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A Profile of California Farmworkers

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A Profile of California Farmworkers

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Preface

The number and characteristics of California farmworkers are of great interest to farmers, farmworker representatives, and policy makers. Unfortunately, reliable data on farmworkers are sparse. In August 1983, the University of California and the California Employment Development Department interviewed a sample of 1,300 farmworkers throughout the state. This report summarizes the data collected by 44 EDD interviewers and analyzed by UC Staff.

Three important findings from the survey are:

Most California farmworkers are immigrants, persons born abroad who come to the United States as adults to do farm work.

Farmworkers earn an average of $5 hourly, but frequent spells of unemployment hold average annual earnings to $4,200.

Harvest work is a 10- to 15-year job and not a career for most farmworkers.

In comparison to a comprehensive 1966 survey commissioned by the state legislature, the 1980s farm work force includes many more workers from Mexican families who have settled in California.

This survey was the product of cooperation between EDD and UC. Angela Diaz, California's Farmworker Monitor Advocate, and her staff deserve credit for winning approval of the survey project within EDD. Four UC survey coordinators assisted the 42 EDD interviewers in the selection of workers to be interviewed. Stella Sandoval, Deputy Director of EDD, assured state support for the project. The survey design and analysis were made possible by the generous support of the Rosenberg Foundation and supplemental funding from the UCD Public Service Research Program.

The manuscript was edited by Carole Nuckton and Janice Aboytes prepared it for publication. We are grateful for their patience and support.

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Introduction

California is the nation's leading agricultural state and the state with the highest concentration of labor- intensive fruits and vegetables. Unlike midwestern farms, California agriculture relies on hired workers to do about 80 percent of its farm work. In August 1983, a farmworker survey was jointly conducted by the University of California (UC) and the California Employment Development Department (EDD) in which bilingual outreach workers from EDD's 42 farmworker offices interviewed 1,286 farmworkers, collecting detailed information about their households, including about 4,600 persons among whom were an additional 953 farmworkers.

EDD offices are located thoughout the state; each conducted approximately 30 interviews. Thus, the sample reflects the statewide distribution of farmworkers. Each office followed a strict quota sampling system to insure that all types of workers would be represented: harvest workers, pruners, equipment operators, etc. Interviewers sampled workers in all crops in their area. The most difficult-to- reach group, Mexican workers in the United States without their families, was targeted for a larger quota. All significant farmworker groups were well represented in the sample.

The results of the interviews permit the construction of a profile of California farmworkers and their families. Details are presented in the many tables of this report. The text will highlight significant findings.

I. Demographic Characteristics

Age and Size of Household

Persons interviewed ranged in age from from 16 to 77, their average age was 37, the median was 35. Family (or budgetary) units were concentrated at the size extremes, i.e., one-third of those interviewed directly were one-person households, while another third were from households with five or more people.[1] Sixty percent of the total sample (including members of the interviewees' families) were from these large households, and 85 percent of all farmworker household members between the ages of 30 and 65 were married. As a result, despite the fact that the sample included large numbers of men whose families were in Mexico, 43 percent of the total sample was 17 years or under (Table I-1). Also, many farmworkers have children living with them even after age 18. Thus, over half of the sample was comprised of children living with their parents. At the other extreme, there are very few older people living in farmworker households; only 1 percent of the total sample was 65 or older.[2] This could be because not many people remain in farm work beyond their early fifties. Most, by this age, have moved with their families to urban areas or returned to Mexico.

Nationality and Place of Origin

Almost three-fourths of the respondents were born and grew up in Mexico (Table I-2). About 20 percent were raised in the United States, half in California and half elsewhere. Most of these U.S.-born people were of Mexican extraction. The largest non-California group consisted of Mexican- Americans from Texas.[3] Life experiences of Mexican-Americans are quite different from those of immigrant Mexicans. Most of the former group speak both English and Spanish. Their relationship to the job market and governmental agencies differs from that of the immigrant group. Another 6 percent of the respondents were non-Mexican foreigners, including Punjabis, Philippinos, Arabs, South East Asians and Central Americans. These small groups bring still other sets of experiences to California's fields, vineyards, and orchards.

Although nearly half of those interviewed came from small towns and villages in the traditional emigration region--the Mexican Central Highlands, many also came from border cities. Some came from major Mexican urban areas, and still others came from the impoverished southern regions where Native American (Indian) languages are common (Table I-3).

Age and Sex

Results of the survey demonstrate the changing settlement patterns of immigrant farmworkers. In the 1940s, 1950s, and the early 1960s most newcomers to rural California areas were Mexican men unaccompanied by their families (hereafter "unaccompanied Mexican men"). This may be the reason that men outnumber women almost two to one in the over 40 age group (Table I-4). By the late 1960s, however, a new pattern of settlement had begun among Mexican immigrant farmworkers. Many of the young immigrants of this period, who came to do U.S. farm work, brought their wives and children to California or started a family in the United States. Notice that the sample is is almost equally divided between men and women in the age group between 30 and 39. But, the process of male-led immi-

1. In a study done by the Tulare County Health Department, 26.1 percent of those surveyed were one-person households; 41.3 percent were from households of five or more (Mines and Kearney, 1982).

2. The Tulare County survey found only 1.3 percent of the sample was over 60 (Mines and Kearney, 1982).

3. 72.1 percent of the U.S.-born respondents from outside California were from the Southwest.

gration continues so that at the same time that Mexican men in their late 20s and 30s are settling in California, a new group of younger male immigrants is entering the farm labor force. Again, men greatly outnumber women in the group between 20 and 29 (Table I-4, row 4). In their turn, many of these men may later bring their families to rural California. This newly settled group may then be succeeded by another group of young male immigrants.

Nearly two-thirds of the farmworker children were born in the United States; 57 percent in California (Table I-5). The adult population in farmworker households was predominantly immigrant with 71 percent of those over 17 born in Mexico. Moreover, this adult immigrant population was predominantly male. Clearly, the inclusion in the sample of many unaccompanied males makes the foreign-born sector largely male. In contrast, U.S.-born adults are about evenly divided between the sexes.[4]

Major Groups

The respondents, like the farmworker population they represent, are very heterogeneous making generalizations difficult. The survey results will therefore be categorized in several ways: by legal status, by region of California, by age, by sex, by whether or not the immigrant's family lives in California, and by the place of birth. There are three major groupings of farmworker respondents. The largest of the three is made up of Mexican-born immigrants who have settled in the United States with their families (58 percent of all respondents). A second group is made up of unaccompanied Mexican men (over one-fourth of all respondents. More than one in three of these men is married and has children in Mexico. The third group consists of farmworker families with a U.S.-born head of household (about one-sixth of the sample). This group is, of course, the most familiar with U.S. institutions.

It should be pointed out that the Mexican family group often includes a U.S.-born wife since one-quarter of the Mexican-born men in the sample had married American-born women (Table I-6). Also, many of the children in the Mexican families are born in the United States.

Legal Status

The legal status of the farmworker population is perhaps of special interest. Less than one in six Mexicans who had their family in the United States was a deportable alien. Over three-fourths of them had permanent residence status (i.e., green cards), 5 percent had a pending legal status, but few were citizens (Table I-7). Over one-half of the unaccompanied male respondents were undocumented; another 42 percent had green cards.[5] Most other foreign-born farm workers had permanent legal status, with 15 percent attaining citizenship.

A higher percentage of the women interviewed had legal status. Of the 324 women respondents, over half had green cards, 29 percent were citizens, and 5 percent had pending status. Only 11 percent were undocumented. By contrast, 22 percent of all the male respondents were undocumented (Table I-8).

Regional Distribution

Despite the statewide coverage of the sample, nearly half of those interviewed were working in the San Joaquin Valley. Together with those in the Sacramento Valley, the lower-wage Central Valley made up 62 percent of the sample. About one-third of the respondents were interviewed either in Southern California or in the Central

4. This demographic profile is in sharp contrast with official statistics of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These differences are discussed in Chapter 6.

5. See definition of legal status types in the Appendix Glossary. Legal status was ascertained by questionning the interviewee. This procedure was not independently verified.

Coast region; smaller numbers were interviewed in the North Coast and Southern Coastal regions (Table I-9). This distribution presumably is representative of the farmworker population.

The three main groups of farmworkers are found in differing proportions across California's six farm regions. Compared to the Central Valley, Southern California had proportionately fewer unaccompanied Mexican men but more settled-Mexican families. Some of the unaccompanied migrants are part of the large cross-border commuter population in Imperial and San Diego Counties. Also, in Imperial County, many workers migrate with their families between the Salinas and Imperial Valleys to harvest vegetables. The Central Coast region, mainly the Salinas Valley also had proportionately more settled Mexican families and relatively fewer U.S.-born families. Both the North Coast (including the Napa Valley) and the Southern Coastal regions had higher than average proportions of unaccompanied Mexican men.

The distribution pattern of the total sample (the respondent and other household members) is similar to that of the respondents alone. However, certain regions have a higher proportion of their family members doing farm work. (Recall that the total sample includes additional farmworkers who were not interviewed directly.) The Central Valley (the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys) made up 59 percent of the total household sample, but included 63 percent of those who did farm work (Table I-10).

Table I-1

Total Sample: Household Members by Age

Age	Number	Percent
1-17	1943	43.1
18-21	436	9.6
22-29	662	14.6
30-39	598	13.2
40-54	614	13.6
55-64	204	4.5
65+	59	1.3
Total	4521	100.0

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table I-2 Respondents' Birthplace and Place Reared		
	Birth-place	Place reared
	Percent	
California	8.4	10.3
Mexico	73.3	73.9
Other U.S.	11.5	9.4
Other country	6.8	6.4
Total	100.0	100.0
Number	1283	1264
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.		

Table I-3 Respondents' Birthplace		
Birthplace	**Number**	**Percent**
Core sending area Mexico[a]	636	49.5
Border states Mexico[b]	192	15.0
Mexico (Unspecified)[c]	113	8.8
U.S. Southwest[d]	106	8.3
California[e]	108	8.4
Other U.S.[f]	41	3.2
Other country[g]	87	6.8
Total	1283	100.0

[a]Mexican states - in western Central Highlands.
[b]Mexican states on U.S. border.
[c]Elsewhere in Mexico or place in Mexico not given.
[d]Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado mostly of Mexican descent.
[e]Anywhere in California.
[f]Other U.S. outside of the Sothwest.
[g]All other countries.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table I-4
Farmworker Family Members
by Age and Sex

Age group	Male	Female	Row total
1 to 13	762	717	1479 32.7%
14 to 17	236	233	469 10.4%
18 to 21	246	190	436 9.6%
22 to 29	409	253	662 14.6%
30 to 39	306	292	598 13.2%
40 to 54	354	260	614 13.6%
55 to 64	134	70	204 4.5%
65 or over	39	20	59 1.3%
Total	2486	2035	4521 100.0%

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table I-5 Percentage and Number in Sample by Age, Sex, and Place of Origin					
	1 to 17		18 or over		Birthplace
	N	Percent	N	Percent	
Male	302	15.8	1102	43.1	
Female	317	16.6	724	28.3	Mexico
Total	619	32.4			
Male	576	30.2	141	5.5	
Female	515	27.0	144	5.6	California
Total	1,091	57.2			
Male	86	4.5	139	5.4	
Female	76	4.0	145	5.7	Other U.S.
Total	162	8.5			
Male	14	0.7	100	3.9	
Female	22	1.2	64	2.5	Other Country
Total	36	1.9			
Total	1908	100.0	2559	100.0	
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983					

Table I-6 Wives of Mexican-Born Heads of Household		
Nationality	**Number**	**Percent**
Mexican-born	**363**	**74.1**
U.S.-born	**127**	**25.9**
Total	**490**	**100.0**
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983		

Table I-7 Percent Distribution by Legal Status; Family Mexicans, Unaccompanied Male Mexican, and Other Foreign-Born					
Legal status	**Unaccom-panied Mexicans**	**Family Mexicans**	**Other foreign-born**	**Total**	**Number**
	Percent				
Green card	42.1	77.7	66.3	53.7	673
Undocumented	50.9	14.6	7.0	19.5	244
Citizen	1.1	2.5	15.1	21.6	32
Pending status	6.0	5.2	11.6	5.1	60
Number	285	638	86	100.0	1009
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983					

Table I-8 Legal Status by Sex			
Legal Status	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
Green card	53.3	54.9	687
Undocumented	22.3	11.1	249
Citizen	19.2	29.0	277
Pending Status	5.1	4.9	65
Total number	954	324	1278
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983			

Table I-9

Distribution of Respondents by Region

	Unaccom-panied Mexican Men	Family Mexicans	U.S.-born families	Total of three groups	All respon-dents
Southern California	12.6%	68.0%	19.4%	100.0%	14.3%
Number	22	119	34	175	184
Southern Coast	31.7%	59.8%	8.5%	100.0%	7.3%
Number	26	49	7	82	94
Central Coast	24.1%	66.0%	9.9%	100.0%	14.5%
Number	39	107	16	162	186
Sacramento Valley	25.9%	57.8%	16.3%	100.0%	13.6%
Number	35	78	22	135	175
San Joaquin Valley	29.3%	52.0%	18.7%	100.0%	48.2%
Number	154	273	98	525	620
North Coast	42.3%	53.8%	3.8%	99.9%	2.1%
Number	11	14	1	26	27
Total percent	26.0%	57.9%	16.1%	100.0%	100.0%
Total Number	287	640	178	1105	1286

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table I-10
Population of Farmworker Households by Region

Region	Total sample	All farm-workers	Farm-workers over 18
	Percent		
Southern California	16.4	14.0	13.8
Southern Coast	6.8	5.5	6.1
Central Coast	16.5	16.1	16.0
Sacramento Valley	12.4	13.4	13.8
San Joaquin Valley	46.4	49.2	48.5
Northern Coast	1.6	1.7	2.0
Total number	4608	2239	1997

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

II. Labor Force Participation and Migrancy

Farm Work

Distribution of Farm Work Jobs

California's farm work is not evenly divided among participants. One-third of the surveyed farmworkers worked 12 weeks or less and represented only 12 percent of the total farm work done by the sample. One-half of the farmworkers, employed 13 to 37 weeks, did a little more than half the work (56 percent). Full-time workers, those employed 38 weeks or more, represented only 16 percent of the workers, but did one third of the work (Table II-1).

Although over one-third of the sample was female, women worked only about one-quarter of the total weeks worked (Table II-2). Farmworker women were more likely to work during periods of peak demand, averaging about 16 weeks of work a year, compared to an average of 25 weeks for male workers. Only 5 percent of female farmworkers worked 38 weeks or more while over half of all those working 6 weeks or less were women (Table II-3).

Farmworker children, most of whom are in school while in California, work far fewer weeks a year than their parents. They worked on average 8 weeks a year, probably mostly during their summer vacation (Table II-4). About one-fourth of the California-born farmworkers interviewed were children. Most of these lived with their immigrant parents.

The Mexican-born part of the labor force, 73 percent of the sample, worked over three-fourths of total weeks worked at farm tasks (Table II-5). U.S.-born farmworkers from other states, predominantly Mexican Americans from the Southwest worked another 10 percent of the total. California-born workers did somewhat less of the work than their numbers imply because one-fourth of this group is children.

The breakdown of farm work by legal status, shows little difference among the four groups (Table II-6). The average weeks worked by the undocumented workers is higher than expected considering that this group is presumably less acclimated to the U.S. job market than are those from legal groups. But recall that there are fewer women among the undocumented and that women on average work only two thirds as many weeks per year as men.

Specialization by Crop and Task

California agriculture offers a variety of jobs, but there are definite patterns that govern who performs which tasks. The more recent immigrant groups tend to do the more arduous work. More mature immigrant social networks whose members have more experience in California are able to place workers in better farm jobs. There is also sex and age-based specialization by task. Young men dominate most of the heavy harvesting tasks in citrus and tree fruits, melons, and piece-rate vegetable harvesting because hand harvesting involves stooping, climbing, or carrying efforts that "use-up" a worker's back in 10 or 15 years. Older men and women tend to specialize in the harvesting of strawberries and carrots and certain vegetables such as cauliflower that are cut, placed on a conveyor belt, and packed in the field. Older men dominate in the semi-skilled tasks of operating machines, supervising, irrigating, and tree-pruning. Farmworker children and women do a large share of the hoeing, thinning and sorting. Older men also are involved in these lighter tasks, but many drop out of farm work altogether. Most leave the farm workforce by age 45. Very few remain after age 54. Only 5 percent of the females surveyed and 10 percent of males were 55 or older.

Women and children (under 20) tend toward certain crop tasks and are excluded almost entirely from semi-skilled work such as pruning trees, irrigating, operating machines, and supervising crews (Table II-7). But, women and young farmworkers did more than their share of the unskilled work. Most women and those under 20 are employed in harvesting, hoeing and sorting. In fact, over half of the sorting and nearly half of the hoe work was done by women in the sample.

Women and children play especially important roles as harvesters of cucumbers, peppers, onions and deciduous fruits and as hoers and thinners in field fruit and vegetables, Table II-8). While there were almost no young people in the lettuce harvest and few women in the melon or citrus harvests, women were well represented in the arduous strawberry pick.

There is a tendency for men over 45 who are still in farm work to work in less physically demanding tasks. They work as crew leaders, machine operators, hoers, tree fruit thinners, irrigators, and pruners. Still, some men aged 45 to 54 worked at harvesting citrus, grapes, field fruit and semitropical fruit. But, men over 54, shift to less taxing crop activities, while many (or even most) older men drop out of the farm labor force entirely. National level statistics show that most farmworkers stop doing farm work in later life (Table II-9). (Census data for all workers is included for comparison.) The UC-EDD survey corroborates these high retirement rates for California farmworkers. Most farm work in California is done by the young.

Since 73 percent of the sample was Mexican-born, this group dominantes in all farm tasks (Table II-10). Almost four out of five harvest jobs were done by Mexican-born workers. Mexicans also did 80 percent of the planting and irrigating jobs in the sample. Finally, they almost totally dominated the crew leader jobs. Most of the crew leaders are Mexican nationals who have acquired some English speaking ability--an essential skill at many job sites where employers cannot communicate with Mexican immigrant crews.

Similarly, the Mexican-born as the largest group predominated in each of California's crop sectors representing from over two-thirds of the workers in deciduous tree fruit crops to 90 percent in citrus (Table II-11). The U.S.-born were well represented in grapes by both California-born and Mexican-Americans from Texas who are especially prominent in table grapes. The relatively high number of non-Mexican foreign-born workers in deciduous fruit reflect the many Punjabis in these industries.

