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Alternative Definitions of Farm People

Vera Banks
Margaret Butler
Judith Kalbacher

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ABSTRACT

Eleven million people lived in households associated with farming by residence, occupation, or income in 1983. Alternative criteria developed in this report yield a farm resident population of 5.6 million in March 1983, a farm occupation population of 7.4 million, and a farm income population of 6.3 million. Differences noted between the farm occupation population and farm resident and income populations relate primarily to the farmworker component of the farm occupation population. This report uses data from the March 1983 Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census.]

Keywords: Farm people, farm residents, farm population, farm income, farmworker, farm households.

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Alternative Definitions of Farm People

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INTRODUCTION

Farm people have generally been thought of as persons living on farms or ranches. The farm population has long been defined in this way, as all persons residing on farms without regard to occupation or income. At the beginning of the 20th century, when the country was chiefly agrarian, the vast majority of people living on farms also worked there, and few nonfarm residents were engaged in agriculture. Farm residence implied a way of life for the entire farm family, and for nearly the entire body of people working in agricultural production.

These ties between farm residence and farmwork have changed. Many people who now live on farms work elsewhere and many who work on farms live elsewhere. Slightly less than half of the 1987 farm resident workforce worked primarily in farm occupations (farm operators and managers plus farmworkers and related occupations) (19).¹ Four-fifths of employed farm residents worked primarily in farming in 1940, however (17). Half of the farmers and farmworkers in March 1983 lived off the farm, compared with just a tenth in 1940.

For efficient and responsive policymaking in today's diverse farm community, target populations must be clearly defined. Information on the size, location, and characteristics of farm people who should receive attention promotes good policymaking. The farm population has long been officially defined as all people who live on farms without regard to occupation or income. With more and more farm-related people living off farms, we must consider other ways of identifying them. The farm occupation population and farm income population are alternative ways of identifying farm-related people, or the three can be pooled to obtain a composite concept. The qualifying criteria may also be easily combined or separated as deemed necessary to meet specified needs.

The changes noted above illustrate the need for and utility of a multi-criteria approach to identify farm people fully and precisely. We use data from the March 1983 Current Population Survey (CPS) of the Bureau of the Census in this report to assess alternative ways of identifying farm people.²

¹Underscored numbers in parentheses refer to items in the References.

²For early perspectives on the classification of farm people, see (2, 3, 5). Data from the 1980 Census of Population on the social, economic, and housing characteristics of the farm-related population defined by residence, income, and employment are presented in (15).

Information from this data set was developed to analyze relationships among three identifying criteria: farm residence, farm occupation, and farm income. We look at the number and characteristics of the total farm-related population and the individual populations identified by the three criteria (residence, occupation, and income), as well as information on the family and household units associated with these populations.

Changes in agriculture today most directly affect the people who are the focus of this report.³ Up-to-date estimates of numbers and characteristics of select component populations are available in related reports. The Bureau of the Census and the Economic Research Service (ERS), USDA, for example, cooperatively publish annual estimates of the farm resident population by detailed social and economic characteristics, based on monthly CPS data (18). March 1986 and 1987 CPS data on the operator component of the farm occupation population and farm income people are currently being analyzed for a forthcoming ERS report. The purpose of this report is to examine the differences in definitions of farm people, not to present the latest population estimates.

METHOD OF IDENTIFICATION

The CPS data used to identify the alternative farm-related populations were collected in March 1983 from a national sample of households. The household is the unit of observation tabulated. A household consists of all persons who occupy a housing unit, as defined by the Bureau of the Census. A house, an apartment, a group of rooms, or a single room are all considered housing units when occupied as separate living quarters.

We identify the farm resident population by its traditional definition, that is, persons living in households located on farms in rural America. This is the segment of the population examined in the annual farm population report (18). The farm occupation population consists of persons in households with at least one member employed primarily as a farmer (that is, farm operator or farm manager) or farmworker (whether paid or unpaid). A household is also included if at least one unemployed member indicated one of these farming occupations as their last full-time job. Farmers and farmworkers are identified as separate components of the occupation population. Persons in households with at least one member who receives farm self-employment income make up the farm income population. The total farm-related population consists of all people in households identified by any of these criteria.

All farm-related households totaled 3.6 million in March 1983. The number of households identified under the alternative criteria varied from 1.8 million farm resident households to 2.0 million farm income recipient households, to 2.2 million farm occupation households.

This report demonstrates the relative strengths and weaknesses of these alternative definitions of farm people, makes comparisons to emphasize the ways that farm people differ from nonfarm people and each other, and discusses the total farm-related population, defined as all persons in farm-related households identified by residence, occupation, or income.

³Detailed analysis of major trends in agriculture is presented in (6, 7, 8).

THE FARM-RELATED POPULATIONS

People living in households identified by the alternative farm criteria--residence, income, and occupation--make up the component farm-related populations. We examine the size and composition of these component populations, and the total farm-related population.

Farm Occupation Population

The farm occupation population is defined as all persons in households where at least one member is primarily employed as a farm operator or manager, or farmworker. This population is the largest of the three farm-related component populations. Individuals employed primarily as farm operators or managers totaled 1.4 million in the March 1983 CPS (table 1), while another 1.3 million people held their primary job in other farm occupations, mostly as farmworkers, either hired or unpaid family members.⁴ They are mostly hired; only 14 percent reported they were unpaid family workers (11). The 2.2 million households of these farm operators and workers contained 7.4 million people.

Table 1--Farm occupation population by residence and age, March 1983

Residence and age	Total farm occupation population <u>1/</u>	<u>Farm operator population</u>			<u>Farmworker population</u>		
		Total	Farm operators	Other household members	Total	Farm- workers	Other household members
<u>1,000 persons</u>							
Total	7,379	3,981	1,384	2,597	4,075	1,254	2,821
Residence:							
Farm	3,724	2,742	954	1,788	1,119	349	770
Nonfarm	4,104	1,239	430	809	2,956	906	2,050
Age:							
Under 18 years	2,231	1,070	5	1,065	1,441	123	1,318
18 to 64 years	4,583	2,506	1,155	1,351	2,536	1,100	1,436
65 years and over	475	405	224	181	98	31	67

1/ The farm occupation total is smaller than the sum of the farm operator and farmworker categories, which are not mutually exclusive.

Source: (11).

Qualifying criteria. The largest proportion of the occupation population consists of persons in households that qualify as farm related solely on the basis of occupation ("O" in text table below) and those in households meeting

⁴These March 1983 estimates, based on primary employment, are significantly lower than if the data covered both primary and secondary employment. In 1980, of all persons holding two or more jobs who had at least one job in agriculture, three-fourths indicated agriculture was their secondary job (18).

all three farm-related criteria--residence, occupation, and income (ROI). The "O" households are not located on farms and do not contain any members with farm self-employment income. In contrast, the "ROI" households are located on farms, have at least one member employed as a farm operator or laborer, and also have a member who receives farm self-employment income. Persons in farm occupation and income households (OI) and farm occupation and resident households (RO) account for comparatively small proportions of the occupation population total, as shown below:

Farm occupation population by qualifying criteria

Item	1,000 persons	Percent
Total	7,379	100.0
(O) Farm occupation households only	2,972	40.3
(RO) Farm occupation <u>and</u> farm resident households	515	7.0
(OI) Farm occupation <u>and</u> farm income households	1,133	15.4
(ROI) Farm occupation <u>and</u> farm resident <u>and</u> farm income households	2,759	37.4

Because the characteristics of farm operators and managers differ from those of farmworkers, we separated the farm occupation population into the farm operator population and the farmworker population. Nearly 1.3 million households had a member(s) employed solely or primarily as a farm operator, or if unemployed, who last worked as a farm operator (11). Households with a member(s) employed as a farmworker, or if unemployed, who last worked as a farmworker, totaled about 1.1 million. In March 1983, each of these populations numbered 4 million (table 1). A relatively small number of households (169,000) contained both a farm operator and farmworker; the 677,000 people living in such households are counted in both the farm operator population and farmworker population.

Persons in farm operator households, particularly those with both an operator and farmworker, are most likely to qualify on the basis of all three identifiers--occupation, income, and residence (ROI). On the other hand, persons in farmworker households most often qualify solely by occupation (O). The smaller but significant proportion of the farm operator population in households that qualify by occupation and income only (OI) reflects the increasing tendency of farm operators to live off the farm. The distributions shown in the tabulation on the next page show differences in the relative importance of qualifying criteria for the three mutually exclusive categories of the farm occupation population.

