

ECONOMY

Unemployment rises to 9.5 percent

✓ *Unemployment*
 Farm jobs shrink by
 2,500 but nonfarm
 jobs up 200

By JONDI GUMZ

jgumz@santacruzsentinel.com

SANTA CRUZ — Unemployment in Santa Cruz County rose to 9.5 percent in November, the state Employment Development Department reported Friday, as the farm sector shed 2,500 jobs, typical for this time of year.

The jobless figure was 8.7 percent in October.

As of Nov. 12, there were 102,000 jobs in the county, with 9,400 farm jobs and 92,600 nonfarm jobs.

Nonfarm jobs were a bright spot, with a gain of 200 when historically there is a loss of 500.

State labor analyst Jorge Villalobos pointed to a gain of 300 retail jobs with hiring for the holidays, tempered by a loss of 100 jobs in wholesale trade.

Job losses in leisure and hospitality were smaller than usual. Typically that sector sheds 400 jobs in November, but this year, it was just 100.

Other sectors were mostly stable and similar to the historic averages except for local government, which posted a gain of 300 jobs. That category includes city and county government, public schools, Cabrillo College, and fire and water districts.

The monthly job numbers are based on surveys of a small sample, and can be skewed, according to economist Jeff Michael of the University of the Pacific, who

tracks the local economy for the Santa Cruz County Business Council.

"It's possible that number will be revised," said Villalobos, noting local government jobs are down 4.1 percent from a year ago.

He pointed out the unemployment rate remains significantly lower than a year ago when it was 10.9 percent.

Compared to a year ago, the trade and transportation sector has 1,200 more

jobs, with retail accounting for 600.

Private education and health services are up 800 jobs from a year ago, and so are professional and business services.

The size of the labor force in November was 156,400, down slightly, and the number employed inside and outside the county was 141,500.

AT A GLANCE

JOBS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Industry	November	Change from October	A year ago
Government	20,700	Up 300	Down 300
Private education, health	14,900	Down 100	Up 800
Trade, transportation, utilities	18,200	Up 200	Up 1,200
Professional and business	10,600	Down 100	Up 800
Financial activities	3,200	0	Up 100
Leisure and hospitality	12,100	Down 100	Up 500
Other services	3,900	0	Up 400
Information	900	0	0
Mining, logging, construction	2,800	0	0
Manufacturing	5,300	0	Up 100
Total Nonfarm	92,600	Up 200	Up 3,600
Total Farm	9,400	Down 2,500	Up 200
Total	102,000	Down 2,300	Up 3,800

SOURCE: California Employment Development Department

Follow Sentinel reporter Jondi Gumz at Twitter.com/jondigumz