Of special interest is where the undocumented work, since their continued contribution to California's fields, vineyards, orchards, and groves is somewhat tenuous. Which crops would be the hardest hit by immigration reform? Although the sample may have undercounted the undocumented, it offers some evidence for which crops are most dependent on a continuous flow of new immigrants from Mexico. Apparently the crop tasks with the heaviest dependency on the undocumented workforce are deciduous tree fruit thinners where 44 percent are without papers, deciduous harvesters with 27 percent, grape harvesters with 36 percent, citrus with 54 percent and, irrigators with 31 percent (Table II-12).

The regional distribution of crop tasks found in the UC-EDD survey reflects the state's cropping patterns. Most jobs were in the San Joaquin Valley, especially those in tree fruits and vineyards. Over three-quarters of the pruning and fruit tree thinning, 68 percent of the deciduous fruit picking, and 82 percent of the grape picking jobs took place in the San Joaquin Valley. The coastal areas and Southern California, on the other hand, had most of the vegetable and field fruit harvest jobs. The citrus harvest jobs were about evenly split between the San Joaquin Valley and the southern part of the state (Table II-13).

Nonfarm Work

Distribution of Nonfarm Jobs

There were 546 individuals in sample who did some nonfarm work in the 1982-83 work year, compared to 2,239 who did some farm work. A higher percentage of the nonfarm workers were women--nearly half the group compared to one-third of the farmworkers (Table II-14). In fact, among the nonfarm workers over 34, over half were female. A higher percentage of women than men in the sample were U.S.-born. Because most U.S.-born workers are better educated and speak better English, they are more likely to find nonfarm employment. A comparison of farm and nonfarm workers by place of birth demonstrates clearly the advantage for the U.S.-born in obtaining nonfarm jobs (Table II-15). The California-born, a younger, more educated group, were particularly prominent among nonfarm workers.

Women averaged more weeks of nonfarm work per year than men (Table II-16). Although many children of farmworkers, particularly older ones, do nonfarm work, among those living with their parents even greater numbers retain their foothold in the farm labor market (Table II-17). One could surmise that adult children of farmworkers who have left their parents' house are more likely to be employed in nonfarm jobs than those who remained. Although the UC-EDD survey was not able to collect data on adult children who have left their parental home, it is likely that a higher proportion is engaged in nonfarm work than is shown by the survey.

Regional Distribution and Types of Jobs

Partly because of the relative proximity of cities to the fields in Southern California and the abundance of nonfarm work there, a higher percentage of farmworker household members there work at nonfarm jobs (Table II-18). Although only 16 percent of the total sample lives in Southern California, one-fourth of those doing nonfarm work are employed in this region.

When nonfarm work is categorized by type, over half were cannery, packing house, or service jobs (Table II-19). These jobs are plentiful in the small rural California towns where most farmworkers live. Those working as craftsmen, and in offices and factories were mostly employed in larger cities.

It is mostly women who hold office jobs and work in canneries and packing houses. The service sector is more evenly divided, but men dominate in other types of nonfarm jobs (Table II-20). Recall from Table II-14 that over 70 percent of nonfarm workers in the sample are less than 35. Ninety percent of the office workers, 69 percent of the factory workers and 93 percent of the sales workers are less than 35. Apparently, the young, most of whom are the children of farmworkers, are the most likely to change to nonfarm jobs.

Members of farmworker households south of the Tehachapi mountains were more likely to find work in offices, factories, and in sales or as gardeners and janitors (Table II-21). But the cities of the San Joaquin Valley also offer nonfarm work, particularly jobs related to agriculture, such as packing and driving trucks. Also, there is factory work and employment in the construction industry of the Central Valley.

Total Employment and Unemployment

Farm and Nonfarm Employment

Only about 9 percent of the workers in the sample did only nonfarm work, 78 percent did only farm work and 13 percent did both types of work during the year (Table II-22). Given that the survey was of farmworker households, all groups depended mostly on farm work. But the U.S.-born were apparently less tied to farm work: In the California-born group 58 percent did only farm work, compared to 83 percent for the Mexican-born group (Table II-23).

While most children (14 to 17) in the sample did only farm work, young adults, age 18-24, tend to have nonfarm jobs or do some of both (Table II-24). One-third of these young members of farmworker households did nonfarm work at least part time. Above age 24, the respondents are increasingly dependent farm work alone. But again note that the survey was of farmworker households. Data on those who have left home and are doing nonfarm work are not included.

Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

The surveyed farmworker population has an extremely high labor force participation rate as measured by those who do any work through the year (Table II-25). Four out of five people 14 and older worked at least one week during the 1982-83 year. Even for high school children and for those over 65, about half of the sample was in the work force at some time during the year.

High labor force participation rates, however, hide the fact that most farmworkers are unemployed a large part of the year. If students are excluded from the sample, 84 percent of all workers who experienced unemployment in the 1982-83 season said that they were involuntarily unemployed (Table II-26). Moreover, high rates of involuntary unemployment applied both to men (88 percent) and to women (78 percent). Table II-27 shows that on average all groups had extremely high rates of unemployment. The unaccompanied Mexican men in this sense fared somewhat better since they spent more time in Mexico. In no group, however, did individual employment reach an average of 27 weeks a year.

Migration

There are two types of migration patterns prevalent among farmworkers: (1) the back-and-forth migration of Mexicans to the United States each year (about one in four farmworkers in the sample)[1] and (2) follow-the-crop migration (almost one in five).[2] Including both types of migration, 37 percent of all farmworkers were on the move each year. Some of the migrants, 6 percent of the farmworker sample, engaged in both types sometime during the year. More men than women migranted, especially across the border.

Birth place is a major determinant of migration patterns with Mexicans being the most prone to move (Table II-29). Thirty percent returned to Mexico every year, and over 20 percent followed the crops. Farmworkers from elsewhere in the United States (mostly Mexican-Americans from the Southwest) were the second most mobile group. Their patterns of movement are similar to those of the Mexicans, but they visited relatives in Mexico much less frequently. Although one in eight of the non-Mexican foreigners visited their home countries each year, they rarely followed the crops to make a living.

Although follow-the-crop migrancy may have declined in recent years, it remains a way of life for specific groups. Children of settled immigrants, and even those of back-and-forth migrants who stay in the same place while in California, are less likely to be sent to the fields to work than the children of families who follow the crops. In other words, children who do farm work are likely to be members of a migratory family while nonworking children in farmworker households are likely to be members of a settled family.

One-third of the Mexican-born farmworker children were in the follow-the-crop migratory circuit. Moreover,

1. Workers who spend at least one week or more a year in Mexico.

2. Workers who spend time overnight away from their usual U.S. home in order to do their farm job. (Follow-the-crop migrancy is of special interest since 45 percent fewer migrants reported using job placement services than did nonmigrant farmworkers.)

another 25 percent of the Mexican children returned to Mexico for part of the year. Combining the two types of migrancy, almost one- half of all children of Mexican farmworkers were migrants (Table II-30). These children may therefore be educationally handicapped.

Rates of migration also vary greatly from region to region within California and Arizona. The Central Coast area, which includes the Salinas Valley, has the highest rate of follow-the-crop migration (31 percent).

Follow-the-crop migration within California can be analyzed area by area using Table II-31. California is divided into seven possible migration destination areas in the first column with total jobs and proportions for each of these areas in the far right column. Fresno County workers had 44 percent of their other-county jobs in nearby southern San Joaquin Valley; 11 percent migrated to Imperial County for their other jobs; 22 percent went to the wine grape country of the northern San Joaquin; and 10 percent went to the coastal valleys. Those who worked in Imperial County also had jobs in other areas. Over three-quarters work in the southern San Joaquin Valley, and 7 percent each work in the Riverside area and the coastal valleys. Monterey County workers in their out-of-county jobs work one-third of the time in the southern San Joaquin, 31 percent of the time in neighboring coastal counties, and 22 percent in Imperial County. One-third of the San Joaquin County workers also are employed in the Sacramento Valley, 22 percent in the southern San Joaquin, and 19 percent in the coastal valleys.

How Families and Individuals Group Jobs to Make a Living [3]

In the first seven months of 1983, workers had an average of 1.8 jobs (Table II-32). The five most frequent jobs were harvesting vegetables, hoeing and thinning, pruning, harvesting deciduous tree fruits, and harvesting grapes. Harvesting represented 44 percent of all jobs, while another 4 percent of the jobs were lighter tasks including planting, pruning, sorting, hoeing, and thinning fruit from trees and vines. The remaining 15 percent were semi-skilled jobs of irrigating, supervising, and operating machines. Considering each major job, it is possible to gain some insight as to how workers combined several farm jobs at the beginning of 1983 to make a living.

One hundred seventy-six people did some pruning in 1983, averaging 1.2 pruning jobs and 2.6 total jobs (by changing employers) during the seven month period. These 176 pruners had 238 nonpruning jobs with other employers. Twenty-four percent of the pruners also harvested grapes; 20 percent harvested deciduous fruit; 24 percent harvested vegetables; 14 percent thinned fruit; and 14 percent did hoeing and thinning.

One hundred forty-six sorters did 180 nonsorting jobs during the first seven months of 1983. Thirty-eight percent did hoeing and thinning; and 22 percent harvested vegetables.

The 153 grape harvesters did 305 jobs other than vegetable harvesting. Twenty-eight percent did hoeing and thinning. Fifteen percent harvested grapes; 17 percent did some pruning; 16 percent harvested deciduous fruit; 8 percent picked field fruit; and 13 percent were sorters.

The 62 citrus pickers did 66 other jobs. Twenty-three percent harvested deciduous fruit, 15 percent grapes, 21 percent vegetables. Eight percent had a pruning job and 11 percent hoed and thinned row crops.

There were 164 deciduous fruit pickers interviewed. Most switched jobs rather frequently. Twenty-six percent were pruners, 19 percent thinned trees,

3. For each crop activity, persons doing that task were asked what other jobs they had in 1983. The percentages reported here offer a rough approximation of the distribution of farm tasks among California's farmworker population.

17 percent harvested grapes, 6 percent picked citrus, 23 percent picked vegetables, and 11 percent were field fruit harvesters. Only a few were sorters and hoers and thinners.

Field fruit harvesters were more specialized and less likely to branch out to other jobs. But 19 percent also worked as deciduous fruit pickers and 13 percent were hoers and thinners. Few took on any other types of work.

The 96 tree thinners also worked at 180 other jobs. Thirty- three percent were pruners, 18 percent hoed and thinned, 30 percent harvested grapes, 46 percent picked deciduous fruit, and 30 percent picked vegetables.

The 228 people who did hoeing jobs also did 306 other farm jobs. Thirty-five percent harvested vegetables, 25 percent were sorters, 13 percent were pruners, and 11 percent picked deciduous fruit. Nine percent of the hoers also operated machines. Older men do both of these types of jobs.

The 130 machine operators tended to specialize in this single activity. One out of five of these workers did some hoeing and thinning. The 85 irrigators were also quite specialized. But some irrigators did hoeing and thinning, operated machines, and harvested vegetables. The 72 crew leaders also did 59 nonsupervisory jobs, including the 22 percent who harvested vegetables and the 23 percent who hoed and thinned.

The information in Table II-32, however, refers only to the first task done for a given employer, i.e., their main job. On 22 percent of 3,035 tasks, workers also did a second task for the same employer, and on 9 percent of the jobs, workers also did a third task (Table II-33). Most workers consider the heavy hand harvest work as their first task for a given employer, and then the lighter assignments are their second and third tasks. Many workers continue on with the same employer after harvest, to sort, irrigate, hoe and thin, operate machines, and do supervisory work. Forty-eight percent of 190 irrigators considered irrigation work as a second or third task. Twenty-nine percent of the 105 crew leaders considered supervision as secondary work. One-third of the 389 hoers and thinners considered some other task as secondary to their main job. Two out of five of the 198 tree thinners list this as a secondary work, as do over one-third of the 279 sorters.

Farmworker families are usually not supported by a sole individual but typically by the farm work done by several persons in a family. Table II-34 first gives each crop task as a percentage of all farm jobs reported and then gives the percentage of all households sampled who had at least one member who did that type of task. Thus, nearly 70 percent of all households had someone who did harvest work.

Because harvest work is such an important part of farmworker household employment, details by family size are given in Table II-35. All family size units did some harvest work. Forty-four percent of the single member households did harvest work. In the units of two or three persons, about one-quarter of the households had someone who did harvest work; and the households of four or more people, about one in six households included one or more harvesters.

Table II-1
Percentage of Total Weeks Worked by Casual, Seasonal, and Full-Time Farmworkers

Weeks worked	Percentage of sample	Percentage of Total weeks worked	Number of workers
Casual 1-12 weeks	34.0	11.5	761
Seasonal 13-37 weeks	50.0	55.9	1120
Full-time 38 or more weeks	16.0	32.5	358
Total	100.0	99.9	2239

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table II-2
Percentage of Total Weeks Worked, by Sex

Sex	Average weeks worked per per year	Number of farmworkers	Percentage of total sample	Percentage of total weeks worked
Male	24.8	1469	65.8	73.3
Female	16.4	764	34.2	26.7
Total	21.9	2233	100.0	100.0

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-3
Number in Sample by Weeks Worked in Farm Work, by Sex

Weeks worked	Male	Female
1 to 6 weeks	152	162
7 to 12 weeks	245	199
13 to 25 weeks	363	229
26 to 37 weeks	386	139
38 to 49 weeks	231	32
50 to 52 weeks	92	3
Total Number	1469	764

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-4
Children Farmworkers (14-17)
As Percentage of the Total Sample
and Average Weeks of Farm work by Birthplace

Birthplace	Number	Children as a percentage of the total by birthplace	Average number of weeks worked in farm work
California	58	24.1	7.8
Mexico	118	7.4	8.4
Other U.S.	19	8.7	8.8
Other countries	6	4.6	3.3
Total	201	9.2	8.2

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-5
Weeks Worked in Farm Work, by Birthplace

Birthplace	Annual average of weeks worked	Number	Percentage of total sample	Percentage of total weeks worked
California	18.3	244	10.9	9.1
Mexico	22.6	1635	73.2	75.4
Other U.S.	22.2	224	10.0	10.1
Other country	20.0	132	5.9	5.4
Total	21.9	2235	100.0	100.0

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-6
Annual Average of Weeks Worked
in Farm Work, by Legal Status

	Green card	Undoc-umented	Citizen	Pending status	Total
Number of workers	677	248	274	45	1244
Average weeks	24.38	26.13	23.60	21.73	24.46

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-7
Percentage Distribution of Crop Tasks, by Sex and Age Groups

Crop Task	Sex			Age		
	Male	Female	Total	Under 20	20 or over	Total
Hand harvesting	556 (39.3%)	311 (42.6%)	867	148 (45.8%)	709 (39.7%)	857
Pruning trees	41 (2.9%)	9 (1.2%)	50	6 (1.9%)	44 (2.5%)	50
Pruning/Thinning vines	137 (9.7%)	77 (10.5%)	214	24 (7.4%)	185 (10.4%)	209
Thinning trees	37 (2.6%)	21 (2.9%)	58	13 (4.0%)	44 (2.5%)	57
Hoeing/Thinning	145 (10.3%)	135 (18.5%)	280	52 (16.1%)	223 (12.5%)	275
Irrigating	114 (8.1%)	8 (1.1%)	122	16 (5.0%)	105 (5.9%)	121
Sorting	96 (6.8%)	121 (16.6%)	217	42 (13.0%)	170 (9.5%)	212
Planting	46 (3.3%)	25 (3.4%)	71	14 (4.3%)	56 (3.1%)	70
Machine operators	216 (15.3%)	19 (2.6%)	235	8 (2.5%)	223 (12.5%)	231
Crew leaders	25 (1.8%)	4 (0.5%)	29	0 (0.0%)	28 (1.6%)	28
Total	1413 (100.1%)	730 (99.9%)	2143	323 (100.0%)	1787 (100.2%)	2110

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-8

Share of Specific Job Tasks Done by Children and Women

Crop Task	Percentage Under 20	Percentage Female	Total Number of Jobs[a]
Harvesting onions	38.1	42.9	21
Harvesting peppers, cucumbers	37.5	44.4	54
Harvesting tomatoes	22.9	40.0	50
Harvesting grapes	17.5	37.8	193
Harvesting deciduous tree fruit	27.3	35.6	135
Harvesting vegetables	20.0	33.2	268
Harvesting field fruit	11.7	43.5	124
Thinning/Hoeing vegetables	20.2	56.7	127
Thinning/Hoeing field fruit	32.7	42.9	7
Percent of total sample	15.3	33.7	

[a]Average number because the total varied slightly for sex, age calculations.
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table II-9

Percentage Distribution by Age for U.S. Farmworkers, California Farmworkers, and all U.S. Workers

Age	USDA: The Hired Farm Working Force, 1981	U.S. Census All Workers, 1982	UC-EDD Survey, 1983
	percent		
Less than 24	55.3	31.9	22.3
25-34	19.7	25.5	28.3
35-44	9.3	20.3	20.4
45-54	6.5	13.8	15.3
55-64	4.3	7.1	10.9
65 or more	4.8	1.4	2.7
Total	99.9	100.0	99.9

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-10
Percentage Distribution of Crop Tasks by Worker Birthplace

Crop task	Calif-fornia	Mexico	Other U.S.	Other countries	Total
Hand harvesting	60 (6.9%)	680 (78.3%)	69 (7.9%)	59 (6.8%)	868
Pruning trees	5 (10.4%)	35 (72.9%)	6 (12.5%)	2 (4.2%)	48
Pruning/Thinning vines	30 (14.0%)	143 (66.8%)	23 (10.7%)	18 (8.4%)	214
Thinning trees	5 (8.8%)	35 (61.4%)	5 (8.8%)	12 (21.1%)	57
Hoeing/Thinning	29 (10.3%)	202 (71.9%)	36 (12.8%)	14 (5.0%)	281
Irrigating	7 (5.7%)	99 (80.5%)	14 (11.4%)	3 (2.4%)	123
Sorting	46 (21.1%)	140 (64.2%)	20 (9.2%)	12 (5.5%)	218
Planting	7 (9.7%)	58 (80.6%)	5 (6.9%)	2 (2.8%)	72
Machine operators	38 (16.2%)	145 (61.7%)	42 (17.9%)	10 (4.3%)	235
Crew leaders	1 (3.4%)	26 (89.7%)	2 (6.9%)		29
Total	228 (10.6%)	1563 (72.9%)	222 (10.3%)	132 (6.2%)	2145

