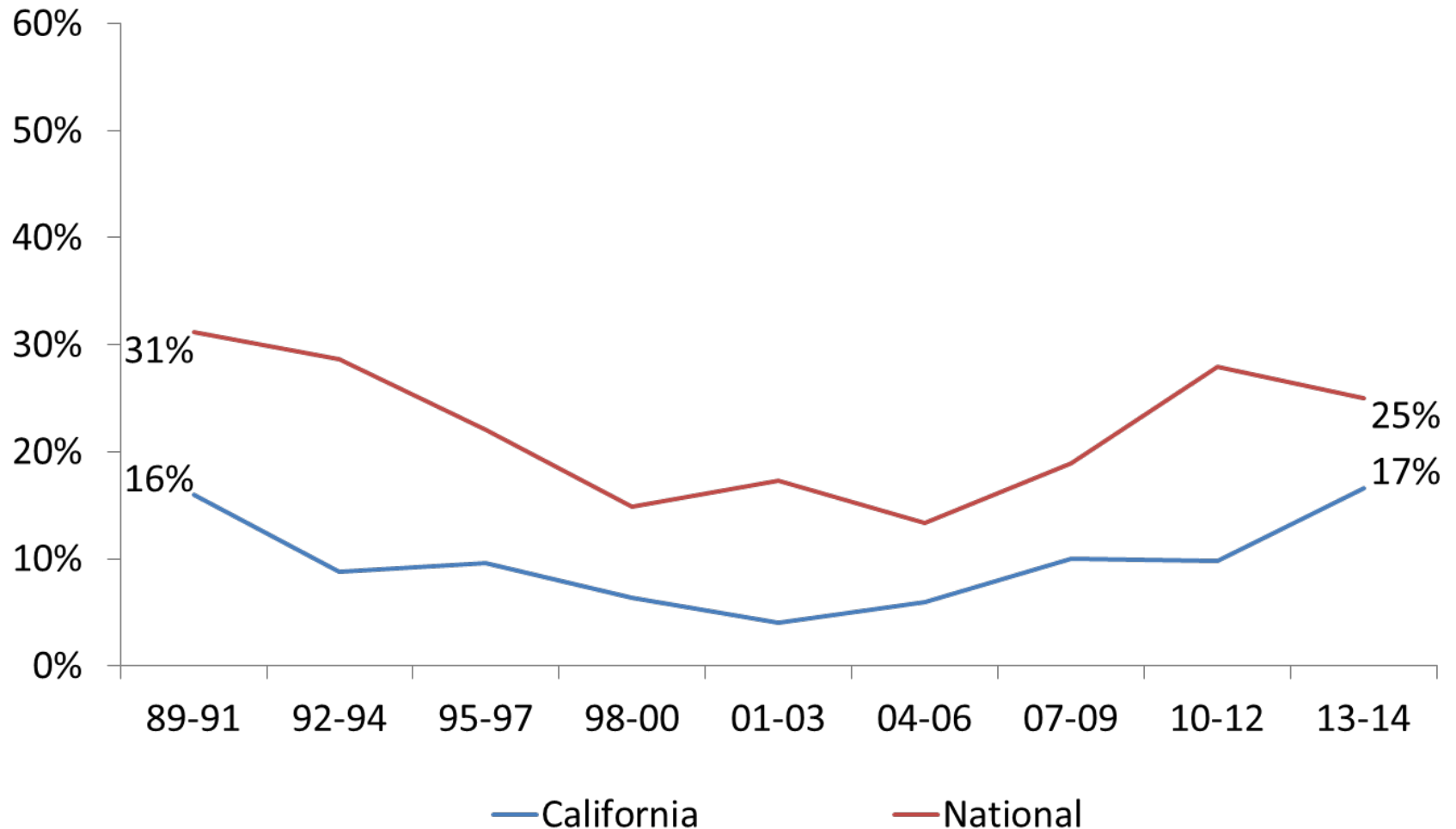
# Weeks of Farm Work the Previous Year

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Held a Non-Farm Job the Previous Year

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Primary Crop At Current Farm Job

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)

Crop	California: 1989-1991	California: 2013-2014	Difference	National: 1989-1991	National: 2013-2014	Difference
Field	9%	3% <sup>a</sup>	-6%	12%	13%	+1%
Fruit/Nut	55%	63%	+8%	28%	40%	+12%
Horticulture	7%	7%	0%	18%	23%	+5%
Vegetable	27%	26%	-1%	35%	21%	-14%
Miscellaneous	2%	<1% <sup>a</sup>	-1%	6%	3%	-3%