Farm operator and farmworker populations by qualifying criteria

Item	Farm operator population only		Farmworker population only		Farm operator and farmworker population	
	1,000 persons	Pct.	1,000 persons	Pct.	1,000 persons	Pct.
Total	3,304	100.0	3,398	100.0	677	100.0
(O) Farm occupation households only	261	7.9	2,701	79.5	10	1.5
(RO) Farm occupation <u>and</u> farm resident households	113	3.4	375	11.0	27	4.0
(OI) Farm occupation <u>and</u> farm income households	887	26.8	164	4.8	82	12.1
(ROI) Farm occupation <u>and</u> farm resident <u>and</u> farm income households	2,043	61.8	158	4.6	558	82.4

Farm Income Population

In March 1983, 2.1 million people reported farm self-employment income during the previous year (table 2). These farm income recipients lived in 2.0 million households, which contained a total population of 6.3 million (11). This population is smaller than the total occupation population by about 1 million persons, or 15 percent, but it exceeds both the farm operator or farmworker component populations (table 1).

Table 2--Farm income, farm resident, and total farm-related populations by residence and age, March 1983

Residence and age	<u>Farm income population</u>			Total farm resident population	Total farm-related population
	Total	Farm income recipients	Other household members		
<u>Thousands</u>					
Total population	6,276	2,121	4,155	5,611	11,283
Residence:					
Farm	3,575	1,243	2,332	5,611	5,611
Nonfarm	2,700	878	1,822	X	5,672
Age:					
Under 18 years	1,799	24	1,775	1,502	3,335
18 to 64 years	3,975	1,824	2,151	3,389	6,974
65 years and over	503	273	230	720	974

X - Not applicable.

Source: (11).

An earlier study, based on special tabulations from the March 1976 CPS, estimated 3.1 million farm income recipients at that time, adding all family members associated with these recipients for a total of 9.1 million farm income people (1). Because of definitional changes in the CPS, such as household and family concepts, the estimate of 9.1 million farm income people in 1976 is not strictly comparable to the 1983 estimate of 6.3 million. Although not precisely measurable, this population undoubtedly declined significantly over the 7-year period.

Qualifying criteria. The largest share of the farm income population (44 percent) qualifies as farm-related based on residence, income, and occupation (ROI), as shown in the following distribution:

Farm income population by qualifying criteria

Item	1,000 persons	Percent
Total	6,276	100.0
(I) Farm income households only	1,568	25.0
(RI) Farm income <u>and</u> farm resident households	816	13.0
(OI) Farm income <u>and</u> farm occupation households	1,133	18.1
(ROI) Farm income <u>and</u> farm resident <u>and</u> farm occupation households	2,759	44.0

This is significantly greater than the 37 percent of the farm occupation population in households that meet all three criteria.

The proportion qualifying by a single identifier is much lower in the farm income than in the farm occupation population--25 percent qualify by income only (I), compared with 40 percent for occupation only ("O" in earlier text table). This percentage would be even lower for the income population if the employment identifier were not restricted by data availability to primary occupation. Many farm income only households contain part-time farm operators and workers primarily employed in nonfarm jobs. These households are in the farm income only category and not the income and occupation category, unless some other member works primarily in farming.

Over a million people, nearly a fifth of the total income population, were in households that also qualify by occupation, but not residence (OI). Over four-fifths of this population lived in farm operator households; only 14 percent lived in farmworker households. Farm income households located on farms with no member employed primarily in farming (RI) account for only 13 percent of the income population.

Farm Resident Population

The U.S. farm population is currently defined as all persons living in households on rural farms, regardless of occupation or income. When first identified in the 1920 Census of Population, the farm population included residents of both urban and rural farms. Except for the restriction to rural areas introduced in 1960, farm residence remains the sole current criterion for identifying the U.S. farm population.

Although the farm population has consistently been defined as all persons living on places designated as farms, increases in price levels and other changes in the structure of agriculture have periodically necessitated changes in the farm definition. The latest such change was adopted for the 1974 Census of Agriculture. Under this new definition, the farm population consists of all persons living on places in rural areas from which agricultural products of \$1,000 or more were sold in the reporting year (18). The previous definition, in use since 1960, defined the farm population as all persons living in rural areas on places of 10 or more acres if at least \$50 worth of agricultural products were sold in the reporting year, and places of under 10 acres if at least \$250 worth of agricultural products were sold.

According to historical estimates of the farm population developed by ERS and predecessor agencies, the number of persons living on farms peaked at 32.5 million in 1916, just before the United States entered World War I. Except for brief interruptions during the Great Depression and following World Wars I and II, the number of farm residents declined almost steadily. Lowered labor requirements in agriculture, increased employment opportunities in nonagricultural industries, the low level of farm income compared with nonfarm incomes, the trend toward smaller families, and the increased tendency to live away from the farm fostered this decline.

According to the March 1983 CPS, 5.6 million people lived in households on farms (table 2). The farm resident population, about three-fourths the size of the farm occupation population and nine-tenths the size of the farm income population, is the smallest of the three farm-related populations.

Qualifying criteria. The distribution of the farm resident population by qualifying criteria shows the largest share in households meeting all three criteria:

Farm resident population by qualifying criteria

Item	1,000 persons	Percent
Total	5,611	100.0
(R) Farm resident households only	1,521	27.1
(RI) Farm resident <u>and</u> farm income households	816	14.5
(RO) Farm resident <u>and</u> farm occupation households	515	9.2
(ROI) Farm resident <u>and</u> farm income <u>and</u> farm occupation households	2,759	49.2

The 49 percent of farm residents in resident-occupation-income households (ROI) compares with 37 percent of the occupation population and 44 percent of the income population in households that meet all three criteria. The farm resident population resembles the farm income population in the proportion qualifying on the basis of a single criterion: residence only (R) and income only (I) households account for about one-fourth of each of these populations. Members of households qualifying solely by occupation (O) account for a much higher proportion (about two-fifths) of the total occupation population.

Total Farm-Related Population

Including all farm-related households (residence, occupation, and income) results in a maximum total farm-related population in March 1983 of 11.3 million persons (table 2). This level has not been observed in the traditional farm resident population since the mid-1960's. Even this broadly defined, the total farm-related population represents only 5 percent of the national total of about 230 million.

Qualifying criteria. The two major components of the total farm-related population are persons in farm occupation households only (O) and persons in households identified by residence, occupation, and income (ROI), as shown in the following distribution:

Total farm-related population by qualifying criteria

Item		1,000 persons	Percent
Total		11,283	100.0
(R)	Farm resident households only	1,521	13.5
(O)	Farm occupation households only	2,972	26.3
(I)	Farm income households only	1,568	13.9
(RO)	Farm resident <u>and</u> farm occupation households	515	4.6
(RI)	Farm resident <u>and</u> farm income households	816	7.2
(OI)	Farm occupation <u>and</u> farm income households	1,133	10.0
(ROI)	Farm resident <u>and</u> farm occupation <u>and</u> farm income households	2,759	24.5

The component typically qualifying solely on the basis of occupation (O) consists of people living off the farm in hired farmworker households. Those qualifying by all three criteria (ROI) are mainly in farm operator or manager households on farms, although the "ROI" population also includes a relatively small number of farmworker households located on farms. The (I) and (R) households each contain about one-eighth of the total farm-related population. These (I) households are not located on farms and most often contain a farm operator(s) principally engaged in nonfarm work. The (R) households in contrast, are included solely on the basis of their farm location although they may contain a person(s) with farmwork as a secondary activity. The smallest component populations live on farms, usually in (RO) households with