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-11
Percentage Distribution of Workers by Crop, Worker Birthplace

Crop	California	Mexico	Other U.S.	Other countries	Total
Citrus	6 (6.7%)	81 (90.0%)	3 (3.3%)		90
Semi-tropical fruit	1 (6.3%)	12 (75.0%)	2 (12.5%)	1 (6.3%)	16
Grapes	55 (11.8%)	328 (70.4%)	52 (11.2%)	31 (6.7%)	466
Deciduous fruit	16 (7.1%)	155 (68.6%)	25 (11.1%)	30 (13.3%)	226
Nuts	4 (6.3%)	48 (76.2%)	7 (11.1%)	4 (6.3%)	63
Field crops	44 (15.5%)	177 (62.3%)	51 (18.0%)	12 (4.2%)	284
Vegetables	61 (9.7%)	493 (78.0%)	47 (7.4%)	31 (4.9%)	632
Field fruit	17 (9.4%)	135 (75.0%)	14 (7.8%)	14 (7.8%)	180
Other crops	24 (13.3%)	134 (74.0%)	19 (10.5%)	4 (2.2%)	181
Total	228 (10.7%)	1563 (73.1%)	220 (10.3%)	127 (5.9%)	2138

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-12
Percentage Distribution of Crop Tasks, By Legal Status

Crop Task	Green card	Undocu-mented	Citizen	Pending status	Total
Pruning	35 (46.7%)	16 (21.3%)	18 (24.0%)	6 (8.0%)	75
Thinning trees	10 (40.0%)	11 (44.0%)		4 (16.0%)	25
Thinning rows	64 (59.8%)	12 (11.2%)	23 (21.5%)	8 (7.5%)	107
Irrigating	33 (49.3%)	21 (31.3%)	11 (16.4%)	2 (3.0%)	67
Sorting	66 (54.1%)	12 (9.8%)	41 (33.6%)	3 (2.5%)	122
Planting	11 (44.0%)	3 (12.0%)	9 (36.0%)	2 (2.5%)	122
Machine operators	55 (50.5%)	11 (10.1%)	40 (36.7%)	3 (2.8%)	109
Crew leaders	31 (62.0%)	7 (14.0%)	8 (16.0%)	4 (8.0%)	50
Harvesting citrus	17 (43.6%)	21 (53.8%)	1 (2.6%)		39
Harvesting semitropical fruit	2			2	2
Harvesting grapes	52 (55.6%)	48 (27.3%)	32 (14.1%)	(3.0%)	132
Harvesting deciduous fruit	55 (55.6%)	27 (27.3%)	14 (14.1%)	3 (3.0%)	99
Harvesting nuts	3 (27.3%)	6 (54.5%)	2 (18.2%)		11
Harvesting field crops	1 (33.3%)		1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	3
Harvesting vegetables	112 (63.3%)	23 (13.0%)	24 (13.6%)	18 (10.2%)	177
Harvesting field fruit	50 (61.7%)	10 (12.3%)	16 (19.8%)	5 (6.2%)	81
total	597 (53.1%)	228 (20.3%)	240 (21.4%)	59 (5.2%)	1124

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-13
Percentage Distribution of Crop Tasks, by California Region

Crop Task	Southern Calif.	Southern Coast	Central Coast	Sacra-mento Valley	San Joaquin Valley	Northern Coast	Total
Pruning	3 (1.9%)	16 (10.3%)	8 (5.1%)	2 (1.3%)	120 (76.9%)	7 (4.5%)	156
Thining Trees	1 (2.0%)	3 (6.0%)	3 (6.0%)	1 (2.0%)	39 (78.0%)	3 (6.0%)	50
Thining Rows	20 (9.9%)	14 (6.9%)	16 (7.9%)	25 (12.4%)	91 (45.0%)	36 (17.8%)	202
Irrigating	6 (7.0%)	6 (7.0%)	8 (9.3%)	6 (7.0%)	53 (61.6%)	7 (8.1%)	86
Sorting	18 (10.8%)	18 (10.8%)	18 (10.8%)	90 (54.2%)	16 (9.6%)	6 (3.6%)	166
Planting	1 (2.8%)	5 (13.9%)	5 (13.9%)	1 (2.8%)	20 (55.6%)	4 (11.1%)	36
Machine operators	12 (8.2%)	12 (8.2%)	11 (7.5%)	31 (21.1%)	72 (49.0%)	9 (6.1%)	147
Crew leaders	12 (20.0%)	4 (6.7%)	10 (16.7%)	1 (1.7%)	22 (36.7%)	11 (18.3%)	60
Harvesting citrus	12 (25.5%)	10 (21.3%)	1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	24 (51.1%)	0 (0.0%)	47
Harvesting semitropical fruit	0 (0.0%)	2 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (80.0%)	0 (0.0%)	10
Harvesting grapes	23 (11.2%)	2 (1.0%)	3 (1.5%)	1 (0.5%)	169 (82.0%)	8 (3.9%)	206
Harvesting deciduous fruit	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (11.5%)	21 (20.2%)	71 (68.3%)	0 (0.0%)	104
Harvesting nuts	0 (0.0%)	4 (20.0%)	2 (10.0%)	5 (25.0%)	9 (45.0%)	0 (0.0%)	20
Harvesting field crops	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (14.3%)	5 (71.4%)	1 (14.3%)	7
Harvesting vegetables	18 (7.4%)	19 (7.8%)	59 (24.2%)	5 (2.0%)	105 (43.0%)	38 (15.6%)	244
Harvesting field fruit	25 (28.4%)	18 (20.5%)	13 (14.8%)	2 (2.3%)	26 (29.5%)	4 (4.5%)	88
Total	151 (9.3%)	133 (8.2%)	169 (10.4%)	192 (11.8%)	850 (52.2%)	134 (8.2%)	1629

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-14
Percentage Distribution of Nonfarm Workers, By Age and Sex

Age	Male	Female	Total
14 to 17	23 (56.1%)	18 (43.9%)	41
18 to 19	35 (53.0%)	31 (47.0%)	66
20 to 24	75 (59.1%)	52 (40.9%)	127
25 to 34	77 (53.1%)	68 (46.9%)	145
35 to 44	37 (40.7%)	54 (59.3%)	91
45 to 54	19 (45.2%)	23 (54.8%)	42
55 to 64	15 (65.2%)	8 (34.8%)	23
65 or over	2 (100.0%)	0	2
Total	283 (52.7%)	254 (47.3%)	537

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-15
Percentage Distribution by Worker Birthplace, Farmworkers and Nonfarm Workers

	Nonfarm Workers		Farmworkers	
Birthplace	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
California	128	23.7	241	11.0
Other U.S.	80	14.8	219	10.0
Mexico	299	55.5	1604	73.1
Other countries	32	5.9	131	6.0
Total	539	99.9	2195	100.1

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-16

Average Weeks Worked in Nonfarm Jobs, by Worker, Sex, and Birthplace

	Male	Number	Female	Number
California	**20.97**	**66**	**21.77**	**62**
Mexico	20.32	160	21.71	139
Other U.S.	21.00	42	26.24	38
Other countries	18.18	17	24.46	15
Overall average	20.44	285	22.57	254

Table II-17

Percentage of Children Living with Their Parents Doing One or More Weeks of Work, Farm and Nonfarm

Age	**Total number** of children living with their parents	Percentage doing farm work	Percentage doing nonfarm work
14 to 17	435	42.1	8.0
18 to 21	265	58.9	27.5
22 to 29	102	62.8	33.3

Table II-18

Percentage Distribution of Farmworkers and Nonfarm Workers in the Sample, by California Region

Region Percent	**Farm workers**	**Nonfarm workers**
Southern California	14.0	25.3
Southern Coast	5.5	3.3
Central Coast	16.1	13.2
Sacramento Valley	13.4	11.6
San Joaquin Valley	49.2	43.7
Northern Coast	1.7	2.9
Total	99.9	100.0
Number	2239	517

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-19 Percentage Distribution by Kind of Nonfarm Work		
Kind of Nonfarm Work	**Number**	**Percent**
Office	40	7.7
Canning/Packing	130	25.1
Factory	48	9.3
Service	148	28.6
Gardener/Janitor	67	13.0
Craftsman	40	7.7
Sales	16	3.1
Driver	24	4.6
Self Employed	4	0.8
Total	517	100.0
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.		

Table II-20 Percentage Distribution of Nonfarm Work By Sex			
Kind of Nonfarm Work	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
Office	**8** (20.0%)	**32** (80.0%)	**40**
Canning packing	47 (36.2%)	83 (63.8%)	130
Factory	34 (70.8%)	14 (29.2%)	48
Service	65 (44.2%)	82 (55.8%)	147
Gardener janitor	52 (77.6%)	15 (22.4%)	67
Craftsman	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)	40
Sales	12 (75.0%)	4 (25.0%)	16
Driver	16 (66.7%)	8 (33.3%)	24
Self-employed	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	3
Column total	275 53.4%	240 46.6%	515
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.			

Table II-21

Percentage Distribution of Nonfarm Work, by Type, by Region in California

Type of Nonfarm Work	Southern California	Southern Coast	Central Coast	Sacra-mento Valley	San Joaquin Valley	Northern Coast	Total
Office	14 (35.0%)	1 (2.5%)	3 (7.5%)	5 (12.5%)	17 (42.5%)		40
Canning/ packing	22 (16.9%)	4 (3.1%)	23 (17.7%)	19 (14.6%)	59 (45.4%)	3 (2.3%)	130
Factory	12 (25.0%)	2 (4.2%)	5 (10.4%)	5 (10.4%)	21 (43.8%)	3 (6.3%)	48
Service	42 (28.4%)	5 (3.4%)	20 (13.5%)	17 (11.5%)	60 (40.5%)	4 (2.7%)	148
Gardener/ janitor	26 (38.8%)	4 (6.0%)	6 (9.0%)	6 (9.0%)	22 (32.8%)	3 (4.5%)	67
Construction	3 (7.5%)	1 (2.5%)	6 (15.0%)	7 (17.5%)	22 (55.0%)	1 (2.5%)	40
Sales	7 (43.8%)		4 (25.0%)		4 (25.0%)	1 (6.3%)	16
Driver	3 (12.5%)		1 (4.2%)	1 (4.2%)	19 (79.2%)		24
Self-employed	2 (50.0%)				2 (50.0%)		4
Column total	131 (25.3%)	17 (3.3%)	68 (13.2%)	60 (11.6%)	226 (43.7%)	15 (2.9%)	517

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-22 Distribution of Workers by Farm and Nonfarm Work	
Percentage doing farm work only	78.0
Percentage doing nonfarm work only	9.3
Percentage doing some of both	12.7
Number	2464
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.	

Table II-23
Distribution of Workers by Source of Earnings: Farm Work, Nonfarm Work or Both by Birthplace

Birthplace	Farm Work Only	Nonfarm Work Only	Both Farm and Nonfarm Work	Total
California	180 (58.4%)	64 (20.8%)	64 (20.8%)	308
Mexico	1456 (82.9%)	122 (6.9%)	179 (10.2%)	1757
Other U.S.	176 (68.8%)	32 (12.5%)	48 (18.8%)	256
Other countries	111 (77.6%)	11 (7.7%)	21 (14.7%)	143
Total	1923 (78.0%)	229 (9.3%)	312 (12.7%)	2464

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-24
Distribution of Workers by Source of Earnings: Farm Work, Nonfarm Work or Both by Age Group

Age	Farm Work Only	Nonfarm Work Only	Both Farm and Nonfarm Work	Total
14 to 17	187 (82.0%)	26 (11.4%)	15 (6.6%)	228
18 to 19	117 (63.9%)	33 (18.0%)	33 (18.0%)	183
20 to 24	273 (68.3%)	50 (12.5%)	77 (19.3%)	400
25 to 34	473 (76.5%)	58 (9.4%)	87 (14.1%)	618
35 to 44	390 (81.1%)	34 (7.1%)	57 (11.9%)	481
45 to 54	281 (87.0%)	20 (6.2%)	22 (6.8%)	323
55 to 64	141 (84.9%)	9 (5.4%)	16 (9.6%)	166
65 or more	28 (93.3%)	0	2 (6.7%)	30
Column Total	1890 (77.8%)	230 (9.5%)	309 (12.7%)	2429

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-25
Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Group

Age	Percentage Who Worked	Total Sample
14 to 17	48.3	472
18 to 19	76.9	238
20 to 24	84.7	472
25 to 34	88.0	702
35 to 44	89.1	540
45 to 54	88.7	364
55 to 64	80.6	206
65 or more	50.9	59
Total	81.0	3053

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-26

Percentage of Voluntary and Involuntary Unemployment: All Workers in Farmworker Households

Type of Unemployment	Male	Female	Overall	Number of Workers
	Percent			
Search unsuccessful	87.7	78.0	84.1	1586
Work in the home	1.3	11.5	5.0	95
Ill	3.9	5.7	4.6	86
Voluntarily/unemployed or retired	7.1	4.7	6.3	118
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	1885

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table II-27

Average Number of Weeks Spent in Farm Work, Nonfarm Work, Unemployed, and Abroad, by Farmworkers Groups

Groups	Nonfarm Work	Farm Work	Unemployment	Outside U.S.	Total Weeks	Average Number[b]
All male heads of household[a]	2.9	25.6	21.1	2.5	52.1	810
U.S.-born male heads of household	4.0	25.2	22.2	0.8	52.2	160
Mexican-born heads of household	1.8	24.0	23.4	2.7	51.9	632
Unaccompanied Mexican men	2.1	26.4	15.1	8.5	52.1	283
Married women with family	4.3	11.1	34.4	2.0	51.8	774

[a]Includes other foreign-born.
[b]Not every respondent answered all four questions.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-28
Farmworker Migration Patterns, by Sex

	Male		Female		Total	
Type	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Follow-the-crop	284	19.3	129	16.9	413	18.5
Back-and forth	400	27.2	149	19.5	549	24.6
Both	110	7.5	32	4.2	142	6.4
Total migrants	574	39.1	246	32.2	920	39.4
Nonmigrants	895	60.9	518	67.8	1413	60.6
Total	1469	100.0%	764	100.0%	2333	100.0%

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-29

Farmworker Migration Patterns, by Worker Birthplace

	California		Mexico			Other U.S.		Other Countries	
Type	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Type**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Follow-the-crop	32	14.3	330	20.2	**Follow-**the-crop	40	17.9	11	8.3
Back-and forth	21	9.4	490	30.0	Back-and forth	21	9.4	16	12.1
Both	5	2.2	133	8.1	Both	4	7.0	0	0.0
Total migrants	47	21.0	687	37.9	Total migrants	57	25.4	27	20.5
Nonmigrants	177	79.0	1125	62.1	Nonmigrants	167	74.6	105	79.5
Total	224	100.0%	1812	100.0%	Total	224	100.0%	132	100.0%

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-30
Migrancy Patterns for Mexican Children (14 to 17 years old) Living with Their Families in the United States

Type	Number	Percent
Follow-the-crop	**39**	**33.1**
Back-and-forth	29	24.6
Both	12	10.2
Total migrants	56	47.5
Nonmigrants	62	52.5
Total	118	100.0%

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-31
Other Areas That Workers in Specific Counties Worked in 1982-83[a]

Other Counties Worked	Home Counties								Distribution of jobs	
	Fresno		Imperial		Monterey		San Joaquin			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Imperial	15	11.1	—	—	13	22.0	7	8.2	212	7.1
Riverside, San Bernardino	9	6.7	17	6.8	5	8.5	2	2.4	225	7.5
Orange, Los Angeles, San Diego	5	3.7	3	1.2	1	1.7	4	4.7	91	3.0
Northern San Joaquin	29	21.5	14	5.6	3	5.1	9	10.6	440	14.7
Southern San Joaquin	60	44.4	196	78.1	19	32.2	19	22.4	1221	40.7
Sacramento Valley	4	3.0	3	1.2	0	0.0	28	32.9	318	10.6
Central and Southern Coast	13	9.6	18	7.2	18	30.5	16	18.8	495	16.5
Total other county jobs	135	100.0	251	100.1	59	100.0	85	100.0	3002	100.1
Total home county jobs	521		211		113		177			

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.
[a]May include some overlap, i.e., a worker may be counted as from both Fresno and Imperial counties

Table II-32
Distribution of Jobs for 1105 Farmworkers Interviewed[a]

Crop task	Number of jobs	Percent	Average Number of total jobs per person[b]	Average number of crop task. Specific jobs done per person[c]
Pruning	216	10.5	2.6	1.2
Thinning trees	97	4.7	2.9	1.0
Thinning rows	274	13.3	2.5	1.2
Irrigating	94	4.6	1.7	1.1
Sorting	172	8.4	2.4	1.2
Planting	52	2.5		
Machine operator	148	7.2	1.7	1.1
Crew leader	85	4.1	2.0	1.1
Harvesting citrus	67	3.3	2.1	1.1
Harvesting Semitropical fruit	10	0.5		
Harvesting grapes	168	8.2	2.7	1.1
Harvesting deciduous fruit	218	10.6	2.7	1.3
Harvesting vegetables	309	15.1	2.5	1.1
Harvesting field fruit	118	5.7	1.9	1.0
Other	25	1.2		
Total jobs	2053	100.0	1.9	

[a]Includes only jobs that ended between January 1 and August 1, 1983. There is overlap since many workers do more than one crop task.

[b]The average number of all tasks done by, for example, pruners.

