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farms in this decade. This is because those farmers depend heavily on an adequate labour force for such crucial operations as fertilizer application.

The main crops produced by these types of farms are highly perishable and must be harvested quickly for shipment to the fresh-fruit market upon which the economy, so far, has been most dependent. Consequently the expansion of the very small-scale type of farm which uses family labour to a large extent is in direct competition with the medium and large-scale farms for labour. Preference for higher wages elsewhere, whether on large estates, rural public works projects, in the city or overseas (St. Croix and St. Thomas) contribute to the labour shortage problem.

Labour, as an input for farm production in Dominica, is most crucial since topographical and climatic limitations do limit the use of capital-intensive techniques, notably mechanization to replace manual labour. Some farm operations such as harvesting of bananas and citrus, under Dominica's field conditions, must be done by hand.

From the field evidence it appears, therefore, that the farmers who operate holdings of 10 - 50 acres suffer most from the labour shortage problem, which is both seasonal and localised in certain areas. It is these farms which are not so adaptable to mechanization because of relief and climatic conditions.

Discussion Report

The paper generated discussion on the reasons for the labour shortage. A major reason was the competing demands of the Crown Lands Agricultural projects for available labour and the 'drift'

from the countryside to the town. It was a matter of concern that medium-sized farms, which were on a weaker economic footing than the large farms, were the ones most affected by the labour shortage.

TABLE I. AVAILABILITY OF LABOUR BY SIZE OF ACREAGE UNDER PRODUCTION

Size of Farm Acreage under Production	Availability of Labour					
	Labour Shortage		No Shortage		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Less than 10 acres	4	4.8	5	6.0	9	10.6
10 – 50 acres	36	43.0	11	13.0	47	56.0
51 – 100 acres	10	12.0	2	2.4	12	14.4
over 100 acres	12	14.0	4	4.8	16	18.8
TOTAL	62	73.8	22	26.2	84	100.0

Source:— Field Survey 1970

TABLE II. ANALYSIS OF AVAILABILITY OF LABOUR BY SIZE OF FARM ACREAGE UNDER PRODUCTION

Size of Farm Acreage under Production	Availability of Labour					
	Labour Shortage		No Shortage		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Less than 10 acres	4	44.4	5	55.6	9	100
10 – 50 acres	36	77.0	11	23.0	47	100
51 – 100 acres	10	83.3	2	16.7	12	100
over 100 acres	12	75.0	4	25.0	16	100

Source:— Field Survey 1970

TABLE III. REASONS FOR LABOUR SHORTAGE BY SIZE OF FARM ACREAGE UNDER PRODUCTION

Size of Farm Acreage under Production	Reasons for Shortage					
	Heavy Peasantry	High Wages Elsewhere	Low Capital for employ- ment of Labour	Migration	Preference for employ- ment on large estate	Estate away from popu- lation centre
Less than 10 acres	5(8.9%)	1(1.8%)	1(1.8%)		1(1.8%)	—
10 – 50 acres	8(14.2%)	3(5.3%)	1(1.8%)	3(5.3%)	15(26.9%)	—
51 – 100 acres	1(1.8%)	—	—	1(1.8%)	—	—
over 100 acres	8(14.2%)	—	—	6(10.8%)	—	2(3.6%)
TOTAL	22(39.1%)	4(7.1%)	2(3.6%)	10(17.9%)	16(28.7%)	2(3.6%)

Source:— Field Survey 1970

TABLE IV.

Size of Farm Acreage Under Production	Average Number of Acres cultivated by one worker.	Weighted Average
Less than 10 acres	4.1	
10 – 50 acres	4.8	
51 – 100 acres	8.7	
over 100 acres	11.0	6.5

Source:— Field Survey 1970

TABLE V.

Categories	Number as a proportion of total farms	Acreage as a proportion of total farmland
Less than 10 acres	90.6	14.3
10 – 50 acres	7.4	15.6
51 – 100 acres	0.8	6.6
Over 100 acres	1.2	63.5
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: 1961 Agricultural Census.