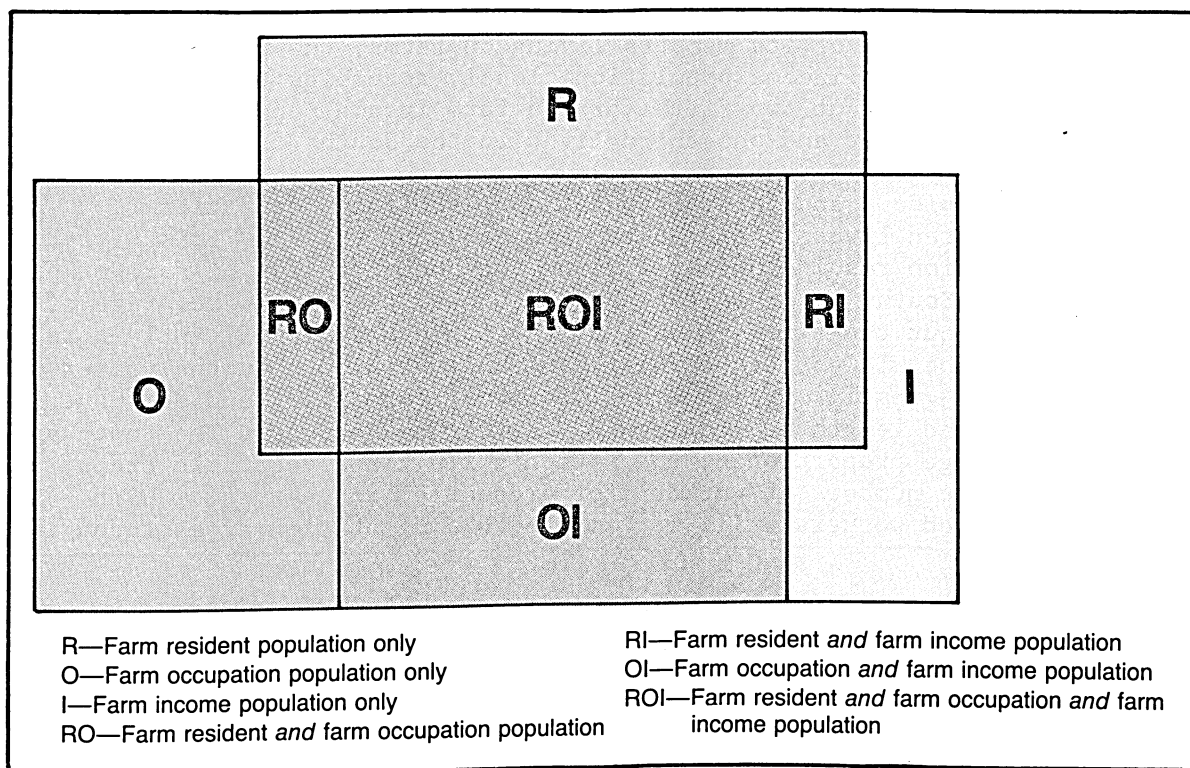
a member solely or primarily employed as a farmworker and in (RI) households with an operator mainly employed in nonfarmwork and farming as a secondary activity.

The various combinations of qualifying criteria define numerous component populations, with the largest proportion of each in households that qualify by more than one criterion. The largest overlap is in households that qualify by residence, occupation, and income ("ROI" in fig. 1). This ROI component numbered 2.8 million in 1983. The proportion of each population in (ROI) households ranges from more than one-third of the occupation population to half of the farm resident population.

The greatest overlap between any two of the alternatives is the intersection of occupation and income (OI). Over a million people in March 1983 lived in these nonfarm households, which typically contain a member self-employed as a farm operator. The smallest overlapping area is between residence and occupation (RO). This population, which totals only 515,000, consists of farm resident households with someone primarily employed in farming but not receiving farm self-employment income.

Figure 1

Farm-related populations show heavy overlap



The individual criteria (R), (O), and (I) combined identify more than half of the total farm-related population. However, the proportion not overlapped differs significantly by criterion. About one-fourth of the total farm-related population lived in households that qualify solely on the basis of farm occupation (O), which is twice the proportion qualifying by residence only (R) or income only (I). The comparatively high proportion in households that qualify solely by occupation reflects the large number of farmworkers who live off the farm and earn wage and salary income.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FARM-RELATED POPULATIONS

We examine the residence, social and employment characteristics, and income levels of the farm population, including age, race, and nonfarm employment and income.

Regional Distribution and Residence

Historical data on regional distributions are available only for the farm resident population. The South contained the largest share of the farm population for many years. As late as 1950, slightly more than half of all farm people lived in the Southern States. As the South persistently lost population faster than the rest of the Nation, its share of the national total declined. By 1965, the South and Midwest each had about two-fifths of the farm total. The Midwest now has the largest number of persons living on farms; the South ranks second (table 3) (18).

With nearly three-fifths of its members living on farms, the regional distribution of the farm income population closely resembles that of the farm resident population. About two-fifths of the farm income population in March 1983 lived in the Midwest and one-third lived in the South (table 4).

Unlike the farm resident and income populations, the farm occupation population most often lives in the South (table 5 and fig. 2). This different regional distribution results primarily from the concentration of farmworker households in the South. The Midwest and South have the same percentage of farm operators, about two-fifths each, but the South has significantly more farmworkers than the Midwest (table 6). Regional variations in the number of farmworkers depend greatly on the number of farms, farm size, and dominant types of farming and length of growing and harvesting seasons. The South and West produce a large proportion of the Nation's fruit and vegetable crops, which require large numbers of workers for production and harvest. High proportions of hired workers still work on the old plantation areas found in the lower South.

The regional distributions of the various farm-related component populations reveal that only those in farm resident and occupation and income (ROI) households, and farm resident and income (RI) households have significantly higher proportions of their totals in the Midwest. Both of these components, accounting for nearly one-third of the farm-related total, have about half its members living in the Midwest (11).

The farm occupation population is the only farm-related population more likely to live off-farm than onfarm--about 56 percent in 1983 (table 5). This high proportion reflects the large number of farm wage and salary workers who commute from nonfarm residences to their farm jobs. About 70 percent of both

Table 3--Selected characteristics of the farm resident population
and total farm-related population, March 1983

Item	Farm resident	Total farm-related	Farm resident	Total farm-related
	-----Thousands-----		-----Percent-----	
Total population	5,611	11,283	100.0	100.0
Male	2,880	5,943	51.3	52.7
Female	2,731	5,341	48.7	47.3
Residence:				
Farm	5,611	5,611	100.0	49.7
Nonfarm	X	5,672	X	50.3
Region:				
Northeast	312	802	5.6	7.1
Midwest	2,550	3,883	45.4	34.4
South	1,965	4,373	35.0	38.8
West	784	2,225	14.0	19.7
Race and Hispanic origin:				
White	5,389	10,387	96.0	92.1
Black	182	760	3.2	6.7
Hispanic origin <u>1/</u>	115	824	2.0	7.3
Age:				
Under 18 years	1,502	3,335	26.8	29.6
18 to 64 years	3,389	6,974	60.4	61.8
18 to 24	642	1,507	11.4	13.4
25 to 34	622	1,467	11.1	13.0
35 to 44	692	1,481	12.3	13.1
45 to 54	700	1,283	12.5	11.4
55 to 64	733	1,238	13.1	11.0
65 years and over	720	974	12.8	8.6
Median age (years)	35.6	30.1	X	X

X - Not applicable.

1/ Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: (11).

Table 4--Selected characteristics of farm income recipients and the farm income population, March 1983

Item	Farm income			
	Recipients	Population	Recipients	Population
	---- <u>Thousands</u> ----		----- <u>Percent</u> -----	
Total	2,121	6,276	100.0	100.0
Male	1,926	3,348	90.8	53.3
Female	195	2,928	9.2	46.7
Residence:				
Farm	1,243	3,575	58.6	57.0
Nonfarm	878	2,700	41.4	43.0
Region:				
Northeast	131	381	6.2	6.1
Midwest	873	2,667	41.2	42.5
South	808	2,287	38.1	36.4
West	310	941	14.6	15.0
Race and Hispanic origin:				
White	2,080	6,114	98.1	97.4
Black	26	103	1.2	1.6
Hispanic origin <u>1</u> /	15	71	.7	1.1
Age:				
Under 18 years	24	1,799	1.1	28.7
18 to 64 years	1,824	3,975	86.0	63.3
18 to 24	100	682	4.7	10.9
25 to 34	393	792	18.5	12.6
35 to 44	468	903	22.1	14.4
45 to 54	403	790	19.0	12.6
55 to 64	460	808	21.7	12.9
65 years and over	273	503	12.9	8.0
Median age (years)	46.9	33.3	X	X

X - Not applicable.

1/ Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: (11).