[c]For example, the average number of pruning jobs done by pruners. Thus, in the first seven months of 1983, pruners did an average of 2.6 total tasks and 1.2 pruning tasks.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table II-33
Types of Farm Tasks Done for One Employer on a Job[a]

Jobs	First task	Second task	Third task
	Percent		
Harvesting	50.8	26.6	30.1
Thinning trees	3.9	11.1	5.3
Pruning	11.0	6.4	13.1
Hoeing/ Thinning	6.8	10.3	11.7
Irrigating	5.0	14.6	14.2
Sorting	6.0	12.4	4.3
Planting			
Machine operators	10.9	11.8	13.5
Crew leader	2.5	3.2	2.8
Other		3.6	5.0
Total percent	99.9	99.8	100.0
Total number of tasks	3035	669	282

[a]Interviewees were asked to list the three main tasks they did for each employer in order of their importance.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-34
Percentage Distribution of Crop Tasks, Family Units

Crop task	Number of jobs	Crop task as a percent of all jobs	Percent of all households who had at least one working at the crop task
Harvesting	868	40.4	69.3
Pruning trees	50	2.3	4.0
Pruning/ thinning vines	214	10.0	17.1
Thinning fruit trees	58	2.7	4.6
Hoeing/ thinning	281	13.1	22.4
Irrigating	123	5.7	9.8
Sorting	218	10.1	17.4
Planting	72	3.4	5.7
Machine operator	235	10.9	18.8
Crew leader	29	1.4	2.3
Total	2148	100.0	1253

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table II-35
Percentage Distribution of Households with Someone Doing Hand Harvest Work in 1983, by Size of Household

Number of persons in household	Percent
1	44
2	24
3	23
4	17
5	13
6	17
7	16
8	14
9 or more	14

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

III. Earnings, Income, and Assets

Introduction

On the basis of the UC-EDD survey, the level of earnings and the sources of farmworker income can be described and quantified. In order to make a living, farmworker households combine U.S. farm work, nonfarm work, government transfer payments and some Mexican earnings. Many farmworkers also derive some economic security from assets held. Although the average hourly wage, $5.10, and weekly wage, $180, for farm work is relatively high, yearly cash income levels are low due to long periods of unemployment. Nonfarm workers in these households generally earn less on a per hour basis than farmworkers, but nonfarm work is a significant source of family income. United States transfer payments and physical assets held also both contribute importantly to the economic well-being of farmworkers households, but income derived from sources in Mexico was negligible for the sample as a whole.

Farm Earnings: Piece Rate vs. Hourly

One factor which determines the level of farmworker earnings is whether or not they do the more highly paid piece-rate work. Most farmworkers are paid hourly, not by the piece (Table III-1). In fact, those paid hourly outnumber those earning piece rates about two to one. More men worked at piece-rate wages than women and more undocumented than legal workers. More employees of farm labor contractors (FLCs) were paid by the piece than were employees of growers, and southern coastal vegetable and fruit workers were the most likely to earn piece rates. Over 83 percent of all piece-rate jobs consist of hand harvest work, but piece rate is also used in other farm tasks as well (Table III-2).

There are two types of piece rates--individual and crew rates. Individual piece rates were used mostly in citrus, deciduous fruit, and strawberries, while crew rates were common in lettuce, cucumbers, and melons. Statewide survey results show that workers paid crew piece rates earned the most, followed by individual piece rates, and then by hourly wages. When piece-rate wages are put on an hourly basis, their average is considerably higher than hourly wages. Crew piece rates averaged 53 percent more and individual piece rates averaged 28 percent more than hourly wages when figured on a per hour basis (Table III-3). When put on a daily basis, however, the gap narrows. Because hourly workers averaged more hours per day than piece-rate workers, crew piece-rate workers earned 25 percent more and individual piece-rate workers 7 percent more than the hourly employees earned per day (Table III-4). Also, variation from worker to worker (measured by the standard deviation) was three times higher for piece-rate employees than for hourly workers, making piece rates unattractive to workers with below-average output levels.

Farm Earnings: Similarities and Differences Among Groups

There was little variation in statewide averages of hourly farm wages across several categories: by place of birth (Table III-5), by level of schooling (Table III-6), or even by farm task (Table III-7). Average wages for nonsupervisory jobs ranged from $4.92 for equipment operators to $4.38 for hoers, thinners, and pruners, with an average wage for all tasks of $4.66 an hour. The only group with decidedly above-average hourly earnings was the crew leaders, who averaged $5.42 an hour. The large variation in their wages (a standard deviation of $2.61) reflects the fact that some were crew leaders for small contractors who earned little more than their crew members, while others were tenured employees of large corporations and earned high wages. Even by legal status, there is not a marked difference in daily wages earned (Table III-8). Although the undocumented earned less per hour, they were able to earn more per day than legal workers when paid on a piece-rate basis.

In spite of these striking statewide uniformities, there are important wage differences by region, union affiliation, sex, and type of employer. Employers in the coastal areas and in Southern California on average pay higher wages than those paid in the interior valleys (Table III-9). The higher paying areas employed about one-third (34.6 percent) of the sample, while approximately 60 percent were employed in the less well-paying Central Valley. In terms of an overall average wage combining hourly and piece rates, there was a 75 percent difference between the highest-- $7.26 on the South Coast--and the lowest-- $4.15 in the Sacramento Valley. Over half of the 1,071 workers reporting wages were interviewed in the San Joaquin Valley where wages averaged $4.60.

The 15 percent wage differential between men and women (Table III-3) is due largely to the ability of male farmworkers to find more piece-rate employment than women do. In fact, in jobs paying hourly, there was only a small difference in earnings between the sexes while at the individual piece-rate jobs men earned 17 percent more and at the crew piece-rate jobs they earned 62 percent more than women.

Two other groups had a significant wage advantage--union workers and those employed directly by growers. Workers with union affiliation received 24 percent more in average hourly wages than those who were not members of unions ($5.54 vs. $4.46). Finally, as will be detailed below, workers employed directly by growers are likely to earn more than those employed by farm labor contractors or packing houses.

Nonfarm Earnings

The survey provides only limited information about nonfarm wages of farmworker household members because the predominant job of the heads of household directly interviewed was farm work. Weekly earnings from 144 nonfarm jobs mostly by wives and children of farmworkers are reported in Table III-10. Wages for low- and medium-skill level nonfarm jobs paid on average less than farm jobs. The type of nonfarm work and the number of weeks worked was reported for the entire sample (Table III-11). Fifty-four percent of the 517 who had nonfarm jobs reported holding medium-skill level jobs, 40 percent low-skill jobs, and 7 percent high-skill positions.

Mexican Earnings

Thirty percent of all Mexican born farmworkers return to Mexico every year and, if Mexican farmworkers who go back every two or three years are included, the rate of return rises to nearly one-half, even for those who have brought their families to the United States (Table III-12). But the contribution to income from earnings in Mexico is very small; few Mexicans work while in their home communities, and if they do, their earnings there are extremely low.

Among family Mexicans, for example, only 12 percent of the households had anyone who worked in Mexico in recent years (Table III-13). And only 4 percent of the families had someone who worked five months or more in a given year. Thus, the average income of these families could not be much affected by Mexican wage earnings. The unaccompanied Mexican men were more likely to work in Mexico. Almost one-third of them spent time working during their most recent trip home. Only 11 percent, however, worked for five months or more. But, considering that earnings in Mexico were only about $100-$125 per month in the 1982-1983 year for unskilled workers, the Mexican contribution to their income averaged less than $400 a year.

Total Cash Income

Using reported weekly wages coupled with weeks worked on both farm and nonfarm jobs, the average annual farmworker income can be estimated. The average adult farmworker made $186 a week for 23 weeks on farm jobs in 1982-83 or $4,300. The same average worker had another two weeks of nonfarm work for an additional $320,[1] for an annual income of $4,620. Of course, those who worked more than 23 weeks made more, and family income increased with more members working. A second person working increased average weeks worked by 15 and annual household earnings by almost $2,700. Income continued to increase with household size but at a much slower rate as youngsters employed part-time were counted (Table III-14).

Low annual earnings result from the high rates of unemployment experienced by these farmworker households. The typical head of household in a farmworker family averaged 20 to 23 weeks of unemployment in the United States in 1982-83. A typical family of four worked on average 49 weeks and earned less than $9,000. The poverty level as defined by the federal government for a family of four in 1983 was $10,178 in 1983,[2] meaning that over 70 percent of the 168 four-member households in the sample were in poverty.

Details about the number of weeks worked by household size are found in Table III-15. Over half the one-member households had 29 weeks or less of employment. When households of two or three people are included and weeks worked by all family members are counted, one-third of the households worked 29 weeks or less. In households of four or five people, 40 percent worked 39 weeks or less. Over one-third of the households with six or more people worked a total of 39 weeks or less.

Judging by weeks worked, about one in five dollars of income in farmworker households came from nonfarm sources (Table III-16). The amount of nonfarm work done varied by birthplace of the household head with the California-born averaging more weeks of work off the farm than the other groups. The small non-Mexican foreign group averaged a total of only 39 weeks a year per household.

Transfer Payments

Most households in the UC-EDD survey were aware of both social insurance and welfare programs. The rates of utilization of these programs were quite high (Table III-17). With the average farmworker being unemployed over half the year, two- thirds of the households had at least one recipient of unemployment insurance (UI). Rates for other benefits were also high. One in eight reported having a household member on disability insurance during 1982-83, and 71 families had someone receiving a payment from the Social Security Administration. Almost

1. Using the average skill level of nonfarm workers (Table III-11) and the average wage for each skill level (Table III-10), we estimate the average nonfarm weekly income to be $160.

2. Quoted from the U.S. Bureau of the Census by Slater, 1984, p. 3.

one-quarter of the households reported using Medi-Cal or food stamps. One in ten reported being beneficiaries of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and 5 percent said they received general assistance from the county where they lived.

Table III-18 shows the use of transfer payments by the three major household groups. The unaccompanied Mexican men received much less social insurance than either of the other two groups. But there was no significant difference between the settled family Mexicans and U.S.-born families in their receipt of UI and other insurance programs. Apparently, once a Mexican family settles in the United States, it learns about its right to use social insurance programs into which it has paid.

Table III-19 shows the usage of welfare programs by the three household groupings. While unaccompanied Mexican men, many of whom had families in Mexico, did receive payments from social insurance programs, they almost never used welfare. But, both the native-born families and Mexican families used welfare at relatively high levels, though the U.S.-born were somewhat more likely to receive these benefits.

Tables III-20 and III-21 respectively, give the distribution of social insurance and welfare benefits by legal status. Thirty percent of the undocumented workers used unemployment insurance or some other insurance program but received few welfare benefits. Even though 43 percent of the undocumented had their families in California only one in ten collected welfare and only 9 percent received Medi-Cal payments (Table III-22). The regional pattern of UI benefits is shown in Table III-23, with the highest usage in Southern California.

Assets Held

Despite relatively low income levels, many farmworker households held assets in the United States, in Mexico, or both (Table III-24). Almost one in five owned a house in the United States. Three out of four owned a car or truck. Also, about one in 20 had some kind of income generating business either in the United States or in Mexico.

Asset holding varies considerably among groups. Family Mexicans and citizen families had a relatively high rate of U.S. home ownership, whereas few unaccompanied Mexican men or undocumented were homeowners. Higher percentages of these groups owned some property in Mexico.

Total Farmworker Income from All Sources

The multinational pool of workers which feeds California's farm labor market is heterogeneous with respect to national origin and education and by the location of the immigrant's family. Still, hourly earnings do not vary a great deal by birthplace, education, or even legal status. Regional differences are apparently more important than other factors, with Southern California and the Pacific Coast, leading in wage rates. The presence of unions, the relative absence of farm labor contractors, and the use of crew piece-rate payment partially explains higher earnings in certain regions. Groups with access to these better labor markets benefit relative to those in lower-paid areas. The advantages of certain regions are probably reinforced by workers' greater access to unemployment insurance there. (Recall Table III-23.) The lower wage San Joaquin Valley also has significantly lower rates of drawing unemployment insurance.

Nonfarm earnings are important to all groups but especially to non-Mexican households. So even though the non-Mexican households do not do as much farm work as Mexicans, they work about the same number of weeks a year by adding more off-farm jobs. The U.S.-born do not have a big advantage relative to the settled Mexican families with respect to government benefits; the latter draw as much unemployment insurance though somewhat less welfare.

Although settled immigrants use U.S. government programs more than the unaccompanied Mexican men, they also have a much higher cost of living. Unaccompanied men spend more time in Mexico themselves and keep their families there at a lower cost. Settled families are more likely to have assets in the United States than are the unaccompanied Mexican men, but more of the latter group work in Mexico and have assets there. Settled immigrants have more of their security in the United States while the unaccompanied men have their families and their security in Mexico.

In sum, there are important differences among groups of farmworkers. However, it is difficult to relate differences in income and overall well-being to nationality, legal status, or education. Rather these differences are more strongly correlated to the region where they work, their type of employer, and the influence of the farm unions in the area.

Table III-1
Percentage Distribution of Method of Payment, by Sex, Legal Status, Employer, and Region of California

	Number of workers	Piece-rate wages	Hourly wages	Some of both
		Percent		
All workers	1280	30.9	62.3	6.8
Sex:				
Male	957	32.4	61.4	6.2
Female	323	26.3	65.0	8.7
Legal status:				
Green card	685	31.2	62.6	6.1
Undocumented	250	38.4	53.6	8.0
Citizen	276	23.6	69.2	7.2
Employer:				
Grower	841	26.8	65.5	7.7
Farm labor contractor	312	47.4	48.4	42.2
Packing house	50	12.0	84.0	4.0
Share cropper	27	25.9	63.0	11.1
California Region:				
Southern California	185	30.3	58.4	11.4
Southern Coast	92	44.6	47.8	7.6
Central Coast	186	29.0	61.3	9.9
Sacramento Valley	175	31.4	68.6	0.0
San Joaquin Valley	586	29.2	64.2	6.7
Northern Coast	27	7.4	92.6	0.0

Source: EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-2
Percentage Distribution by Method of Payment, by Crop Task

Crop Task	Piece-rate Wages	Hourly Wages	Some of Both	Total
Hand harvesting	318 (57.1%)	179 (32.1%)	60 (10.8%)	557
Pruning trees	4 (28.6%)	9 (64.3%)	1 (7.1%)	14
Pruning/thinning vines	12 (15.6%)	60 (77.9%)	5 (6.5%)	77
Thinning trees	2 (25.0%)	6 (75.0%)		8
Hoeing/ thinning	7 (6.5%)	99 (91.7%)	2 (1.9%)	108
Irrigating	4 (4.6%)	82 (94.3%)	1 (1.1%)	87
Sorting	16 (12.7%)	102 (81.0%)	8 (6.3%)	126
Planting	3 (10.3%)	21 (72.4%)	5 (17.2%)	29
Machine operator	10 (5.8%)	161 (93.1%)	2 (1.2%)	173
Crew/ leaders	5 (15.2%)	26 (78.8%)	2 (6.1%)	33
Total	381 (31.4%)	745 (61.5%)	86 (7.1%)	1212

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-3
Wages for Hourly Workers and Piece-Rate Workers Compared, when Standardized at an Hourly Rate[a]

	Male		Female		Total	
Methods of Payment	**Dollars per hour**	**Number**	**Dollars per hour**	**Number**	**Dollars per hour**	**Number**
Hourly wages	4.71	628	4.45	229	4.66	859
Individual piece-rate	6.19	157	5.31	55	5.97	212
Crew piece-rate	7.47	71	4.62	9	7.15	80
Overall average	5.29	804	4.59	267	5.12	1017

[a]The hourly equivalent for individual piece rates is the units per day times the unit price divided by the number of hours worked. The crew piece-rate equivalent is the number of units handled by the crew times the unit price divided by total number of crew member hours.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table III-4
Average Daily Wage by Method of Payment

Type of Payment	**Daily earnings**	**Standard deviation**	**Number of workers**
	Dollars		
Hourly wages	39.6	12.6	837
Individual piece-rate	42.2	26.8	218
Crew piece-rate	49.3	35.0	90

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-5
Hourly Pay by Birthplace

	Hourly earnings	Standard deviation	Number of workers
	Dollars		
California	4.37	1.37	76
Mexico	4.23	1.33	620
Other U.S.	4.25	1.12	113
Other countries	4.43	2.40	47

Table III-6
Hourly Earnings by Years of School

Years of School	Hourly Earnings	Standard Deviation	Number of Workers
	Dollars		
No school	4.51	1.08	85
1 to 7 years	4.60	1.28	524
8 years	4.63	1.11	47
9 to 11 years	4.87	1.80	116
12 or more years	4.67	1.35	77
Still in school	3.89	.67	5
Total	4.64	1.34	852

Table III-7
Hourly Wages by Crop Task

Crop Task	Hourly Earnings	Standard Deviation	Number of Workers
	Dollars		
Hand harvesting	4.75	1.45	211
Pruning	4.37	0.79	59
Thinning trees	4.63	1.17	14
Hoeinng/thinning	4.38	1.73	95
Irrigating	4.47	1.07	78
Sorting	4.40	1.15	111
Planting	4.57	1.05	25
Machine operators	4.92	1.17	139
Crew leaders	5.42	2.61	42
Total	4.66	1.36	774

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-8

Daily Earnings on an Hourly and Piece-Rate Basis, by Legal Status

Legal Status	Hourly Wages			Piece Rate Wages		
	Earnings per day	Standard deviation	Number of workers	Earnings per day	Standard deviation	Number of workers
	Dollars			Dollars		
Green-card	40.5	13.7	450	43.0	31.0	141
Undocu-mented	37.2	8.6	137	45.9	33.9	64
Citizen	41.7	12.7	201	41.8	22.1	35

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-9

Average Wages per Hour, Hourly and Piece-Rate Wages Combined, by California Region

Regions	Hourly Earnings	Standard Deviation	Number of Workers	Region as a Percentage of State Average
	Dollars			
Southern California	5.71	3.43	136	11.5
South Coast	7.26	3.32	74	41.8
Central Coast	6.17	3.32	138	20.5
San Joaquin Valley	4.60	1.93	538	-10.2
Sacramento Valley	4.15	1.13	93	-18.5
North Coast	4.93	1.40	26	-3.8
All California	5.12	2.61	1,071	

Sources: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table III-10
Weekly Earnings on Nonfarm and Farm Jobs

Weekly Earnings	Number of Jobs	Skill Level
Nonfarm Jobs		
Dollars		
141.49	94	low-skill
181.61	40	Medium
232.00	10	High-skill
158.91	144	Average
Farm Jobs		
181.76	3130	All farm jobs

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table III-11
Percentage Distribution of Jobs by Skill Level for Nonfarm Workers

Skill Level	Percent	Number of Workers
Low-skill	39.5	204
Medium-skill	54.0	279
High-skill	6.6	34
Total	100.0	517

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table III-12
Distribution of Family and Unaccompanied Mexicans Who Return to Mexico

	Family		Unaccompanied	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Every year	140	22.8	129	46.2
Every 2-3 years	155	25.2	60	21.5
Every 4-5 years	90	14.6	16	5.7
Every 6 years, or less often	87	14.1	20	7.2
Never	140	22.8	54	19.4
Daily	3	0.5	0	0
Total	615	100.0	279	100.0