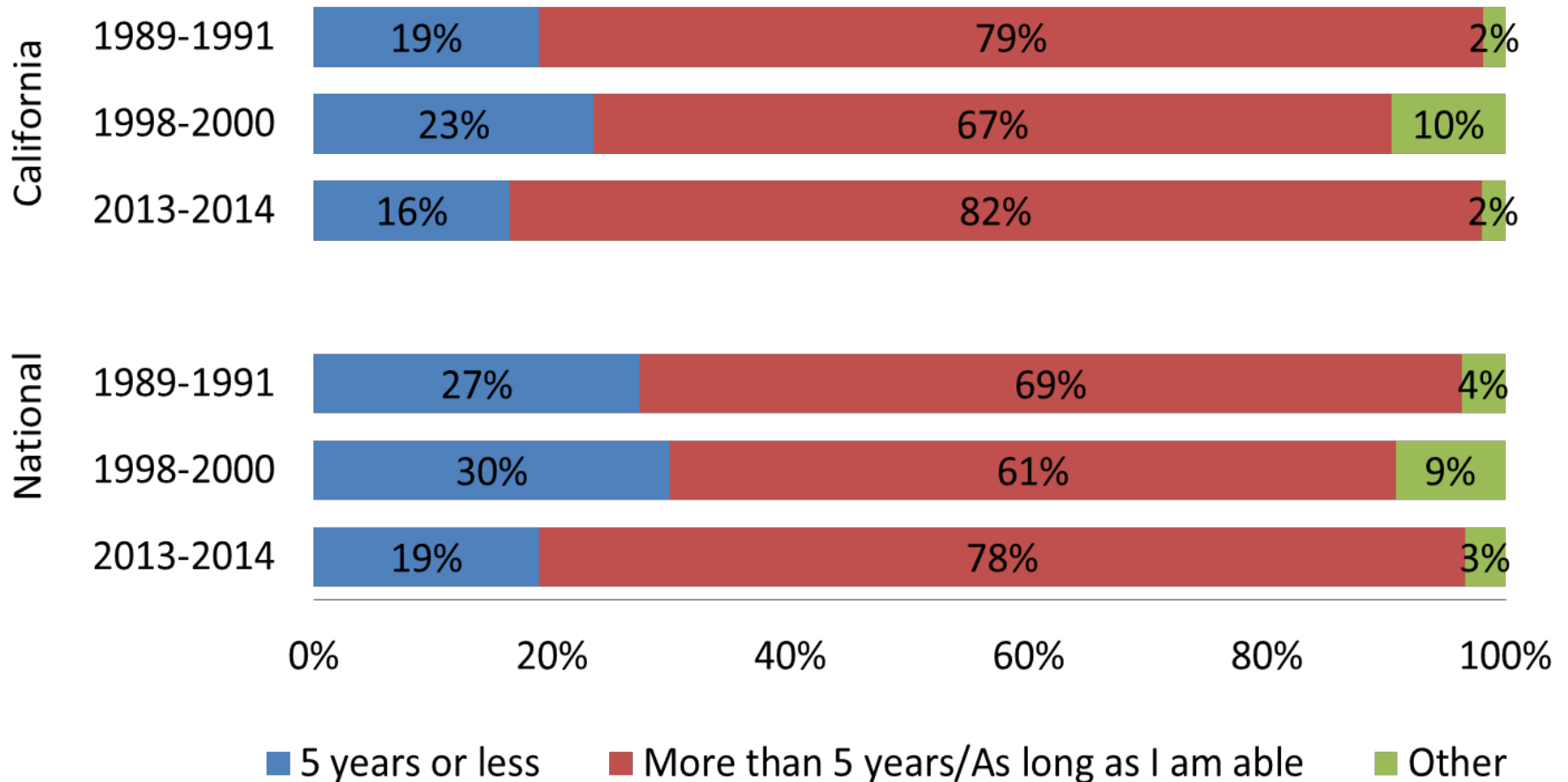
# Primary Task At Current Farm Job

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)

Task	California: 1989-1991	California: 2013-2014	Difference	National: 1989-1991	National: 2013-2014	Difference
Pre-harvest	10%	22%	+12%	20%	26%	+6%
Harvest	47%	27%	-20%	41%	23%	-18%
Post-harvest	9%	14%	+5%	13%	18%	+5%
Semi-skilled	29%	37%	+8%	18%	33%	+15%
Other	3%	0%	-3%	7%	0%	-7%

# Plans To Continue Working in Agriculture

(Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey)



# Summary

This presentation summarized important changes in crop worker characteristics by assessing 1989 to 2014 National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) data. The data inform that between 1989-1990 and 2013-2014 the crop labor force:

- Became slightly older (the average age in California increased from 34 to 39 and nationally it increased from 33 to 38);
- Became increasingly settled, with the share of California workers who were migrant decreasing by 29 percentage points and the share nationally decreasing by 25 percentage points;
- Remained largely comprised of married farmworkers (between one-half and two-thirds of workers both in California and nationally over the 25-year period) and farmworkers who were born in Mexico (approximately 9 in 10 workers in California and between one-half and two-thirds of workers nationally over the 25-year period)
- Increased more than threefold in the share who lacked work authorization (from 13 to 56 percent of California workers and 14 to 46 percent of workers nationally); and
- Had longer tenures in US farm work (with the average number of years doing farm work in the US increasing from 11 to 16 years in California and 10 to 14 years nationally) and more years working for their current employer (two on average, both in California and nationally).





# The End

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