Table 5--Selected characteristics of the farm occupation population, March 1983

Item	Farm occupation population					
	Total <u>1/</u>	Farm operator	Farm-worker	Total	Farm operator	Farm-worker
	-----Thousands-----			-----Percent-----		
Total population	7,379	3,981	4,075	100.0	100.0	100.0
Male	3,948	2,096	2,229	53.5	52.7	54.7
Female	3,431	1,885	1,845	46.5	47.3	45.3
Residence:						
Farm	3,274	2,742	1,119	44.4	68.9	27.5
Nonfarm	4,104	1,239	2,956	55.6	31.1	72.5
Region:						
Northeast	595	286	354	8.1	7.2	8.7
Midwest	2,339	1,706	993	31.7	42.9	24.4
South	2,801	1,406	1,550	38.0	35.3	38.0
West	1,643	583	1,177	22.3	14.6	28.9
Race and Hispanic origin:						
White	6,674	3,846	3,492	90.4	96.6	85.7
Black	611	99	520	8.3	2.5	12.8
Hispanic origin <u>2/</u>	772	39	741	10.5	1.0	18.2
Age:						
Under 18 years	2,321	1,070	1,441	31.5	26.9	35.4
18 to 64 years	4,583	2,506	2,536	62.1	62.9	62.2
18 to 24	1,061	433	746	14.4	10.9	18.3
25 to 34	1,041	550	571	14.1	13.8	14.0
35 to 44	928	466	548	12.6	11.7	13.4
45 to 54	808	519	402	10.9	13.0	9.9
55 to 64	747	539	270	10.1	13.5	6.6
65 years and over	475	405	98	6.4	10.2	2.4
Median age (years)	27.7	33.9	22.9	X	X	X

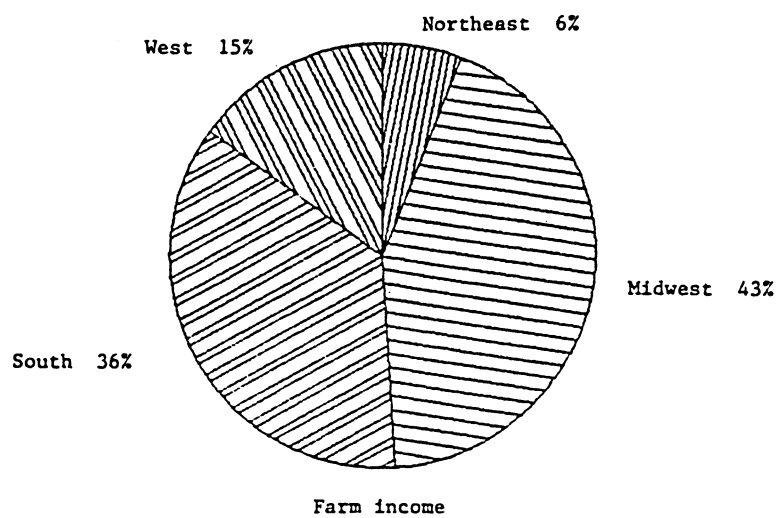
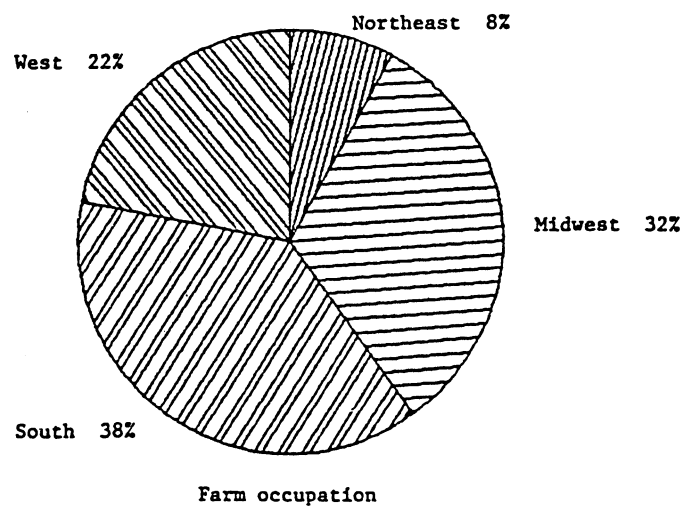
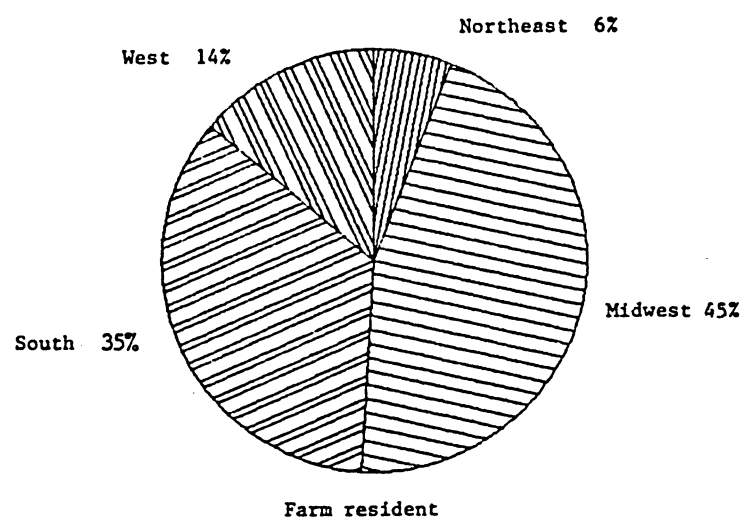
X - Not applicable.

1/ The farm occupation total is smaller than the sum of the farm operator and farmworker categories, which are not mutually exclusive.

2/ Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: (11).

Figure 2--Regional distribution of farm-related populations, March 1983



Source: (16)

Table 6--Selected characteristics of farmers and farmworkers, March 1983

Item	Farmers and farmworkers					
	Total	Farm operators	Farm-workers	Total	Farm operators	Farm-workers
	-----Thousands-----			-----Percent-----		
Total farmers and farmworkers	2,638	1,384	1,254	100.0	100.0	100.0
Male	2,186	1,235	952	82.9	89.2	75.9
Female	452	149	303	17.1	10.8	24.2
Residence:						
Farm	1,303	954	349	49.4	68.9	27.8
Nonfarm	1,335	430	906	50.6	31.1	72.2
Region:						
Northeast	197	94	103	7.5	6.8	8.2
Midwest	880	576	304	33.4	41.6	24.2
South	1,005	513	491	38.1	37.1	39.2
West	557	201	356	21.1	14.5	28.4
Race and Hispanic origin:						
White	2,434	1,356	1,078	92.3	98.0	86.0
Black	183	20	162	6.9	1.4	12.9
Hispanic origin <u>1</u> /	240	12	228	9.1	.9	18.2
Age:						
Under 18 years	128	5	123	4.9	.4	9.8
18 to 64 years	2,255	1,155	1,100	85.5	83.5	87.7
18 to 24	431	70	361	16.3	5.1	28.8
25 to 34	594	276	317	22.5	19.9	25.3
35 to 44	469	252	217	17.8	18.2	17.3
45 to 54	363	254	109	13.8	18.4	8.7
55 to 64	399	302	97	15.1	21.8	7.7
65 years and over	256	224	31	9.7	16.2	2.5
Median age (years)	38.1	48.3	28.9	X	X	X

X - Not applicable.

1/ Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: (11).

farmworkers and their household members resided in nonfarm areas, while about 70 percent of both farm operators and their household members lived on farms (tables 5 and 6).

Social Characteristics

Age

The occupation population, with a median age of 27.7 years in 1983, is the youngest of the farm-related populations (table 5). This median compares with 33.3 years for the farm income population and 35.6 years for farm residents (tables 3 and 4). The younger age of the farm occupation population primarily reflects the younger age of the farmworker population, which accounts for half of the occupation total. The median ages of the farm operator and farmworker populations are 33.9 years and 22.9 years (table 5). All of these medians, except that for the farmworker population, are higher than the national median of 30.7 years in 1983 (12).

Historic data, available only for the farm resident population, suggest that high rates of outmigration among young farm adults during the 1940's and 1950's significantly altered the age structure of that population. Years ago, the farm population with its high proportion of children and young adults was relatively young. The median age of the farm population was 24.4 years in 1940, about 6 years younger than that for the nonfarm population (16). Today's farm resident population is about 5 years older than the nonfarm population (12).

Age composition differs among many components of the farm resident, occupation, and income populations defined by the various combinations of qualifying criteria (11). Households with farmworkers, whether identified solely on the basis of this criterion or in combination with other criteria, are the youngest in age. Farm resident households, regardless of occupation and income, are generally the oldest; only the 355,000 persons in farm resident-farmworker households had a low median age--23.9 years in 1983. The tendency of older people to stay on farms after retirement contributes to the significantly older age of the households qualifying by farm residence only. The median for this population was 45.4 years in 1983.