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-13
Months Worked in Mexico
Family and Unaccompanied Mexican Men

Months Worked	Family Mexicans		Unaccompanied Mexican Men	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	318	88.3	141	68.8
1 or 2	16	4.4	28	13.7
3 or 4	14	3.9	13	6.3
5 or 6	6	1.7	11	5.4
7 or more	6	1.7	12	5.9
Total	360	100.0	205	100.0

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-14
Estimated Earnings by Size of Household

Number of people in the household	Total weeks worked by household	Number of house-holds	Dollars per year calculated at $175 weekly earnings
1	28.6	404	5,005
2	43.9	130	7,683
3	47.3	148	8,278
4	49.0	166	8,750
5	55.8	155	9,765
6	62.5	110	10,938
7	69.9	65	12,215
8	77.1	36	13,493
9 or more	78.6	32	13,755

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-15

Percentage Distribution of Weeks Worked by Households of Different Sizes

Number in household	Weeks Worked							Number of of households
	Less than 20	20 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	Total	
	Percent							
1	26.1	25.8	22.8	21.3	4.0	-	100.0	403
2 or 3	19.9	12.1	17.6	16.0	11.3	23.0	99.9	256
4 or 5	13.4	13.7	13.7	16.4	16.1	26.7	100.0	292
6 or 7	13.0	10.1	12.3	15.2	15.2	34.1	100.0	138
8 or more	18.6	2.9	10.0	20.0	12.9	35.7	100.0	70
Total	19.5	16.5	17.4	18.1	10.5	18.1	100.01	1156

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-16

Weeks Worked at Farm Work and Total Weeks Worked by Birthplace of Household Head

Birth-place	Farm Work weeks Worked	Number of Households	Total weeks Worked	Number of Households
California	33.9	108	47.9	108
Mexico	40.0	934	47.9	936
Other U.S.	35.7	147	47.6	147
Other country	30.8	86	38.8	87
Total	38.3	1275	47.3	1278

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-17

Percentage of Households Receiving Transfer Payments During the Year Before the Survey

Benefit	Number of Recipients	Percent of Households	Number of Households
Unemployment insurance	857	66.7	1284
Disability insurance	177	13.8	1282
Social Security payments	71	5.5	1280
Medi-Cal benefits	308	24.2	1275
AFDC	148	11.6	1281
County general assistance	66	5.2	1278
Food stamps	334	26.2	1277
Public housing subsidy	257	27.3	942

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-18

Percentage of Workers Receiving Social Insurance Benefits[a] During the Year Before the Survey; by Type of Household

Group	Percentage receiving no benefits	Percentage benefiting from one program	Percentage benefiting from two or more programs	Number of families
Unaccompanied Mexican men	59.6	35.2	5.2	287
Family Mexicans	19.2	62.4	19.3	639
U.S.-Born families	21.0	57.4	19.9	178

[a]Including Social Security, UI, disability, and veterans' benefits.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table III-19

Percentage of Workers Receiving Welfare Benefits During the Year Before the Survey;[a] by Type of Household

Group	Percentage receiving no benefits	Percenage benefiting frome one program	Percentage benefiting from two or more programs	Number of families
Unaccompanied Mexican men	96.2	3.5	0.3	287
Family Mexicans	63.9	22.7	13.4	639
U.S.-Born families	57.9	18.5	18.0	178

[a]Including food stamps, AFDC, and general assistance.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table III-20

Percentage of Households Receiving Social Insurance Benefits[a] during the Year Before the Survey; by Legal Status

Legal Status	Percentage receiving no benefits	Percentage benefiting from one program	Percentage benefiting from two programs	Percentage benefiting from three or more programs	Number of families
Green card	17.8	64.8	16.4	1.0	687
Undocu-mented	70.4	26.4	3.2		250
U.S. citizen	25.1	54.5	18.2	2.2	275
Pending status	32.3	49.2	18.5		65
Total	30.4	54.3	14.3	1.0	1277

[a]Including Social Security, UI, disability, and veterans' benefits.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-21

Percentage of Households Receiving Welfare Benefits[a] During the Year Before Survey; by Legal Status

Legal Status	Percentage receiving no benefits	Percentage benefiting from one program	Percentage benefiting from two programs	Percentage benefiting from three or more programs	Number of families
Green card	68.9	19.6	8.4	3.1	688
Undocumented	89.2	6.8	3.2	0.8	250
U.S. citizen	66.4	15.5	13.0	5.1	277
Pending status	67.7	12.3	20.0		65
Total	72.3	15.9	9.0	2.9	1280

[a]Including food stamps, AFDC, and general assistance.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-22

Percentage of Households Receiving Med-Cal Payments During the Year Before the Survey; by Legal Status

	Percent	Total Number in Category
Green card	27.2	680
Undocumented	8.5	248
U.S. citizen	30.3	277
Pending status	25.0	64
Total	24.1	1269

Source: EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-23

Percentage of Households Receiving Unemployment Insurance, by Region

	Percent	Total Number in Category
Southern California	80.1	186
Southern Coast	71.7	92
Central Coast	70.4	186
Sacramento Valley	74.9	175
San Joaquin Valley	59.4	586
Northern Coast	37.0	27
Total	66.7	1252

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table III-24

Percentage Distribution of Asset Ownership for the Total Sample, for Unaccompanied and Family Mexicans, and by Legal Status

	Type of Household			Legal Status		
	All households	Family Mexican	Unaccompanied Mexican males	Green card	Nondocumented	Citizen
Total sample[a]	1286	640	287	688	250	277
ASSETS	19.3 of	24.1% of	2.87% of	23.5% of	0.8% of	26.8% of
U.S. house	1282	638	285	685	250	276
House in home country	35.5% of 1030	28.4% of 640	50.2% of 287	33.7% of 683	44.5% of 247	12.1% of 33
Farmland in home country	10.2% of 1016	4.6% of 632	17.0% of 234	7.5% of 676	18.1% of 243	6.3% of 32
Income-providing business or land in home country	4.8% of 1073	1.9% of 636	10.2% of 285	3.7% of 680	8.9% of 246	0.0% of 32
Income-providing business in U.S.	1.5% of 1274	1.6% of 638	0.3% of 286	1.7% of 686	0.0% of 250	2.2% of 268
Car or truck	73.4% of 1284	83.4% of 640	48.1% of 287	81.8% of 688	44.0% of 250	81.5% of 275
U.S. bank account	28.5% of 1278	30.7% of 638	16.2% of 284	34.9% of 685	10.9% of 248	30.3% of 274
Bank account in home country	15.3% of 1014	9.5% of 633	29.2% of 281	13.0% of 677	23.7% of 241	9.1% of 33

[a]Only foreign-born were included in the sample for catgegories dealing with assets in the home country. In addition, the sample size differs from the total sample size whenever some did not respond to the particular survey question.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

IV. The California Farm Labor Market

Introduction

A central characteristic of California farm labor markets is the availability of a large pool of workers who individually experience long spells of unemployment. The UC-EDD survey found an average period of unemployment of over 20 weeks for farmworker heads of household. That there is such a pool is shown by comparing the demand for farmworkers with the numbers of individuals actually doing the work. For example, in the late 1970s, total demand for in-field labor was approximately 128,000 workers on a year-round basis (Mines and Martin, 1983). But in 1978, there were 298,000 farmworkers who earned more than $800, implying that the labor pool had over twice as many workers as there were available jobs (Martin and Mamer, 1982)[1]

This surplus labor phenomenon has facilitated a special kind of system--the crew leader recruitment and supervisory system. This Mexican-influenced recruitment style is used by farm labor contractors, by small growers in tree fruits and vineyards, and by larger growers for hoeing and thinning activities. In contrast, some employers, particularly larger ones in regions where farm labor unions have been active, use more formal labor management practices.

1. And another 300,000 who earned less than $800 (Martin and Mamer, 1982).

Employment Stability and Immigrant Turnover

Longevity of Employment

Overall, employers in California face a very stable supply of workers with few shortages. But, beneath this stable surface are relatively fast-changing groups of workers making up this supply.[2] Although many farmworkers return annually to the same employers, most jobs with each employer are of short duration. As a result, most farmworkers are obliged to piece together work from several employers during the year in order to make a living.

Nevertheless, many farmworkers are quite loyal to individual employers. On 37 percent of the jobs, workers returned to the same employer at least six consecutive years. On one out of 10 jobs, workers returned for 11 years in a row or more. On the other hand, the personnel performing many crop tasks is continually changing. Employers either preferred or were obliged to seek new workers most frequently in the vine and

2. Whenever a sample is taken of farmworkers, however representative of the contemporary group involved, it will make the farmworker population appear more stable in farmwork than is actually the case. This is because surveys do not sample ex-farmworkers. Thus, any sample is biased toward those who have remained in farm work, interviewing none of those who have moved to city jobs or back to Mexico. This bias should be kept in mind as all statistics from the UC-EDD survey are reviewed.

tree fruit thinning tasks, the harvest of citrus fruit, and in the selection of crew leaders. They were least likely to have to seek new workers as irrigators, machine operators and vegetable harvesters.

Recall the description in Section II of job turnover rates experienced by those specializing in certain crop tasks. Fruit tree and grape vine thinners, pruners, hoers of row crops, sorters, and harvesters of grapes, deciduous fruit, and vegetables change employers frequently in order to piece together a living. Machine operators, irrigators, crew leaders, and field fruit or citrus harvesters did not change jobs as often.

Although some workers return year after year to a given employer, their period of employment is often quite brief. Forty-two percent of all jobs lasted four weeks or less; nearly one in five workers had a job that lasted only one week. Short jobs were much more prevalent among foreign groups than citizens (Table IV-1). Only 6 percent of jobs held by citizens lasted four weeks or less.

Including year-round employees, the length of employment with a single employer averages 13 weeks. But the length of employment varies considerably from one crop task to another. Irrigators, citrus harvesters, and machine operators had the longest-term jobs, while grape harvesters, sorters, and deciduous fruit pickers had the shortest (Table IV-2).

Certain crop tasks have a disproportionate share of very short-term jobs. Harvesting deciduous and semitropical fruit, thinning fruit, and sorting had the most four-week-or-under jobs, while picking citrus along with the semi-skilled positions of irrigator, crew leader and machine operator had the fewest (Table IV-3).

The Flow-Through Labor Market

Historically, the California seasonal farm labor market has depended on first generation rural immigrants, either domestic or foreign, to carry out its crop activities (McWilliams, 1972). As one group or community of workers abandoned the most difficult entry-level farm tasks, a newer group less familiar with available employment options would take its place. In the last two decades, this system has been dominated by successive groups of Mexican nationals. As one social network moves on to city work or to less physically demanding farm work, another group, often from a new sending area replaces it. A thorough study of this process would entail following a network of workers over time and measuring how quickly workers move out of the more difficult farm tasks and then out of farm work entirely. (For one such study, see Mines and Nuckton, 1982.) The UC-EDD survey, however, cannot capture the evolutionary turnover patterns in the farm labor market because it is a snapshot of the situation at one point in time. But, the survey does show which crop activities have the highest turnover of Mexican workers and therefore are the most dependent on recent immigrants. The most immigrant-dependent crop activities are thinning fruit from trees and vines, and harvesting citrus and field fruit, while the least dependent are sorting, operating machinery, and supervising other workers (Table IV-4). Notice that there is no particular correlation between the length of employment in a crop task and its reliance on new networks of recently immigrated Mexicans. Citrus harvesting, for example, has a relatively long season, yet is highly dependent on recent immigrant workers. Sorting is an extremely short-term job but uses mostly workers who have been in the United States since before 1980.

The survey cannot show the full extent of the rapid flow-through of Mexicans in California's farm labor market because of unavoidable biases in the data collection process. (Those who have moved on were not interviewed.) But despite these biases, a large percentage first arrived in the United States only recently (Table IV-5). In fact, of the Mexican-born farmworkers who settled with their families, 19 percent of

the total, including their children, came for the first time less than five years before the survey. Among the unaccompanied males, one- quarter arrived within the four years prior to the survey, and of this group, over one-half of those under 25 came during these four years. Although we have no measure of the outflow, the inflow from Mexico implies a rapid turnover in the labor force.

The Mexican Crew Leader Recruitment System

Given the preponderance of short-term jobs, the rapid turnover of Mexican immigrants through the farm labor market, and the language barrier between white employers and Mexican crews, job matching problems for growers and workers could be expected. But, growers have dealt effectively with this potential difficulty by hiring Mexican crew leaders to serve as a bridge. The intermediary keeps track of the demand for workers in an area and secures an adequate supply of workers to meet the demand. This crew leader has become an irreplaceable link in the employment chain in many circumstances. Workers are linked to particular crew leaders through their social networks, and employers instead of hiring individuals, hire crews. Crew leaders speak enough English to determine the demand for workers by their employers, be they farm labor contractors, growers, or corporation managers. In the other direction, they put out the call for workers through farmworker social networks and the aforementioned labor pools which include many unemployed workers.

Survey results reveal the prevalence of this system. Ninety percent of the crew leaders were Mexican-born and the rest were Spanish-speaking Mexican Americans from the Southwest. Friendship and kinship networks were the most popular means of job search for farmworkers of all groups. Fifty-three percent of job searches were through friends and relatives. Another 21 percent of the workers sought employment on their own by directly inquiring at the job site. Twelve percent were recruited by a crew leader or a farm labor contractor. Only 7 percent of the job searches involved direct hiring by growers, and only 6 percent involved the use of the Employment Development Department. In Table IV-6 these sources of job placements are categorized by legal status and birthplace of the worker.

This informal recruitment system in which workers hear of jobs not from growers or from employment agencies but by talking to friends, crew leaders or Spanish-speaking workers at the job site is especially common for Mexican immigrants. Sixty-seven percent of the Mexican-born farmworkers and 77 percent of the undocumented workers used either a friend, relative or crew leader to find their jobs. Citizens and non-Mexican foreigners were more likely to use formal channels to find work (Table IV-6). Unions were rarely used for job searches.

Types of Employers

Conditions for farmworkers vary considerably from one employer to another, but Recently, some farmworkers have been working under improved conditions. However, in order to maintain their better-off status they must be separated from direct competition with the ever-present large pool of readily available workers. On these job sites, the authority of the Mexican crew leader has been attenuated by the presence of union ranch committees or by formal labor management practices.

UC-EDD survey information helps explain what is behind these differences in working conditions. Variation in wages and working conditions are a function of three interrelated factors: the type of employer, the exposure to unionization, and the region where the farmworker is employed, with the greatest differences occurring among types of employer (Table IV-7) The lowest wages were paid on average by FLCs and packing houses, where the independent authority of the Mexican

crew leader is most entrenched; the highest, by growers.

These wage differences among employers are apparently not due to demographic characteristics of those hired. The average age of workers in all three groups was about the same, though growers hire more who are 55 or older. Also, the three types of employers appear to hire men and women at similar rates (from one-fourth to 30 percent of those hired were female.

But the prevalence of three types of employers varies by region, accounting in part for the regional differences in earnings noted earlier. The San Joaquin Valley with 58 percent of the total jobs reported in the survey, had approximately 70 percent of the jobs offered by packing houses and farm labor contractors (Table IV-8). The three types of employers also differ by the type of worker they tend to hire, with FLCs and packing houses hiring somewhat higher levels of undocumented workers than growers do (Table IV-9).

Workers hired by FLCs had less exposure to unions than those hired by growers. Only 10 percent of FLC employees had been union members in the last three years while 19 percent of the growers' employees had been members. The FLCs offered more short-term jobs than the growers did (51 percent of FLC jobs were less than five weeks compared to 31 percent of growers' jobs); they had a less stable relationship with their workers from year to year (that is, workers were more likely to return to the same grower than they were to the same FLC); and FLCs were more likely to hire recent immigrants than growers were.

Because FLCs were concentrated in certain crop tasks, they were almost twice as likely to pay piece rates than growers were (Table IV-10). FLCs supervised one-third of the harvest of the state's fruits and vegetables reported in the survey and almost 60 percent of the hoeing and thinning of row crops (Table IV-11). They had a lesser role in pruning and sorting and almost no role in the other tasks.

There is a significant difference in average wages paid among types of employers no matter how it is measured. On a weekly basis, growers' wages averaged 26 percent more than those of FLCs and 12 percent more than packing houses (recall Table IV-7). Similar differences are found with other meausurements of wages--the difference between growers and FLCs, for example, was 15 percent for hourly workers, 22 percent for individual piece-rate workers and 75 percent for crew piece-rate workers (Table IV-12).

It is somewhat difficult to explain this wide differential in wages paid by type of employer. The difference is not to be found by crop task. If anything, average wages for harvest jobs in which FLCs are concentrated are higher than for other work. Also, the higher paying piece-rate wages are more common with FLCs than with growers. Furthermore, legal status is not the explanation since undocumented workers, though they earned somewhat less when paid by the hour than legal workers, actually earned more per day when they were paid by piece-rate (recall Table III-8).

One important factor in wage differentials is exposure to unions. Daily wages of workers who were members of unions in the last three years were 13 percent higher than nonunion workers. Differences are even greater for members of certain unions (Table IV-12).

Another reason is regional differences. On both an hourly and piece-rate basis the central coast regions (from Oxnard to Watsonville) paid considerably better than other parts of California, and hourly rates in Southern California were higher than in the Central Valley. These regional differences result partly from union pressure. The presence of a union raises wages not only where contracts are signed but also at neighboring firms with similar institutional structures. That is, when a contract is signed with one grower,

other growers competing in the same job market are influenced. But if the labor market is segmented so that the higher-paying sector is at least partly insulated, other employers may pay much lower wages even though they operate nearby. Thus, FLCs may pay lower wages than growers in the same area (Table IV-17). A practice accentuating this tendency is growers' screening out undocumented workers who then go to work for FLCs.

Labor Law Violations

The survey uncovered some information about labor law violations.[3] Although employers who pay twice the minimum wage ($6.70 the hour) are not required to pay for their workers' equipment, many other employers illegally require their workers to purchase equipment. Survey results indicate that small growers did not engage in this practice as much as large growers. Only one-fourth of growers with fewer than 10 workers illegally charged them. On the other hand, a rather high number of large growers violated this law (Table IV-15). Small growers hired a relatively higher share of irrigators, machine operators and other skilled workers who use expensive equipment; they were, therefore, likely to provide them with adequate equipment to do their jobs. Also, for their harvest crews, small growers were more likely to use intermediaries responsible for providing work equipment. Large growers, who have a relatively larger share of unskilled workers, were more likely to require them to buy their own bags, gloves, clippers, and pruning shears. Violations were particularly prevalent for certain crop tasks (Table IV-15). Apparently grape workers were the most frequently used in this way.

As a group, FLCs had a higher rate of violation of the equipment statute than growers (Table IV-16). Certain regions had more violations than other areas--Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley had the lowest rate of compliance. But there was not much difference by legal status of the worker.

With respect to the sanitation requirements of labor laws, it is the smaller growers who were less likely to provide the legally required drinking water, toilets, and washing facilities (Table IV-17). Since they tend to have smaller crews and a higher proportion of skilled workers, they may view these services as burdensome and not as enhancing to productivity as is providing equipment. Larger growers with larger crews, are more subject to inspection. Since few FLCs have payrolls of less than one full crew, they are more likely to abide by work site sanitation regulations (Table IV-17). While a higher proportion of FLCs provided toilets and drinking water, they were less likely to provide washing facilities than were growers. Apparently Fresno County employers are somewhat more lax in providing the legal sanitary facilities to their workers. Of 175 workers interviewed on this issue, 20.6 percent reported no drinking water available, 35.4 percent no toilets, and 46 percent hand washing facilities.

3. The exact percentages reported here may understate the true rate of violations, since the worst-off individuals may not have been interviewed. Still, the relative rates among different groups point to where enforcement efforts could best be directed.

Table IV-1

Weeks Worked per Year for One Employer, by Legal Status

Weeks per Year	All Workers		Green Card		Undocumented		Citizen	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
1 to 4	42.3	1426	41.9	709	44.8	326	15.8	89
5 to 9	22.7	765	21.9	370	22.3	162	35.1	198
10 to 14	13.0	438	12.9	219	11.4	83	19.9	112
15 to 19	6.3	214	6.5	110	7.7	56	7.6	43
20 to 29	9.0	305	9.5	161	8.3	60	11.7	66
30 to 39	3.5	117	3.5	60	3.4	25	4.8	27
40 to 52	3.3	110	3.7	63	2.1	15	5.1	29
Total	100.0	3375	99.9	1692	100.0	727	100.0	564

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-2

Average Weeks Worked per Year for One Employer by Crop Task (Most Recent or Current Job Only)

Crop Task	Average Weeks	Number of Workers
Irrigating	23.8	59
Harvesting citrus	23.5	35
Machine operators	21.4	99
Crew leaders	14.9	33
Thinning trees/ vines	14.8	23
Pruning	13.9	73
Harvesting field fruit	12.8	78
Hoeing/ thinning	10.4	98
Harvesting vegetables	10.2	153
Harvesting grapes	10.0	121
Sorting	7.2	112
Harvesting deciduous fruit	6.1	95
All tasks	12.8	1019

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-3
Percentage of Jobs for One Employer Lasting 4 Weeks or Less, by Crop Task

Crop Task	Percentage of jobs lasting 4 weeks or less	Number of jobs
Pruning	31.8	296
Thinning trees	55.5	119
Hoeing/thinning	46.4	364
Irrigating	24.1	112
Sorting	51.5	262
Planting	28.0	75
Machine operators	23.9	218
Crew leaders	20.0	85
Harvesting citrus	19.8	96
Harvesting semitropical fruit	64.4	45
Harvesting grapes	48.2	330
Harvesting deciduous fruit	75.4	313
Harvesting vegetables	49.2	4.5
Harvesting field fruit	32.3	155
All tasks	44.7	2951

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-4
Percentage of Mexican Workers Who Immigrated Since 1980, by Crop Activity

Crop Task	Percent who Immi-grated since 1980	Total number of workers
Pruning	13.8	262
Thinning trees	20.0	110
Hoeing/thinning	10.4	308
Irrigating	12.0	100
Sorting	9.0	201
Planting	10.9	55
Machine operators	2.9	137
Crew leaders	8.1	99
Harvesting citrus	19.1	89
Harvesting semitropical fruit	9.5	42
Harvesting grapes	13.9	286
Harvesting deciduous fruit	11.6	275
Harvesting vegetables	12.9	395
Harvesting field fruit	16.7	132
All tasks	12.6	989

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-5
Year First Entered the United States

Years since first entered	Mexican Families		Unaccompanied Mexican Men		Unaccompanied Mexican Men Under 25	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
0-4	18.6	390	24.8	68	50.6	41
5-9	28.2	592	28.8	79	33.3	27
10 or more	53.2	1116	40.5	111	16.0	13
Total	100.0	2098	100.0	258	100.0	81

Table IV-6
Percentage Distribution of Sources of Job Reference, by Legal Status and Birthplace

	Legal Status			Birthplace			
	Green card	Undocumented	Citizen	California	Mexico	U.S. other	Other countries
	Percent						
Source of job reference							
Edd	15.8	2.3	9.0	6.6	4.2	10.7	13.0
Grower	6.8	4.1	10.5	8.6	6.3	10.7	5.2
Crew leader, FLC	12.6	12.4	9.8	6.3	12.9	12.4	10.0
Union	1.5	0.0	1.8	0.7	1.1	2.6	0.9
Friend/relative	50.0	64.8	47.9	49.0	53.6	46.0	61.9
Self/others	23.3	16.4	21..1	28.9	21.9	17.6	9.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.2	100.0	100.1
Number of jobs	1750	727	792	304	2503	420	231

Table IV-7
Two-Year Average of Weekly Earnings by Type of Employer

Employer	Average weekly Earnings	Number of Jobs
Growers	$210.5	1984
Packing House	$187.31	112
FLC	$166.98	958

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-8
Percentage Distribution of Jobs, by Types of Employers, by Region

Type of employer	San Joaquin Valley	Sacramento Valley	Northern Coast	Central and Southern Coast	Southern California
Grower, corporation	57.9	72.7	78.6	63.0	66.7
FLC	36.0	25.1	18.0	25.3	20.6
Packing house	4.9	2.3	3.4	3.2	3.0
Share-cropper	1.2	0.0	0.0	8.4	9.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-9
Percentage Distribution of Workers by Legal Status of Worker, by Type of Employer

Employer	Green Card	Undocumented Worker	Citizen	Pending Status	Number of Jobs
Grower	54.1	19.0	23.5	3.3	2101
FLC	48.2	25.4	17.7	4.6	1002
Packing House	41.6	25.0	32.5	0.9	120

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-10
Percentage Distribution of Payment Methods, by Type of Employer

Employer	Piece-rate	Hourly	Both	Total	Number of Jobs
Grower	26.8	65.5	7.7	100.0	841
FLC	47.4	48.4	4.2	100.0	312

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table IV-11
Percentage Distribtuion of Crop Tasks by Type of Employer

Employer	Hoeing/ Thinning	Harvesting Tree Fruit and Grapes	Harvesting Vegetables	Prun-ing	Sort-ing	Irri-gating	Total
Grower	30.9	66.6	63.1	74.6	69.7	91.3	68.0
FLC	59.1	33.4	36.9	25.4	30.3	8.7	32.0
Number of Jobs	372	655	580	279	231	149	2830

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table IV-12
Daily Wages by Type of Employers, Hourly, Individual, and Crew Piece-Rate

	Grower	FLC	House
Individual Piece-Rate	47.2	38.6	40.3
Number	110	93	4
Standard deviation	26.9	26.9	14.9
Crew Piece-Rate	60.4	34.6	
Number	54	31	
Standard deviation	36.4	25.8	
Hourly	41.4	35.9	35.5
Number	581	158	40
Standard deviation	12.3	13.7	8.4

Table IV-13
Average Weekly Earnings by Union Affiliation

Union	Average Weekly Earnings	Number of Jobs	Number of Workers
International Union of Agricultural Workers	$243.90	16	10
Teamsters	$223.60	121	39
U.F.W.	$210.00	266	121
Total Union	$216.17	473	201
Nonunion	$192.01	2841	961
Total		3314	1162

Source: UC-EDD Survey of 1983

Table IV-14
Average Weekly Earnings by Region and by Type of Employer

Region	Growers wages paid	Number	FLC wages paid	Number
Southern California	209.8	190	163.4	75
Southern Coast	252.9	56	220.0	18
Central Coast	230.1	162	158.0	46
Sacramento Valley	207.7	107	159.7	44
San Joaquin Valley	196.1	575	155.7	401

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983

Table IV-15

Percentage of Growers and FLCs With 50 or More Workers Who Illegally Charge for Equipment Compared to the Average for all Employers, by Crop Task

Task	Growers Employing 50 or more Workers Who Charge Them	Number	FLCs Employing 50 or more Workers Who Charge Them	Number	All Employers Who Illegally Charge Workers	Number
	Percent		Percent		Percent	
Thinning trees/vines	50.0	10	-	0	45.2	25
Hoeing/ thinning	47.5	21	32.0	25	36.0	99
Sorting	57.1	35	50.0	12	49.6	113
Pruning	28.6	28	50.0	10	45.2	73
Harvesting grapes	67.9	56	73.7	19	60.3	131
Harvesting deciduous fruit	56.3	16	35.0	20	45.5	88
Harvesting vegetables	33.3	54	48.8	43	37.8	164
Harvesting field fruit	47.4	38	33.3	12	38.2	68
Harvesting Citrus	0.0	10	25.0	8	39.5	38
Total	42.0	336	44.7	161	38.5	1043

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-16

Percentage of Employers Who Illegally Charge for Equipment Type of Employer, California Region, and Legal Status of Worker

	Percent	Number of Workers
Employer:		
Grower	33.8	775
FLC	43.2	294
Region:		
Southern California	50.8	124
Southern Coast	24.5	53
Central Coast	21.7	129
Sacramento Valley	16.5	109
San Joaquin Valley	40.4	332
Northern Coast	15.8	19
Legal Status:		
Green Card	36.1	635
Undocumented	37.8	238
Citizen	34.4	262

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table IV-17

Percentage Violations of Labor Sanitation Laws

	No Drinking Water	No Toilets	Hand Washing Facilities	No Number of Workers
Growers	12.0	18.7	26.5	838
FLCs	7.1	15.5	43.0	305
Growers with fewer than 20 workers	20.9	35.6	34.3	233
By Crop Task:				
Pruning	12.3	17.3	29.3	75
Thining trees	8.0	32.0	32.0	25
Irrigating	41.5	56.9	39.4	65
Machine operators	17.4	31.5	33.6	108
Harvesting citrus	15.4	23.1	64.1	39
Harvesting deciduous fruit	10.1	22.4	29.6	98
Harvesting grapes	10.5	20.3	30.0	133

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Appendix to Chapter IV:

How Families and Individuals Group Jobs to Make a Living

Table A-IV-1
Descriptive Information for All Jobs That Ended in 1983 by Crop Task

Crop Task	Number of Jobs	Percent of All Jobs	Average Number of total jobs per person 1983	Average number of specific jobs done per person who did this specific job
Prune	216	10.5%	2.6*	1.2*
Thin Trees	97	4.7	2.9	1.0
Thin Rows	274	13.3	2.5	1.2
Irrigation	94	4.6	1.7	1.1
Sorting	172	8.4	2.4	1.2
Planting	52	2.5	NA**	NA**
Machine Operator	148	7.2	1.7	1.1
Foreman	85	4.1	2.0	1.1
Harvest Citrus	67	3.3	2.1	1.1
Harvest Semitropical	10	0.5	NA**	NA**
Harvest Grape	168	8.2	2.7	1.1
Harvest Deciduous	218	10.6	2.7	1.3
Harvest Vegetable	309	15.1	2.5	1.1
Harvest Field Fruit	118	5.7	1.9	1.0
Other	25	1.2	NA**	NA**
Total Jobs	2053	100.0%	1.9	

N = 1105 workers.

* For example, 2.6 refers to the total of all jobs done in 1983 by pruners (562) divided by the number of pruners (216). 1.2 refers to the total pruning jobs by pruners (259) divided by the number of pruners.

** NA = Not Available

Source: EDD Survey, 1983.

Table A-IV-2

Types of Farm Tasks Done for One Employer During One Job: 1st Task, 2nd Task and 3rd Task In Importance (all jobs)

Job	1st Task	2nd Task	3rd Task
Harvest	50.8%	26.6%	30.1%
Thin Trees	3.9	11.1	5.3
Prune	11.0	6.4	13.1
Hoe/Thin	6.8	10.3	11.7
Irrigate	5.0	14.6	14.2
Sort	6.0	12.4	4.3
Plant	3.0	3.4	5.0
Machine Operator	10.9	11.8	13.5
Foreman	2.5	3.2	2.8
Total Percent	99.9%	99.8%	100.0%
Total Number of Jobs	3035	669	282

Table A-IV-3

Percentage Distribution of Crop Tasks Done by Family Units (1982-83 season)

Crop Task	Number of Jobs	Percent of All Jobs	% of all Households
Harvest	868	40.4%	69.3%
Prune Trees	50	2.3	4.0
Prune/Thin Vines	214	10.0	17.1
Thin Trees	58	2.7	4.6
Hoe/Thin	281	13.1	22.4
Irrigate	123	5.7	9.8
Sort	218	10.1	17.4
Plant	72	3.4	5.7
Machine Operator	235	10.9	18.8
Foreman	29	1.4	2.3
Total	2148 Jobs	100.0%	1253 Households (cases)

Table A-IV-4

Percentage of Family Members That Do Hand Harvest Work By Number in the Household

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9+
Percent	44%	24%	23%	17%	13%	17%	16%	14%	14%
Number of Units	396	127	146	162	150	106	63	36	32

Source: EDD Survey, 1983.

V. Farmworker Housing and Health and Social Service Needs

Housing

Most farmworkers rent modest homes and apartments in the small rural towns and cities of agricultural areas where they work. According to the survey, a considerable number also lived in trailers, rooms, and barracks. A handful lived in hotels, and a small number lived in the fields (Table V-1). Most unaccompanied Mexican men (legal and undocumented) lived in apartments, rooms, or barracks. The housing of the undocumented tended to be the least desireable with more than 5 percent of those surveyed living in the open field. Seventeen of the undocumented families lived in trailers in camps run by farm labor contractors or private camp owners.

Overall, about two-thirds of farmworker households rented; about one in five owned a dwelling and one in ten lived rent free with a relative or an employer. Almost one-quarter of the unaccompanied Mexican men lived rent free; most of the rest rented their shelter (Table V-2). Among renters, most were tenants of private owners, but one-fifth rented from a public agency providing subsidized housing, and one-sixth each rented from a friend or employer (Table V-3).

Rents were high relative to farmworker income, and conditions crowded (Table V-4). The average farmworker household in the sample was 3.6 people with access to 2.8 rooms. Rents varied from about $150 for one room to $270 for 5 rooms. The average family of four renting three rooms spent about one-third of its annual earnings on housing.

Health Needs

It is useful to compare findings of the UC-EDD survey with regard to the health status of farmworkers to results from a study of farmworker health done in Tulare County in 1981 (Mines and Kearney, 1982). The UC-EDD survey did not find a large number of job-related medical complaints; only 14 percent of the those interviewed mentioned a specific work site problem that had occurred in the two years before the survey. In the Tulare study, when workers were also asked about health problems during the previous 11 years, three out of five workers had a specific complaint. In both studies similar medical problems were reported (Table V-5). Injuries amounted to over half the work site problems. Falls from ladders were the most frequent, but cuts, burns and equipment accidents were also disclosed. The second most frequently mentioned problems were musculoskeletal, particularly those related to ailments of the joints and back. About one in five farmworkers who mentioned medical problems in each study brought up a work-related problem of the joints or back. The lifting, toting and climbing necessary for many farm work tasks may be the source of these ailments.

Problems of the lungs, skin and eyes that were reported may be related to exposure to chemicals. Farmworkers held very different attitudes toward their exposure to chemicals. Some remarked that they just washed the chemicals off after the day's work and they had no ill effects from them. But, half the respondents in the Tulare study, when asked what they considered the most dangerous aspect of farm work, named chemicals. More people feared chemicals than all types of injuries combined (Mines and Kearney, 1982, p. 54).

Both surveys also collected information about health problems not necessarily related to work (Table V-6). In the total health picture of the farmworkers, injuries were the most frequently mentioned concern. But in the UC-EDD study a rather large number of those interviewed mentioned several other important health problems of farmworkers -- mental, visual, auditory and dermatological. Mental problems were most often viewed by farmworkers as excessive nervousness. This condition was particularly prominent among women, for 40 percent who reported this

problem were women out of a sample that was 30 percent female.

Despite low annual income levels, farmworkers pay for their medical treatment over one-third of the time. Employers also pay part of workers' medical costs through health insurance programs (Table V-7). The myth that farmworkers either leave their health bills unpaid or rely exclusively on public resources is not substantiated by either survey.

Social Service Needs

In the opinion of California's farmworkers, the two services they most need are: (1) help in filling out government forms and (2) help in finding a job (Table V-8). In fact, over half of all households mentioned these two areas as important major needs. Other common social service needs were help in communicating with doctors and with transportation. About one-third of all the farmworker households mentioned those two services.

There are important differences in social service needs, depending on where the respondent was born (Table V-9). The California-born had relatively fewer needs than other groups. Even they, however, particularly needed help with finding jobs (55 percent) and with transportation (23 percent). The Mexicans most often mentioned need for help in understanding and filling out government forms (62 percent). Although over half of the Mexican households needed help finding work, this was a smaller percentage than for the other groups. It could be that Mexicans, despite their language and cultural barriers with respect to urban U.S. society, are better able to find jobs in the Mexican-dominated California farm labor market than are native groups.

Despite their U.S. birth, 42 percent of the domestic immigrants, mostly Mexican Americans from Texas, needed help in filling out government forms. These Texans as a group had a low educational level and a lack of familiarity with English. Two-thirds needed help finding work, and over one-quarter needed help with transportation. Over 70 percent of the non-Mexican foreign households said they needed help finding work. This is consistent with the finding reported earlier that this group worked on average fewer weeks per year than the other groups.

A high percentage of the foreign-born, both Mexican and other reported a need for help in communicating with doctors and with the immigration service, and expressed an interest in English classes. Over one-fourth of the non-Mexican foreigners expressed interest in learning English. Finally, 174 Mexicans reported having a special need for child care.