People who receive farm self-employment income are usually older than their nonfarm counterparts. Farm income recipients are most often farm operators, who are typically older than other employed persons. The median age of employed farm operators and managers was 48.3 years in March 1983; the median for all employed persons was 12 years less, or 36.0 years (20).

While some of the age difference is a function of self-employment in general, part relates specifically to farming. Only 3 percent of all employed workers were 65 years or over in 1983, compared with 9 percent for all self-employed workers and 16 percent for self-employed workers in agriculture. The older age structure of farmers developed gradually over the past few decades, principally as a result of modernization in agriculture. Technological advances fostered consolidation of smaller farms into larger, more economically efficient units, thus reducing the number of farms and labor requirements.

The high capital investments necessary for modern farming also make entry increasingly difficult for young adults. The nature of farming also permits older farmers to delay full retirement and to farm part-time, further limiting

opportunities for potential young farmers. As fewer young people enter farming, the average age of farmers rises.

Race and Hispanic Origin

Although all of the farm-related populations are predominantly white, the farm occupation population has the highest proportion of blacks and persons of Hispanic origin.⁵ Blacks accounted for 8 percent of the farm occupation population in March 1983, and persons of Hispanic origin, 11 percent (table 5). Blacks accounted for only about 3 percent of the farm residents, and persons of Hispanic origin, 2 percent (table 3). The racial and Hispanic makeup of the farm income population resembles that of farm residents (table 4).

Racial differences between the farm occupation population and farm resident and income populations trace primarily to farmworkers and their household members. The farmworker population was 13 percent black and 18 percent of Hispanic origin (table 5). Relatively few of these minorities now operate farms in the United States. Of all persons reporting farm operator as their major occupation in March 1983, about 1 percent were black and about 1 percent were of Hispanic origin. Thus, the major involvement of these minority groups in agriculture today is as hired farm wage and salary laborers.

Farm occupation only and farm resident only households contain comparatively high proportions of blacks. Blacks accounted for 17 percent and 8 percent of these populations in March 1983. Persons of Hispanic origin have above average representation in farm occupation only (22 percent) and farm resident and occupation (18 percent) households (11).

Households and Families

The 3.6 million households tied to farming by residence, occupation, and income represented about 4 percent of the Nation's 83.9 million households in March 1983 (table 7) (10). Farm-related households averaged 3.1 persons, significantly larger than the national average of 2.73 persons per household. Average household size is comparatively high for all types of farm households, ranging from 3.03 for farm resident households to 3.87 for farmworker households.

Most households are maintained by families; farm households are even more likely than households nationwide to be composed of families (87 percent versus 73 percent). Families account for a relatively high percentage of farm resident, occupation, and income households (table 7).

Married-couple families are the dominant U.S. household type, despite substantial increases during the 1980's in other types of families (especially those maintained by women with no husband present) and nonfamily households (10). Married couples accounted for 79 percent of farm-related households in 1983, compared with 59 percent for all U.S. households (table 7) (10).

⁵Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Table 7--Farm-related households by type, March 1983

Household type	Total farm- related	Farm resident	Farm occupation			Farm income
			Total <u>1/</u>	Farm operator	Farm- worker	
<u>Thousands</u>						
All farm-related households	3,638	1,849	2,155	1,272	1,052	1,952
Family households	3,164	1,617	1,910	1,158	919	1,774
Married-couple family	2,877	1,485	1,736	1,094	792	1,684
Other family	288	131	173	64	127	90
Male householder	102	50	67	38	36	55
Female householder	185	81	106	26	91	35
Nonfamily households	474	232	245	115	133	178
Persons per household	3.10	3.03	3.42	3.13	3.87	3.22
Tenure:						
Owner household	2,857	1,569	1,569	1,111	615	1,717
Renter household	781	280	585	161	438	236
No cash rent	340	192	247	59	188	73
<u>Percent</u>						
All farm-related households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Family households	87.0	87.5	88.6	91.0	87.4	90.9
Married-couple family	79.1	80.3	80.6	86.0	75.3	86.3
Other family	7.9	7.1	8.0	5.0	12.1	4.6
Male householder	2.8	2.7	3.1	3.0	3.4	2.8
Female householder	5.1	4.4	4.9	2.0	8.7	1.8
Nonfamily households	13.0	12.5	11.4	9.0	12.6	9.1
Tenure:						
Owner household	78.5	84.9	72.8	87.3	58.5	88.0
Renter household	21.5	15.1	27.1	12.7	41.6	12.1
No cash rent	9.3	10.4	11.5	4.6	17.9	3.7

1/ The farm occupation total is smaller than the sum of the farm operator and farmworker categories, which are not mutually exclusive.

Source: (11).

Although differences exist among farm resident, occupation, and income households, all have above-average percentages of married couples. Farmworker households are more likely than other farm-related households to be composed of other types of families, mainly those maintained by women with no husband present.

Tenure of Housing Unit

Nearly 80 percent of all farm-related householders owned their living quarters in March 1983 (table 7). This compares with 65 percent of all U.S. householders (10). Higher than average ownership rates characterize all types of farm-related householders, except those in the farmworker category. Only about three-fifths of the householders of farmworker units owned their living quarters. Not only were these householders more likely than other farm-related householders to be renters, they were also more likely than others to occupy the premises without payment of cash rent. Although such a rental agreement is less common than in the past, about 18 percent of the householders of farmworker units surveyed in 1983 still had rent-free housing (9).

Economic Characteristics

Agricultural Versus Nonagricultural Employment

Farm resident workers no longer account for the larger share of total agricultural employment. Only 44 percent of the 3.0 million persons employed in agriculture in March 1983 lived on farms (12). Sixty-three percent of the agricultural work force lived on a farm as recently as 1970 (18). Agricultural workers in the farm occupation population and, to a lesser extent, the farm income population, account for a significantly larger share of the total. The occupation labor force employed in agriculture represented about 81 percent of total agricultural employment in March 1983; the comparable proportion of the farm income labor force was about 52 percent (12).

By definition, each household in the farm occupation population has at least one member with a farming occupation. About 62 percent of the farm occupation labor force worked solely or primarily in agriculture in March 1983; only 29 percent worked at nonfarm jobs (table 8 and fig. 3). The farm resident and farm income labor forces, on the other hand, are nearly equally divided between agricultural and nonagricultural jobs.

Overall, about half of the farm income labor force worked primarily in agriculture, but this heavy involvement in farmwork applies only to those living on farms. Only one-third of those with nonfarm residences worked primarily in agriculture (11). Employed persons living off farms in farm income households were more likely than those living on farms to work in manufacturing, trade, and personal services.

Unemployment

The rate of unemployment (the proportion of the labor force currently without a job and looking for work) is traditionally low among farm people, compared with the remainder of the population (18). Only 3 percent of the labor force living on farms in March 1983 was unemployed; the comparable rate for the nonfarm population was about 10 percent (table 8) (12).

The frequency of agricultural workers holding two or more jobs contributes to the lower farm unemployment rate. Agriculture plays a much larger role in multiple jobholding than in the general labor market. Nearly one-fifth of all persons with more than one job in 1980 had at least one job in agriculture. More than three-fifths of this group combined a primary nonagricultural wage and salary job with self-employment in agriculture. Therefore, when a farm operator loses a nonfarm job, that person is still counted as employed on the basis of the farmwork (4, 18).

The farm income population and the farm operator portion of the farm occupation population also have comparatively low unemployment. The farmworker labor force, however, has relatively high unemployment; its unemployment rate neared 15 percent in March 1983. Hired farmwork is often seasonal and subject to frequent periods of unemployment.

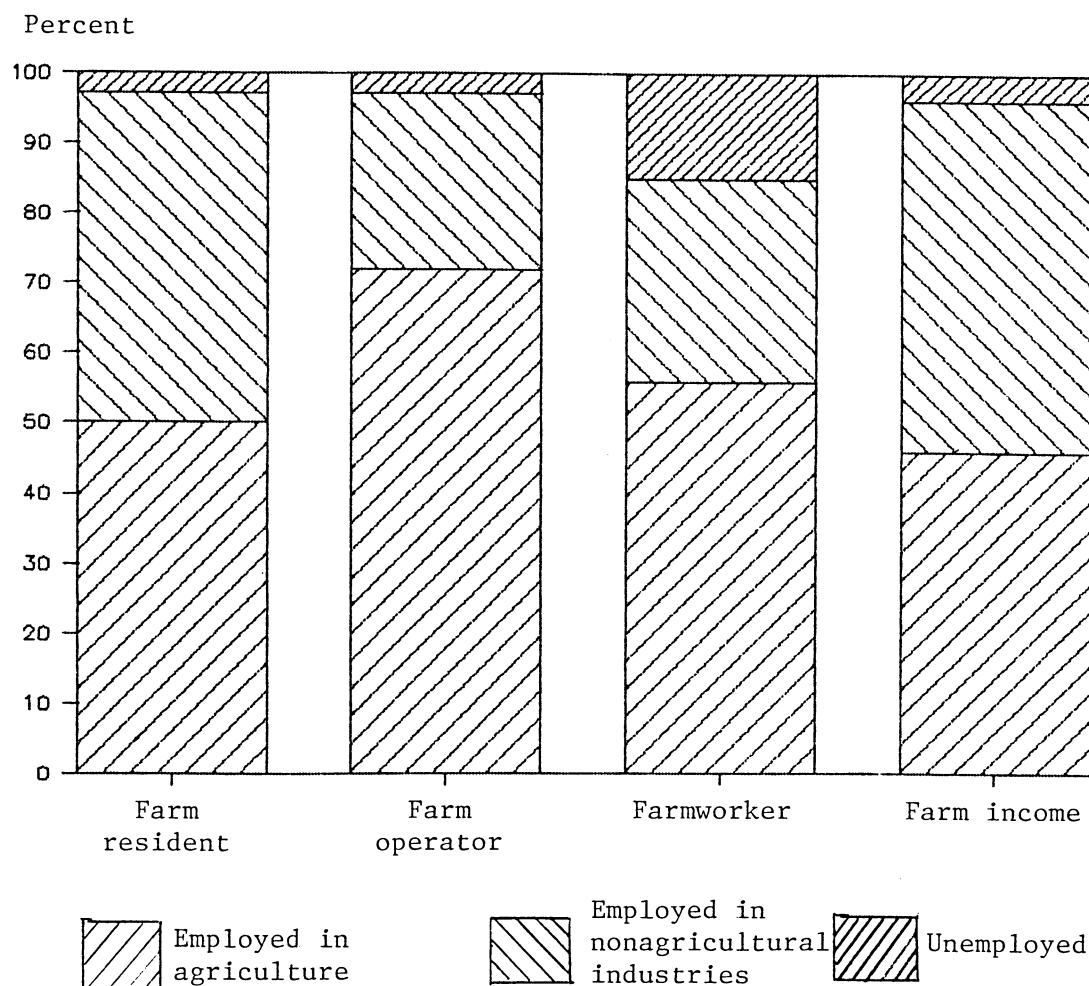
Table 8--Farm-related populations by labor force and employment status, March 1983

Employment status	Total farm- related	Farm resident	Farm occupation			Farm income
			Total <u>1/</u>	Farm operator	Farm- worker	
<u>Thousands</u>						
Persons in the labor force, 14 years old and over	5,733	2,718	3,990	2,233	2,211	3,369
Employed	5,252	2,631	3,620	2,173	1,889	3,251
Agriculture	2,484	1,348	2,460	1,613	1,251	1,565
Nonagricultural industries	2,768	1,283	1,159	560	638	1,685
Unemployed	481	87	370	60	322	119
<u>Percent</u>						
Persons in the labor force, 14 years old and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed	91.6	96.8	90.7	97.3	85.4	96.5
Agriculture	43.3	49.6	61.7	72.2	56.6	46.5
Nonagricultural industries	48.3	47.2	29.0	25.1	28.9	50.0
Unemployed	8.4	3.2	9.3	2.7	14.6	3.5

1/ The farm occupation total is smaller than the sum of the farm operator and farmworker categories, which are not mutually exclusive.

Source: (11).

Figure 3--Employment status of the farm-related workforce, March 1983



Source: (11).

Income and Poverty

Farm-related households and families received less money income in 1982 than those nationwide. Median income for farm-related households was \$18,500 in 1982, roughly 10 percent lower than the \$20,200 median for all U.S. households (table 9) (14). Median income for farm-related families was \$19,600, about 16 percent below the \$23,400 median for families nationwide (table 10).

All types of farm families had relatively low income in 1982. Household comparisons reveal that income levels were also comparatively low in farm resident and occupation (farm operator and farmworker) households, but median income for households in which some member received farm self-employment income about equaled the national median income level. However, the way in which income varies by type of farm family is consistent with the pattern for households, with the highest median income reported for farm income families and households and the lowest for farmworker units.

Table. 9--Income of farm-related households, 1982

(Households as of March 1983)						
Income	Total farm- related	Farm resident	Farm occupation			Farm income
			Total 1/	Farm operator	Farm- worker	
<u>Thousands</u>						
All farm-related households	3,638	1,849	2,155	1,272	1,052	1,952
Household income:						
Income loss	121	87	99	94	17	107
\$1 to \$2,499	104	61	84	61	36	64
\$2,500 to \$4,999	170	115	98	52	55	59
\$5,000 to \$7,499	272	133	193	84	120	100
\$7,500 to \$9,999	281	140	185	96	108	115
\$10,000 to \$14,999	531	269	367	194	193	241
\$15,000 to \$19,999	486	248	313	175	158	266
\$20,000 to \$24,999	458	236	261	156	129	254
\$25,000 to \$29,999	310	153	156	88	74	178
\$30,000 to \$39,999	452	227	189	131	75	285
\$40,000 to \$49,999	211	84	99	58	47	105
\$50,000 and over	244	97	113	84	40	178
<u>Dollars</u>						
Median income	18,500	17,200	15,900	16,800	14,900	20,400
<u>Percent</u>						
All farm-related households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Household income:						
Income loss	3.3	4.7	4.6	7.4	1.6	5.5
\$1 to \$2,499	2.9	3.3	3.9	4.8	3.4	3.3
\$2,500 to \$4,999	4.7	6.2	4.5	4.1	5.2	3.0
\$5,000 to \$7,499	7.5	7.2	9.0	6.6	11.4	5.1
\$7,500 to \$9,999	7.7	7.6	8.6	7.5	10.3	5.9
\$10,000 to \$14,999	14.6	14.5	17.0	15.3	18.3	12.3
\$15,000 to \$19,999	13.4	13.4	14.5	13.8	15.0	13.6
\$20,000 to \$24,999	12.6	12.8	12.1	12.3	12.3	13.0
\$25,000 to \$29,999	8.5	8.3	7.2	6.9	7.0	9.1
\$30,000 to \$39,999	12.4	12.3	8.8	10.3	7.1	14.6
\$40,000 to \$49,999	5.8	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.5	5.4
\$50,000 and over	6.7	5.2	5.2	6.6	3.8	9.1

1/ The farm occupation total is smaller than the sum of the farm operator and farmworker categories, which are not mutually exclusive.

Source: (11).

Table 10--Income and poverty level of farm-related families, 1982

(Families as of March 1983)						
Income and poverty	Total farm- related	Farm resident	Farm occupation			Farm income
			Total <u>1/</u>	Farm operator	Farm- worker	
<u>Thousands</u>						
All farm-related families	3,164	1,617	1,910	1,158	919	1,774
Family income:						
Income loss	107	81	86	83	15	96
\$1 to \$2,499	76	40	65	46	33	52
\$2,500 to \$4,999	96	60	72	40	40	45
\$5,000 to \$7,499	192	96	143	69	85	84
\$7,500 to \$9,999	248	127	164	92	92	111
\$10,000 to \$14,999	457	227	335	181	175	218
\$15,000 to \$19,999	440	229	289	164	141	242
\$20,000 to \$24,999	411	217	238	143	117	229
\$25,000 to \$29,999	292	147	151	85	73	165
\$30,000 to \$34,999	223	117	97	64	41	129
\$35,000 to \$39,999	202	106	77	59	28	138
\$40,000 to \$49,999	193	78	89	55	40	100
\$50,000 and over	229	92	104	77	38	167
Below poverty level	578	300	462	261	257	296
<u>Dollars</u>						
Median income	19,600	18,800	16,700	17,300	15,600	20,900
<u>Percent</u>						
All farm-related families	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Family income:						
Income loss	3.4	5.0	4.5	7.2	1.6	5.4
\$1 to \$2,499	2.4	2.5	3.4	4.0	3.6	2.9
\$2,500 to \$4,999	3.0	3.7	3.8	3.5	4.4	2.5
\$5,000 to \$7,499	6.1	5.9	7.5	6.0	9.2	4.7
\$7,500 to \$9,999	7.8	7.9	8.6	7.9	10.0	6.3
\$10,000 to \$14,999	14.4	14.0	17.5	15.6	19.0	12.3
\$15,000 to \$19,999	13.9	14.2	15.1	14.2	15.3	13.6
\$20,000 to \$24,999	13.0	13.4	12.5	12.3	12.7	12.9
\$25,000 to \$29,999	9.2	9.1	7.9	7.3	7.9	9.3
\$30,000 to \$34,999	7.0	7.2	5.1	5.5	4.5	7.3
\$35,000 to \$39,999	6.4	6.6	4.0	5.1	3.0	7.8
\$40,000 to \$49,999	6.1	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.4	5.6
\$50,000 and over	7.2	5.7	5.4	6.6	4.1	9.4
Below poverty level	18.3	18.6	24.2	22.5	28.0	16.7