The differing needs of farmworkers can also be analyzed by legal status (Table V-10). Citizens had less need for help filling out government forms than foreign groups, but, the presence of the older non-English speaking Texas Mexicans among them keeps the percentage quite high (30 percent). A high percentage of those with legal residency (green cards) or whose status was pending reported the need for help filling out government forms. Even the undocumented, who often go unrecorded by U.S. authorities, nearly half wanted help filling forms. Only a few of the undocumented expressed interest in English classes or needed help dealing with the immigration service. Over half of all groups reported needing help finding jobs, but the undocumented seemed no worse off in that respect than the other groups. The undocumented were on average younger and thus may be considered desirable workers by many employers. A higher percentage of citizens reported needing help finding work. Transportation problems were the most frequently cited needs of the undocumented. Recall that fewer in this group owned cars. Among all the legal status groups, a higher percentage of those with pending status needed services. Relative to other groups, they needed more help with government forms, doctors, lawyers, English classes, and the immigration service.

Many farmworkers reported having received help with these needs. Most received aid from friends and relatives, but public and nonprofit agencies were often mentioned as helpful. To a lesser extent unions and employers helped farmworkers (Table V-11). Friends and relatives were often used in filling out government forms, communicating with doctors, providing child care, helping with the police, and in finding a job. Agencies were used most in helping workers who complained about working conditions, with immigration problems, and in finding English classes. The unions helped most often in addressing complaints about working conditions.

In closing this section, it should be pointed out that many fewer farmworkers complained about working conditions than about the lack of work. Six times as many farmworkers said they needed help finding work than said they needed help improving their working conditions.

Table V-1

Percentage Distribution of Type of Dwelling Occupied in California for All Households, for Family Mexicans, Unaccompanied Mexican Men, Green Card Holders and the Undocumented

Type of Dwelling	All Households	Family Mexicans	Unaccompanied Mexican Men	Green Card Families	Undocumented Families
	Percent				
House	61.8	71.1	34.8	74.1	52.2
Trailer	7.0	6.8	8.0	4.8	18.9
Apartment	17.6	18.2	14.9	18.4	16.7
Room	6.2	1.6	19.9	0.8	6.7
Barracks	5.0	1.6	15.2	1.2	3.3
Field	1.6	0.3	5.1	0.2	1.1
Hotel	0.9	0.5	2.2	0.4	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number of households	1266	636	276	495	90

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table V-2

Percent Distribution of Ownership Status of Tenant, All Households, Family Mexicans, Unaccompanied Mexican Men

Ownership Status	All Households	Family Mexicans	Unaccompanied Mexican Men
	percent		
Own	19.6	24.0	4.3
Rent	67.7	67.4	72.3
Live rent free	11.4	8.6	23.4
Total	98.7	100.0	100.0
Total number of households	1161	605	235

Table V-3

Owner of Property Rented by All Households and by Family and Unaccompanied Mexican Men

	All Households		Family Mexicans		Unaccompanied Mexican Men	
Owner	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Employer	156	16.6	62	13.3	63	27.8
Relative/ friend	155	16.6	48	10.3	48	21.1
Public agency	193	20.5	149	32.0	13	5.7
Private owner	438	46.5	206	44.3	103	45.4
Total	942	100.0	465	100.0	227	100.0

Table V-4

Average Rental or Mortgage Payment Per Room By Number of Rooms

Number of Rooms	Payment	Number of Households
1 room	$148.42	163
2 rooms	186.21	295
3 rooms	229.47	292
4 rooms	244.24	204
5 rooms	269.75	59
6 rooms	313.12	25
7 rooms	362.25	4
Total	$212.23	1042

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table V-5
Work-Related Health Problems
UC-EDD and Tulare County Surveys Compared

Medical Problems	UC-EDD Survey[a]		Tulare Survey[b]	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Injury	88	50.0	159	55.8
Musculoskeletal	32	18.2	60	21.1
Minor illness	20	11.4	14	4.9
Chemical poisoning	10	5.7	8	2.8
Respiratory Problem	3	1.8	7	2.5
Skin	10	5.7	7	2.5
Eye	0	0.0	6	2.1
Other	13	7.4	24	8.4
Total	176	100.1	285	100.1

[a]Occurrence during the past two years.
[b]Occurrence during the past 11 years.
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983; Mines and Kearney, 1982.

Table V-6
Percentage Distribution of Major Health Problems
(Not Necessarily Job Related)
UC-EDD and Tulare County Surveys Compared

Medical Problem	UC-EDD Survey	Tulare Survey
Injury	16.4	28.5
Minor illness	2.7	10.5
Surgery	4.7	9.7
Internal problems	0.8	10.0
Respiratory	0.5	5.1
Musculoskeletal	14.0	9.4
Skin	11.8	4.8
Heart	4.9	4.3
Prenatal	0.0	6.2
Vision, hearing	13.2	1.0
Mental, nerves	24.7	1.6
Serious illness	6.0	7.0
Other[a]	0.3	2.5
Total percent	100.0	100.6
Number of workers	365	372

[a]Family planning, check-ups, shots, nutritional counseling, dental.
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983; Mines and Kearney, 1982.

Table V-7

Source of Payment for Medical Treatment
UC-EDD and Tulare County Surveys Compared

Source of Payment	UC-EDD Survey		Tulare Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Worker[a]	64	37.6	137	36.4
Employer[b]	77	45.3	80	21.3
Public[c]	17	10.0	103	27.4
Joint Payment[d]	10	5.9	36	9.6
Never paid	2	1.2	20	5.3
Total	170	100.0	376	100.0

[a]Includes cash payments by workers, worker-owned health insurance, union health insurance, and home treatments.
[b]Includes employers' health insurance and worker's compensation.
[c]Includes Medi-Cal and free public clinics.
[d]Some combination of a, b, and c.

Source: UC-UC-EDD Survey, 1983; Mines and Kearney, p. 25.

Table V-8

Major Social Service Needs Mentioned by Farmworkers

Service Needed	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Filling out government forms	700	21.9
Communicating with doctors	387	12.1
Help with lawyers or police	156	4.9
Help finding a job	693	21.7
Help complaining about working conditions	111	3.5
Help with immigration problems	178	5.6
English classes	187	5.9
child Care	206	6.4
Transportation	390	12.1
Other	187	5.9
Total	3195	100.0

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table V-9

Percentage of Respondants Reporting Their Household's Need of Services, by Type of Service, by Birthplace of Respondent

Service Needed	Birthplace			
	California	Mexico	Other U.S.	Other Countries
	percent			
Filling out government forms	16.9	62.3	42.0	56.8
Communicating with doctors	12.3	34.7	13.4	37.0
Help with lawyers or police	4.6	13.8	10.9	9.9
Help finding a job	55.4	51.7	66.4	70.4
Help complaining about working conditions	4.6	9.5	9.2	6.2
Help with immigration problems	4.6	16.1	3.4	22.2
English classes	4.6	16.8	2.5	25.9
Child care	9.2	18.6	12.6	6.2
Transportation	23.1	32.0	26.1	35.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number of households	130	934	119	81

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table V-10

Percentage of Respondants Reporting Their Household's Need of Services, by Type of Service, by Legal Status of Respondent

Service Needed	Green Card	Undoc-umented	U.S. Citizen	Pending Status
	Percent			
Filling out government forms	64.8	49.2	29.6	69.2
Communicating with doctors	35.3	32.0	12.6	40.0
Help with lawyers or police	13.4	10.8	7.6	24.6
Help finding a job	52.8	53.2	57.0	53.9
Help complaining about working conditions	10.3	6.4	6.9	6.2
Help with immi-gration problems	16.0	14.0	5.1	27.7
English classes	19.3	10.8	4.3	23.1
Child care	20.8	8.4	11.9	12.3
Transportation	25.9	50.8	23.1	30.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number of households	688	250	277	65

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table V-11

Source of Help to Farmworkers When in Need of A Specific Service

Service Needed	Number of Households	Agency	Friend/ Relative	Employer	Union	one	Total
		Percent					
Filling out government forms	700	35	57	1	5	3	100
Communicating with doctors	387	19	68	3	2	8	100
Help with lawyers or police	156	26	43	1	2	27	99
Help finding a job	693	37	46	19	2	5	100
Help complaining about working conditions	111	31	17	5	10	31	94
Help with immigration problems	178	47	29	5	1	17	99
English classes	187	35	32	1	0	27	95
Child care	106	24	63	1	0	9	97
Transportation	390	3	77	11	0	5	96

* Does were not necessarily add to 100% because nonresponses not included.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

VI. A Comparison with Other Surveys

The 1965 Survey

The California State Employment Service has sent interviewers out into the state's farmworker communities two times. An effort quite similar to the UC-EDD survey of 1983 was carried out in 1965 under the sponsorship of the California State Assembly (Assembly Committee on Agriculture, 1969). A comparison of the two surveys reveals to several important changes between the two periods.

In sharp contrast to the 1983 findings, in 1965 there were still large numbers of non-Hispanic whites, as well as some black and Filipino farmworkers (Table VI-1). Many of these workers, who had migrated to California in the 1920s and 1930s, were aging and leaving the farm work force. In 1965, only about half of the seasonal farm work force was of Mexican descent--either Mexican born or Mexican Americans. Among those of Mexican origin was a large number of men whose wives, children, and parents were living in Mexico. But most of the workers in 1965 were occasional workers only casually attached to the farm labor market, including students, homemakers, older persons, children and some with personal problems making them unemployable in the nonfarm sector. In contrast the 1983 study, there were very few women in the regular, i.e. noncasual, farm workforce in 1965.

By 1983, this human landscape had undergone some fundamental changes. Three out of four of California's farmworkers were born in Mexico. Furthermore, most of the rest of farm laborers in 1983 were either Mexican Americans born in the Southwest or the children of Mexican-born immigrants. Hardly any non-Hispanic whites or blacks remained though there was a small number of non-Mexican foreign-born immigrants. Reflecting this influx of Mexican peasants and urban poor is the decline in the average educational level of farmworkers between the two surveys (Table VI-2). Another contrast of importance is the increase in the number of Mexican immigrant men who brought their families to settle in rural California. This trend began in the late 1960s and continues to the present day. While there continues to be a large number of unaccompanied men in the Mexican immigrant community, their proportion has dropped significantly since 1965.

Evidence for this shift to "family immigration" can be seen in several ways. First, there were proportionately more long-term (19 weeks or more) seasonal workers in 1983 than in 1965 and a correspondingly smaller proportion of casual or "occasional" workers. Also, the proportion of women working 19 weeks or more, i.e., as "regular" workers and the proportion of prime age workers increased between the two surveys. Although a somewhat smaller share worked full time in crop agriculture in 1983 than in 1965 (6.6 percent vs. 7.2 percent), 5.3 percent of the surveyed farmworkers worked in agriculture 19 weeks or more each year in 1983 compared to 42 percent in 1965 (Table VI-3). By 1983, there were more long-term seasonal workers and fewer at either extreme of casual or full-time. Second, the percentage of men among the regular farmworkers fell from 89 percent in 1965 to 76 percent by 1983. This may be due to the presence of so many more women who have joined their immigrant husbands in California. Finally, in the labor force of 1983, a higher percentage of the sample was of prime working age. In 1965, 60 percent of the workers were between 20 and 54, while in 1983, 76 percent were in this prime age bracket (Table VI-4). Thus by 1983 there is evidence that most of the state's farm work is being done by Mexican immigrant families, although newcomers from Mexico are continuously replacing existing workers.

In summary, the population has changed considerably since 1965. The *core group* is now made up of "settled" Mexican families. In many cases both the men and women do farm work. Ear-

lier, unaccompanied male foreigners and domestic workers only casually committed to farm work were the two largest groups.

While the settling process has been a positive development for many Mexican families who have become permanent residents of the United States, there is no evidence that the average real income level has increased since 1965. In fact, unemployment has probably worsened in the past two decades for farmworkers. The 1965 study found that "about fifty percent (of the workers) had employment for half the year." The UC-EDD survey of 1983 found that only 42 percent of the 2,471 workers were able to find work for half the year or more.

Since the unemployment picture has not improved in recent decades for farmworkers, there must be other explanations for increased settlement. Shifts in immigrant preference or a relaxation of immigration laws are not adequate answers. But the nature of farm work has changed for many. Some of the more arduous tasks have been eliminated and the length of farm work careers has probably increased due to a shift in labor demand. New plant varieties, mechanization, and better packing and preserving have reduced the ratio of short-term to long-term workers (Table VI-5). In relative terms, the number of harvesting and lifting jobs has decreased while jobs as irrigators, machine operators, and supervisory workers have increased. As a result, although the amount of seasonal farm work has not declined in absolute terms in the past two decades due to an enormous increase in production, the relative share of short- to long-term workers has declined. Although many of those remaining in seasonal work still face long spells of unemployment each year, prospects for better jobs may have encouraged many families to stay in farm work.

Another factor is that follow-the-crop migration has declined markedly since 1965. The pronounced reduction in this type of migrancy encouraged many to bring their families from Mexico.

As the population became more settled, the patterns of recruitment changed (Table VI-6). A much lower percentage relied on growers for job placement and a somewhat smaller percentage used the EDD in 1983 than in 1965. Friendship and kinship networks (tapped by employers' crew leaders) have assumed an expanded role. In addition, workers are now more likely to find their crew leader or employer on their own.

The farmworker population is better off today in that most are families of immigrants working together in a foreign land to improve their lives. On the other hand, the oversupply of workers today is probably worse than a generation ago. The resulting long spells of unemployment have made it even more difficult for many (or even most) farmworkers to raise their earnings above the poverty line.

Other Farmworker Surveys

The best national survey of farmworkers is done for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) by the U.S. Census Bureau (Pollack and Jackson, 1983). The report, titled the Hired Farm Working Force (HFWF), divides farmworkers into two large subgroups: regular and casual. Regular farmworkers derive most of their income from farm work, while casual workers use farm work only as a supplement to nonfarm income. In 1981, the census found approximately two million farmworkers nationwide. Half earned their living primarily from nonfarm work, earning 96 percent of their income off the farm, while the other half was principally farmworkers whose families earned only 11 percent of their income from nonfarm work.

Nationally, the nonfarmworker group is made up of primarily non-Hispanic white students and homemakers, most of whom work only occasionally at farm work. The farmworker group is made up primarily of families

in which the main occupation of the head of household is farm work. Minorities are in the majority in this group. Many in this farmworker group experience the special problems documented by the UC-EDD survey: high unemployment, poor housing, education, and health care.

The HFWF reports regionally. California dominates the Pacific Region. The regional difference in the composition of the farm workforce is evident in the comparison between the Pacific and the Midwest in the distribution of days worked (Table VI-7). In the Pacific Region, 43 percent of farmworkers worked 150 days or more while in the Midwest, only 17 percent worked 150 days.

There are serious discrepancies, however, between the USDA statistics for the Pacific Region and the UC-EDD findings for California. In the USDA data only half of the farmworkers surveyed in the Pacific Region were Hispanic. Not only the UC-EDD survey but also several other California studies have found the proportion of Hispanics among farmworkers to be much higher.[1] The UC-EDD survey, which was conducted during the peak season and was targeted to survey difficult-to-reach groups, found many more Mexican immigrants, both settled families and unaccompanied workers than the HFWF which is conducted in December when many farmworkers are back in Mexico.

1. A 1978 study carried out for the California Commission on the Status of Women found that among farmworkers surveyed in California, 66 percent were Mexican-born, 28 percent were Mexican Americans, and 6 percent other. (California Commission on the Status of Women, 1978.) Another 1978 study conducted by the University of California at Davis found that 94 percent of tomato sorters surveyed were of Mexican descent (Thompson and Scheuring, 1978). A Tulare County Health Department study of 500 farmworkers in 1981 found that 80 percent of the farmworker heads of household interviewed were Mexican-born and another 8.2 percent were Texas Mexicans. (Mines and Kearney, 1982).

The UC-EDD survey results differed in other ways from the HFWF. Results indicate that the workforce is more female, and includes more long-term seasonal workers (25 to 149 days a year) than were reported by the HFWF (Table VI-8).

The 1983 regional wage rankings from the UC-EDD *worker* survey of farmworkers is remarkably similar to the 1982 *employer* survey of workers' wages (Johnston and Martin, 1983). The employer survey was conducted on 755 farms which hired a total of almost 140,000 seasonal workers during 1982. As in the UC-EDD survey, the employer survey found that the union-influenced Central and South Coast areas paid above average wages and that the Sacramento Valley had the lowest and least variable hourly wages (Table VI-9). In both surveys, coastal wages were higher than average and inland wages were lower than average. The results differed, however, for Southern California (Imperial, San Diego, Orange, and Riverside counties) with the 1982 employer survey reporting below average hourly earnings and the worker survey reporting above average wages. This apparent discrepancy might be explained by the fact that the worker survey was conducted during August. Because farm activity peaks there in the January to March period, only the permanent and more highly paid workers remain in the Imperial Valley in the summer.

Finally, comparing transfer payments reported by the UC-EDD survey with those reported by the Tulare County Health Survey reveals a possible bias in the UC-EDD survey (Table VI-10). A much higher proportion of the unaccompanied Mexican men in the UC-EDD statewide study reported receiving social insurance benefits. Two out of five of these men in the UC-EDD study surveyed reported collecting UI or participating in another insurance program while only about one in 14 in the Tulare County study reported receiving such payments. Under-representation of young, undocumented Mexicans in the

UC-EDD sample may in part explain this discrepancy. But there are similar differences in findings about social insurance programs between the two studies with respect to the family Mexicans and the U.S. citizen families (Tables VII-11 and VII-12). It is possible that interviewers, from EDD despite a sincere effort to maintain a representative sample, may have been more likely to interview people who collected UI than those who did not. This possible bias stems from the fact that one of the most important contacts these EDD outreach workers have with farmworkers is in the distribution of UI payments.

The findings on receipt of welfare programs are much more consistent between the two studies. The fact that the Tulare County findings show a smaller percentage receiving welfare benefits than the statewide study is to be expected since Tulare County's farmworkers are younger than the average for California's farmworkers.[2]

2. The UC-EDD survey found that 31.9 percent of the farmworkers surveyed statewide were younger than 25 while among the 101 surveyed in Tulare County, 39.5 percent were younger than 25.

Table VI-1
Estimates of Major Ethnic Groups in the California Farm Work Force

	1965	1983[a]
	percent	
White	43.9	4.5
Mexicans		71.3
Mexican-Americans	45.9	16.5
Asians and Native Americans	6.8	6.8
Blacks	3.3	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0

[a]Estimates based on calculations from EDD office sampling logs compiled from the survey.