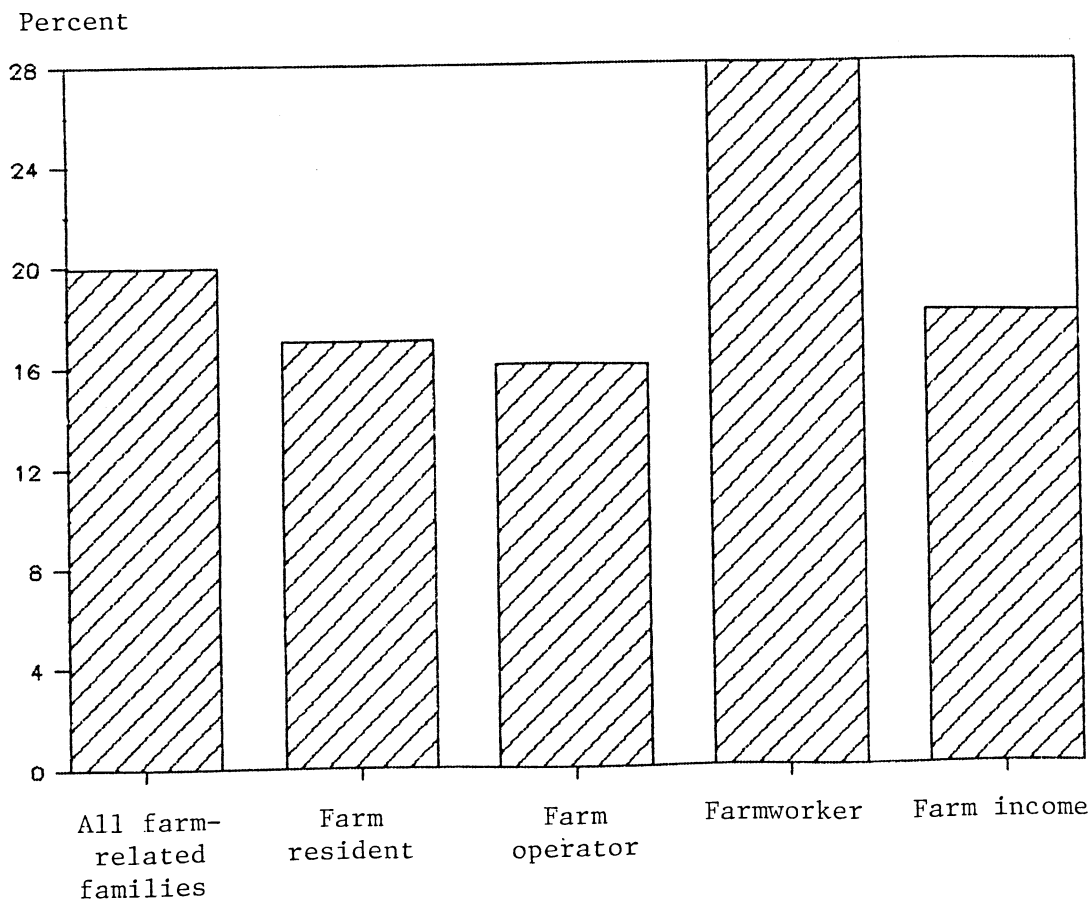
1/ The farm occupation total is smaller than the sum of the farm operator and farmworker categories, which are not mutually exclusive.

Source: (11).

Differences in income level between farmworker and farm income components relate positively with educational attainment. The 1983 CPS data on highest grade of school attended for persons 15 years and over show that farmworkers and members of their households have significantly less formal education than farm income recipients and their household members. About 26 percent of all farmworkers and 23 percent of persons in their households had not attended high school (11). Comparable proportions for farm income recipients and their household members were 14 percent and 12 percent.

Farmworker families had relatively low income despite above average number of earners per family. One-fourth of farmworker families in March 1983 had three or more earners, compared with one-fifth for all farm-related families and somewhat more than one-tenth for all U.S. families (fig. 4). The low-income level of most farmworker families is highly related to their employment in typically low-skilled and low-paying farm laborer occupations. In the March

Figure 4--Farm-related families with three or more earners in March 1983*



*All U.S. families = 13 percent.

Source: (11).

1983 CPS, year-round, full-time workers in farm occupations other than managerial had annual median earnings of about \$8,500 in 1982; the median for all year-round, full-time workers was about \$17,300 (14).

Farm families are also more likely than other U.S. families to live in poverty. The poverty level is based solely on money income and varies by family size and composition. The poverty threshold for a family of four persons was \$9,862 in 1982 (13). About 18 percent of farm families had incomes below this level, compared with 12 percent overall (table 10). Although differences exist among farm resident, occupation, and income families, all had above average poverty rates in 1982. Poverty was most prevalent among farmworker families.

Receipt of noncash benefits should be considered in these comparisons of income and poverty level, but data for farm-related families are available only for money income. Many low-income families, farm and nonfarm, receive noncash benefits such as food stamps, health benefits, and subsidized housing. Some farm-related families benefit from rent-free housing and goods produced and consumed on the farm.

Sources of Income

Farm-related families, like most U.S. families, typically receive income from more than one source, so that their dependence on farming varies. Because wage and salary income received by farm-related families is not broken down by farm/nonfarm sources, we cannot derive an overall estimate of dependence on farming, only dependence on farm self-employment income. Only 9 percent of farm families receiving farm self-employment income in 1982 were solely dependent on their income from self-employment in farming (11). Although the degree of dependence varies, 56 percent of all farm-related families reported receipt of farm self-employment income (table 11).

Wage and salary income is the most frequently reported income source for families. About 82 percent of all U.S. families and 77 percent of farm-related families in March 1983 received such income during the previous year (table 11). The next most commonly reported income source is interest; about two-thirds each of farm and all U.S. families received interest income. A comparatively high proportion of farm families received dividends. This difference in rate of income recipiency relates to the higher likelihood of farm-related families to receive rental income (included in the dividends income category).

Among farm families, farmworkers deviate most from overall trends in source of income. Farmworker families are more likely than other farm-related families to receive wage and salary income and are less likely to receive farm self-employment income (table 12). By definition, farmworker families, even those included on the basis of a member currently unemployed whose last job was as a farmworker, received some cash wages and salaries (except those families with an unpaid family farmworker only). Only one in every four farmworker families reported any farm self-employment income. Farmworker families are more likely than others to receive payments from unemployment compensation, veterans' payments, and workers' compensation. They are less likely to have property income or receive social security and retirement income.

Table 11--Total U.S. families and farm-related families by source of income, 1982

(Families as of March 1983)		
Source of income	Total U.S. families	Total farm-related families
	<u>Thousands</u>	
All families	61,393	3,164
Families receiving:	<u>Percent</u>	
Wage and salary income	81.8	77.3
Self-employment income:		
Nonfarm	12.8	16.4
Farm	2.9	56.1
Property income:		
Interest	64.8	65.1
Dividends <u>1/</u>	23.4	32.0
Other income sources:		
Social security and railroad retirement income	23.3	21.3
Supplemental security income <u>2/</u>	2.4	2.5
Public assistance and welfare <u>3/</u>	5.6	2.1
Unemployment compensation, veterans' payments, and workers' compensation	19.2	16.8
Retirement <u>4/</u>	12.9	8.3
Alimony and child support <u>5/</u>	3.9	10.2

1/ Includes dividends, net income from estates or trusts, net rental income, or royalties.

2/ Includes payments made by Federal, State, and local welfare agencies to low-income persons who are (1) age 65 years old and over, (2) blind, or (3) disabled.

3/ Includes aid to families with dependent children and general assistance.

4/ Includes private pensions and annuities, military retirement, Federal Government employee pensions, and State or local government pensions.