Sources: Assembly Committee on Agriculture, 1969, and UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table VI-2

A Comparison of Farmworker Educational Level Between 1965 and 1983

Years of School	1965	1983
	Percent	
0	5.6	8.4
1-7	32.5	54.2
8	13.0	5.6
9-11	16.9	13.2
12+	14.6	8.6
Still in school	17.3	10.0
Total	99.9	100.0

Sources: UC-EDD Survey, 1983, and Assembly Committee on Agriculture, 1969.

Table VI-3

A Comparison of Dollars Earned in 1965 with the Number of Weeks Worked in 1983,[a] Percentage Distributions

Dollars Earned	Percent	1965 Weeks Worked	Percent
100-499	37.8	1-9 wks	22.7
500-999	19.9	10-18 wks	23.9
1000-1999	17.8	19-27 wks	18.2
2000-2999	10.3	28-36 wks	18.6
3000-3999	7.0	37-45 wks	10.0
4000 or more	7.2	full-time	6.6
Total	100.0		100.0

a

The Assembly survey grouped workers by dollars earned rather than by weeks worked. In 1965, the average hourly wage was $1.40 or $56 a week for a 40-hour week. The average weekly earnings of the UC-EDD surveyed worker were $186. Therefore, to earn the equivalent of $500 in 1965, one would have to earn $1660 in 1983, which represents 8-9 weeks of work at the average rate. (Livestock and horticultural workers were excluded since almost none were interviewed in 1983.)

Sources: UC-EDD Survey, 1983, and Assembly Committee on Agriculture, 1969.

Table VI-4
A Comparison of Farmworker Age Distribution, 1965 and 1983

Age	1965	1983
under 20	22.9	16.0
20-24	12.1	16.0
25-34	16.5	25.4
35-44	19.2	20.4
45-54	12.5	13.7
55-64	11.9	7.1
65 and over	5.0	1.4
Total	100.1	100.0
Number	4,780[a]	2,193

[a]An estimate, in 100's of workers.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983 and Assembly Committee on Agriuclture, 1969.

Table VI-6
A Comparison of Job Reference Sources, 1965 and 1983

Source of Reference	1965	1983
	Percent	
UC-EDD	8.2	5.8
Grower	34.4	7.0
Crew leader, FLC	11.2	12.1
Union	0.3	1.2
Friend/relative	34.1	52.9
Self/other[a]	11.8	21.1
Total	100.1	100.1
Number	9449[b]	3466

[a]Includes several other small categories.

[b]An estimate, in 100's of workers.

Sources: UC-EDD Survey, 1983, and Assembly Committee, 1969

Table VI-5
Ratio of Seasonal Workers to Year-Round Workers[a] at Peak Season, Selected Years

Year	1952	1957	1964	1972	1980
Ratio	2.2	2.3	2.4	1.5	1.4

[a]Seasonal is defined as working less than 150 days for the same employer; year-round, 15 days or more.

Source: EDD, Farm Labor, Annual Reports, various years.

Table VI-7 Percentage Distribution of Farmworker Days of Farm Work, by Region			
Farmworker Days	**United States**	**Pacific Region**	**Midwest Region**
	Percent		
less than 25	39	22	53
25-74	22	18	17
75-149	12	17	14
150-249	11	20	7
250 or more	16	23	10
Total	100	100	100
Source: Pollack and Jackson, 1983.			

Table VI-8

Percentage Distribution of Farmworker Samples, Pacific Region in 1981 and California in 1983, by Days of Farm Work

	Less than 25 days	**25 to 74 days**	**75 to 149 days**	**150 or more days**	**Total**	**Number of workers**
	Percent					
Pacific Region (HFWF)	22.0	18.0	17.0	43.0	100.0	208[a]
California UC-EDD	8.1	29.3	31.9	30.6	100.0	2239

[a]An estimate in 100's of workers.

Source: Pollack and Jackson, 1983, and UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table VI-9

A comparison of Hourly Wages, Worker Survey in 1983 and Employer Survey in 1982, by California Region

	Worker Survey 1983			Employer Survey, 1982		
Region	**Hourly** Wages	**Standard** Deviation	**California** Average	**Percentage of Hourly** Wages	**Standard** Deviation	**California** Average
Southern California	4.86	1.63	4.3	4.47	1.03	-7.8
South Coast	5.75	1.52	23.4	6.42	2.19	32.5
Central Coast	5.24	1.41	12.4	6.78	2.78	39.8
San Joaquin Valley	4.42	1.16	-5.2	4.48	1.01	-7.6
Sacramento Valley	3.97	0.82	-15.8	4.48	.73	-7.6
North Coast	4.91	1.43	5.4	5.23	1.40	7.8
Statewide	4.66			4.85		
Number	859 workers			755 farms		

Sources: UC-EDD Survey, 1983, and Johnston and Martin, 1983.

Table VI-10

Percentage of Unaccompanied Mexican Male Farmworkers Who Received Social Insurance and Welfare Benefits in the Year Prior to the Respective Surveys, Tulare County, 1981, Statewide, 1983

Social Insurance Programs[a]

	Percentage Receiving no Benefits	Percentage Benefiting from one Program	Percentage Benefiting from two or more Programs	Number of Families
Tulare County 1981	92.6	6.1	1.0	99
Statewide, 1983	59.6	35.2	5.2	287

[a]Including Social Security, UI, disability and veteran's benefits.

Welfare Payments[b]

	Percentage Receiving no Benefits	Percentage Benefiting from one Program	Percentage Benefiting from two or more Program	Number of Families
Tulare County, 1981	99.0	0.0	1.0	99
Statewide, 1983	96.2	3.5	0.3	287

[b]Include food stamps, AFDC, and general assistance.

Sources: UC-EDD Survey, 1983, and Mines and Kearney, 1982.

Table VI-11

Percentage of Mexican-born Farmworker Households Which Received Social Insurance and Welfare Benefits in the Year Prior to the Respective Surveys, Tulare County, 1981, and Statewide, 1983

Social Insurance Programs[a]

	Percentage Receiving no Benefits	Percentage Benefiting from one Program	Percentage Benefiting from two or more Programs	Number of Families
Tulare County, 1981	63.6	32.1	4.3	303
Statewide, 1983	19.1	62.0	19.1	639

[a]These include: Social Security Pension, UI, disability and veteran's benefits.

Welfare Payments[b]

	Percentage Receiving no Benefits	Percentage Benefiting from one Program	Percentage Benefiting from two or more Programs	Number of Families
Tulare County, 1981	76.6	12.6	10.7	303
Statewide 1983	63.9	22.7	13.4	639

[b]These include food stamps, AFDC and general assistance.

Sources: Mines and Kearney, 1982, and UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table VI-12

Percentage of U.S. Citizen Farmworker Households Who Received Social Insurance and Welfare Benefits in the Year Prior to the Respective Surveys, Tulare County, 1981, and Statewide, 1983

Social Insurance Programs[a]

	Percentage Receiving no Benefits	Percentage Benefiting from one Program	Percentage Benefiting from two or more Programs	Number of Families
Tulare County, 1981	60.6	36.1	3.4	46
Statewide	22.0	58.4	19.9	178

[a]These include Social Security Pension, UI, disability, and veteran's benefits.

Welfare Payments[b]

	Percentage Receiving no Benefits	Percentage Benefiting from one Program	Percentage Benefiting from two or more Programs	Number of Families
Tulare County, 1981	49.5	12.0	38.5	46
Statewide, 1983	59.9	20.2	19.9	178

[b]These include food stamps, AFDC and general assistance.

Sources: Mines and Kearney, 1982, and UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

VII. Immigration Reform and California's Farmworkers

Since most of California's field, orchard and vineyard work is done by foreign, mostly Mexican, immigrants and their children, effective immigration reform could have profound effects on the supply of labor and the conditions of employment. Although there is a rapid rate of movement of farmworkers out of agriculture in California, the rate of new immigrant entry at the bottom of the labor market has, at least, counterbalanced the fast outflow. The result is a continuing oversupply of workers.

Growers in California have become accustomed to what is from their point of view a favorable supply situation. They have opposed strict immigration reform out of an awareness that much of their supply of replacement workers originates in Mexico. In addition, employers tend to oppose amnesty because they fear that legalized workers would opt for U.S. city jobs, leaving farms with labor shortages. It is true that growers face a serious problem of high turnover. Many workers return to Mexico, or follow their kinship network contacts to urban jobs. However, it is far from clear that growers' fears of the results of amnesty are justified. According to the UC-EDD survey, more farm workers have contacts to rural employment than to city jobs in the United States (Table VII-1). Moreover, there appears to be little difference between groups when categorized by legal status.

While undocumented and many other immigrant farmworkers do not have urban job contacts, there are many who do have such connections. One explanation of the relatively fast flow of farmworkers through the farm labor market is the movement of those with contacts to urban employment. But many--or perhaps even most--remain behind. Survey results demonstrate clearly that workers are restrained from moving to city jobs for several reasons, with legal status as the least frequently cited factor (Table VII-2). Among the undocumented only 12 percent reported that a lack of legal papers kept them from moving while over half cannot move to cities because they lack contacts to jobs or housing. Instead, they prefer to stay in a known environment where their skills are salable.

Effective immigration reform which would slow the rate of entry of new workers from Mexico may present growers with supply problems in the long run. Meanwhile, the outflow of workers from agriculture would continue because of the nature of farm tasks and the relatively poor earnings of farmworkers. But since many workers are constrained from moving by lack of urban opportunities and/or connections, immigration reform might not speed up markedly their movement to the cities. Rather a generous amnesty could actually alleviate the short-run labor supply problems faced by employers. But in the long run, if faced with a permanently curtailed labor supply, employers might have to improve working conditions, offer more year-round employment, and implement technologies to lighten farm tasks. Such changes could lengthen farm work careers, attract more U.S. citizens, including more women to agriculture, lessening the need for an uncontrolled influx of Mexican workers. The adjustment process, however, may be slow and painful. Production of some of the more labor-intensive crops may leave California. The choice of immigration reform may mean importing more crops and fewer workers.

Table VII-1

Number of Contacts for Urban Jobs and for Agricultural Jobs,[a] for all Farmworker Respondents and for the Undocumented

	Urban Jobs				Agricultural Jobs			
	All workers		Undocumented		All workers		Undocumented	
Number of Contacts	Number	Percent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
None	559	53.8	119	53.4	217	20.5	42	18.3
1 or 2	151	14.5	31	13.9	129	12.2	23	10.0
3 to 5	104	10.0	19	8.5	143	13.5	36	15.7
6 or more	226	21.7	514	24.2	571	53.9	129	56.1
Total	1040	100.0	223	100.0	1060	100.0	230	100.1

[a]Most contacts are with friends or relatives of the farmworker respondent.

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Table VII-2

Reason Given by Workers for not Moving to Urban from Rural Areas

	All Workers		Undocumented	
Reasons for not Moving	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Legal Status	16	2.9	14	12.3
No job contacts	179	32.6	43	37.7
Rent/ housing	127	23.1	18	15.8
Prefer rural area	108	19.7	20	17.5
Lack job skills/ English	96	17.5	16	14.0
Other	23	4.2	3	2.6
Total	549	100.0	114	99.9

Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983.

Appendix: Methods

The survey was designed to determine the characteristics and needs of the farmworker population as an aid in designing and implementing labor and immigration policies and in matching social and job agency services with farmworker needs. The questionnaire, designed in spring 1983, was reviewed by academics, extension personnel, employers and unionists. Where possible the questions were made to conform with the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, the Tulare County Health Study of 1981 and the California Assembly Study of 1966. The format was based on survey designs of the Survey Research Center, University of California, Berkeley.

In June 1983, 76 interviewers assembled in Davis, California for a two day training session. Five experienced interviewers served as trainers; four of them helped administer the survey as "survey facilitators." The purpose of the survey was explained; the procedures for obtaining cooperation and accurate information were discussed; interviewers rehearsed administering questionnaires and modified the phrasing of certain questions.

The Target Quota Sampling System

The sampling system used in the UC-EDD survey is not any "textbook" technique. Probability sampling methods such as cluster or stratified sampling require a population list from which to draw a sample, but such a list of the farmwork population does not exist. A considerable, although unknown, proportion of this population is clandestine. Since the work is seasonal and approximately one in five workers move with the crops, special sampling problems arise.

A statewide list could be derived from Social Security numbers used by farmworkers, but it could not generate a random sample. Since 1977, the Social Security Administration has made it difficult for undocumented workers to obtain Social Security cards. As a result, many recent immigrants do not have valid cards, several use the same card, and others carry several cards. In certain areas (for example, north San Diego County), thousands of farmworkers are employed without Social Security numbers.

Given the impossibility of obtaining a list from which a probability sampling frame could be constructed, quota sampling was chosen as the only feasible alternative. Because the "real" distribution of various types of farmworkers on which to base quotas was not known, an elaborate process on an office-by-office basis was used to assign accurate interviewing quotas. In each EDD office, the interviewer or interviewers, in consultation with that office's survey facilitator, designed an area-specific quota sampling system. This sampling design was incorporated into a sampling log listing the four different types of quotas (or categories) for each office:

(1) Subareas (i.e., small towns or labor camps). To each "natural" subarea with an office's jurisdiction an appropriate number of interviews was assigned to sum to 30 or more from the total area. The range was from two to nine subareas per area.

(2) Household size and ethnicity. In each office the interviewers, relying on their experience in the area, arrived at a specified number of interviews to be conducted with: (a) families of Mexican descent, (b) single person households of Mexican descent, (c) and other ethnic groups. Since only heads of household or their spouses were interviewed, a bias toward larger families because of the greater probability of finding someone at home was avoided.

(3) Sex. Interviewers estimated the proportion of male to female farmworkers in their area and used this ratio to establish a quota for interviews with women.

(4) Special jobs. Certain jobs such as equipment operator and irrigator were assigned a minimum quota for each area so that they would not be missed.

The quotas were set as targets, that is, the interviewers were expected to meet the assigned minimums. The quotas overlapped, e.g., a female equipment operator of Mexican descent could be counted in three quotas. The objective of the quota sampling system was not to reveal the true distribution of the distinct groups but to sample all significant ones, to be able to compare the different groups and ascertain their respective needs.

Interviewers worked under detailed instructions. They were not permitted to do more than five of the 30 interviews inside the EDD office. Interviewees had to be 14 or older, heads of household or their spouses, and to have worked 25 days or more in farm work during the 24 months prior to the survey. No more than two individuals working for the same employer were interviewed. Interviewers were forbidden to interview friends, to collect wage or work information from one person about another, and to interview children living with their parents in a household.

Of approximately 1,300 interviews completed, 1,286 were acceptable to be processed. Coding and editing was done by a staff of four at UC Berkeley. Each interview was checked by two persons (for an average of 40 minutes); data were entered into a computer at UC Davis for processing.

Possible Biases in the Survey

Although the sample was not random, the interviewers spoke to large numbers of farmworkers from all major groups so that the needs and characteristics of these groups could be assessed. The EDD offices are distributed throughout the state in approximately the same pattern as the farmworker population. There were, however, some areas and agricultural activities that were underrepresented because of the location of the EDD offices. For example, Orange County was not adequately represented nor were the undocumented tomato and strawberry pickers of north San Diego County. Livestock, poultry and nursery workers were almost totally absent from the sample since the interviewers concentrated their efforts on the field, orchard, and vineyard crops near the EDD offices.

Despite determined efforts of both supervisors and interviewers to seek out difficult-to-interview groups, one group may still have been underrepresented: the young unaccompanied Mexican men. These young men, most of whom live in crowded apartments in rural towns, were specially targeted for interviews. In fact, 23 percent of the interviewees were unaccompanied Mexican men. About one-half of them were undocumented (Appendix Table 1). Thus, about 11 percent of the total sample were undocumented unaccompanied Mexican men, probably indicating an underrepresentation of this group, although their true proportion in the population is not known. Another evidence of this possible bias is that only 5 percent of these men were under 20, compared to about 20 percent in the survey conducted for the Tulare County Health Department (Appendix Table 2).

Because of an unavoidable tendency for interviewers to talk to those who are less shy and fearful of government officials, the sample probably overrepresents the more settled, better off groups. The youngest and most newly arrived are probably underrepresented in the sample, but more interviews were conducted with this difficult-to-find groupd than any other statewide farmworker survey. Further, the sample is large enough to carry out useful analysis of this important subpopulation. But the survey findings with respect to the length of time in the United States, the length of time with a given employer, assets, average age, and general working and living conditions will be biased toward the more settled population.

Appendix Table 1 Unaccompanied Mexican Men by Legal Status		
Legal Status	**Number**	**Percent**
Green card	120	42.1
Undocumented	145	50.9
Pending status	17	6.0
Citizen	3	1.1
Total	285	100.0
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983		

Appendix Table 2 Unaccompanied Male Mexicans by Age				
	UC-EDD Survey. 1983		**Tulare Survey, 1981**	
Age	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Less than 20	15	5.3	20	20.2
20 or over	266	94.7	79	79.8
Total	281	100.0	99	100.0
Source: UC-EDD Survey, 1983				

Agricultural Production Regions

Southern California. Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Orange, San Diego, and Imperial counties.

South Coast. Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo counties.

Central Coast. Contra Costa, Alameda, Monterey, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and San Benito counties.

San Joaquin Valley. Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties.

Sacramento Valley. Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Sacramento, Solano, Sutter, Tehema, Yolo, and Yuba counties.

North Coast. Napa, Sonoma, and Lake counties.

Glossary

Green Card. A card that gives foreigners the right to live and work permanently in the United States, i.e., permanent resident status.

Undocumented. One with no claim to work in the United States.

Pending status. Workers with a Silva Letter, a stay or deportation, or other such non-permanent status.

A week worked. A week in which some work was done for pay.

A week unemployed. A week in which no work for pay was done.

Follow-the-crop migrants. Any who sometime during the year in the course of doing their farm work had to spend the night away from their usual U.S. home.

Back-and-forth migrants. Those who return to Mexico at least once during the year.

Wages. There are three types of wages recorded in this study. Hourly wages refer to workers paid by the hour of work without counting their productivity. Individual piece rate and crew piece rate were also recorded. To calculate the hourly equivalent for individual piece rates, one multiplies the units per day times the dollars per unit and divides by the hours reported per day. To calculate the hourly equivalent for crew piece rates, one multiplies the units per day times the dollars per unit and divides by the hours reported per day and the number of members of the crew.

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