5/ Includes other regular contributions from persons not in the household.

Source: (11).

Table 12--Farm-related families by source of income, 1982

(Families as of March 1983)

Families as of March 1963

Source of income	Farm resident	Farm occupation			Farm income
		Total	Farm operator	Farm- worker	
<u>Thousands</u>					
All farm-related families	1,617	1,910	1,158	919	1,774
Families receiving:			<u>Percent</u>		
Wage and salary income	67.5	76.2	62.4	93.0	71.5
Self-employment income:					
Nonfarm	15.6	12.6	12.2	12.7	18.4
Farm	62.8	57.7	89.1	25.0	100.0
Property income:					
Interest	69.2	60.1	70.6	48.5	73.0
Dividends <u>1/</u>	35.8	26.7	35.5	18.1	36.6
Other sources:					
Social security and railroad retirement income	27.4	17.8	23.2	10.1	19.7
Supplemental security income <u>2/</u>	2.8	1.9	.9	3.0	1.2
Public assistance and welfare <u>3/</u>	.6	3.0	.4	5.7	0.4
Unemployment compensation, veterans' payments, and workers' compensation	12.3	16.1	10.0	22.9	12.7
Retirement <u>4/</u>	9.6	6.8	8.5	4.1	7.9
Alimony and child support <u>5/</u>	9.4	10.2	9.2	12.7	9.4

1/ Includes dividends, net income from estates or trusts, net rental income, or royalties.

2/ Includes payments made by Federal, State, and local welfare agencies to low-income persons who are (1) age 65 years and over, (2) blind, or (3) disabled.

3/ Includes aid to families with dependent children and general assistance.

4/ Includes private pensions and annuities, military retirement, Federal Government employee pensions, and State or local government pensions.

5/ Includes other regular contributions from persons not in the household.

Source: (11).

ASSESSING THE ALTERNATIVES

Each alternative way of identifying farm people possesses unique qualities that determine suitability for specific purposes. Using the traditional farm residence criterion to identify specific farm-related target populations suits many but not all purposes. Producers and sellers of farm equipment and supplies, for example, will miss many potential buyers if they limit their advertising and marketing to farm residents.

An important feature of the farm residence criterion is data availability. Information on people living on farms was collected in censuses and surveys since the 1920's. The residential data are currently collected monthly in the Current Population Survey and, thus, can be averaged annually for stability. Today's farm residents as a whole are not as economically dependent on farming as those of earlier years, but their lives are in some way (sociologically if not economically) still tied to the farm. Many farm residents who work primarily at off-farm jobs continue to farm on a small-scale, part-time basis. The residence criterion, however, does not include farmers and farmworkers who live off their farms.

All households identified by the farm income criterion must by definition be economically tied to farming; at least one household member must be a farmer or farmworker. Because this criterion has no residence requirement, it captures the large population in nonfarm-resident operator households and, especially, hired farmworker households. These data are also available monthly from the CPS. A major shortcoming is that except for the CPS December supplement, which lacks detailed demographic data, employment refers only to a respondent's primary occupation (the activity performed the most hours during the survey week).⁶ Households in which one or even more members have part-time, secondary jobs in farming are missed, unless some member works primarily as a farmer or farmworker.

Households identified by the farm income criterion are also to some degree economically tied to farming; at least one household member must receive income from farm self-employment. This income is net money income (gross receipts minus operating expenses) from operation of a farm by a person on his or her own account, as an owner, renter, or sharecropper. Persons receiving this income are most often farmers, although gross receipts may include income from sources only marginally associated with the farm operation.⁷ This criterion misses households of operators of incorporated farms and farm wage and salary households, unless someone in the unit receives farm self-employment income, but includes others which might casually receive such income.⁸ The data needed to identify farm income households are also available only once a year. Using such data introduces more sampling variation than in the residential and occupational data collected monthly.

The total farm-related population identified by residence or occupation or income, although liberally defining farm people, inherits part of the

⁶The biennial CPS supplementary questionnaire on farmwork, conducted in December, is a partial exception to this shortcoming. But, the CPS for that month lacks the income data necessary to identify households with farm self-employment income.

⁷Some of the other sources include receipts from rental of farm equipment to others and receipts from the sale of such items as wood, sand, and gravel.

⁸The income of operators of incorporated farms is reported as wages and salaries.

inability to identify households with farming as a secondary activity. Such households are included only if located on farms or if reporting some farm self-employment income.

COMBINING CRITERIA

The various criteria can also be combined in different ways to meet specified needs. One such combination, developed to identify persons engaged in a farm operation on their own account, consists of those primarily employed as farm operators or managers and/or those who receive some farm self-employment income. To be identified as a farm operator, the person must either actively participate in farming or make day-to-day decisions about such things as planting, harvesting, and marketing. Persons who receive some farm self-employment income are included whether or not operating a farm is their primary employment. All people living in households identified by these criteria make up the farm operator/income population.

Using the component qualifying populations developed earlier, the population in these operator/income households totaled 6.7 million in March 1983. This population is distributed as follows:

Operator/income population by qualifying criteria

Item	1,000 persons	Percent
Total	6,686	100.0
Persons in:		
Households with person(s) primarily employed as farm operator or manager; no farm income recipient	411	6.1
Households with person(s) receiving some farm self-employment income; no one primarily employed as farm operator or manager	2,705	40.5
Households with person(s) primarily employed as farm operator or manager, <u>and</u> a farm self-employment income recipient	3,570	53.4

The occupation category, farm operators and managers, is overwhelmingly (95 percent in 1983) composed of farm operators (19). As most farm operators are self-employed, more than half of the operator/income population are in households with an operator and income recipient. Only a small proportion live in households with a hired manager or farm operator who did not receive any farm income. The 40 percent of this population in households with farming as a secondary activity reflect the increasing number of farm operators primarily employed off the farm.

This operator/income concept measures the population directly associated with the operation or management of farms, regardless of their farm or nonfarm residence. Characteristics of this population are shown in table 13.

Table 13--Selected characteristics of the farm operator/income population, March 1983

Item	Farm operator/income population	
	<u>Thousands</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total population	6,676	100.0
Male	3,553	53.2
Female	3,123	46.8
Residence:		
Farm	3,709	55.6
Nonfarm	2,967	44.4
Region:		
Northeast	436	6.5
Midwest	2,769	41.5
South	2,437	36.5
West	1,032	15.5
Race and Hispanic origin:		
White	6,482	97.1
Black	130	1.9
Hispanic origin <u>1/</u>	79	1.2
Age:		
Under 18 years	1,920	28.8
18 to 64 years	4,227	63.3
18 to 24	738	11.1
25 to 34	862	12.9
35 to 44	958	14.3
45 to 54	832	12.5
55 to 64	839	12.6
65 years and over	529	7.9
Median age (years)	32.9	X
Employment status:		
Persons in the labor force,		
14 years old and over	3,596	100.0
Employed	3,452	96.0
Agriculture	1,694	47.1
Nonagricultural industries	1,757	48.9
Unemployed	144	4.0

X - Not applicable.

1/ Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: (11).

CONCLUSIONS

The farm resident population numbered 5.6 million in March 1983 and the farm income population, 6.3 million. The farm occupation population, with 7.4 million members, is the largest of the alternative farm-related populations. Slightly more than half of the occupation population lived in farmworker households. Most differences in characteristics between the farm occupation population and the farm resident and income populations relate primarily to farmworkers and their associated population. Most often similarities exist between the farm operator population and farm residents and income people.

Including all farm-related households (residence, occupation, and income) results in a total population of 11.3 million. The characteristics of this population, although a composite of those of the individual alternative populations, are slightly weighted in the direction of the largest component, the occupation population.

The flexibility of the qualifying criteria used in developing these alternatives is exhibited in the concept of the farm operator/income population. This population, which numbered 6.7 million in March 1983, may become commonly used in determining the number and characteristics of persons directly involved in farming their own farm.

While one alternative or another may be better for some purposes, no one definition is so clearly superior to the others that we can conclude that it alone best describes the Nation's farm people.

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APPENDIX--DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Population Coverage

Estimates in this report are based on data tabulated from the March 1983 Current Population Survey (CPS) of the Bureau of the Census. They relate to the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States and members of the Armed Forces living off-post or with their families on post.

Geographic Regions

Northeast. Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Midwest. Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

South. Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia,

West. Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Race

The population is divided into three groups on the basis of race: white, black, and other. The last category includes Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and any other race except white and black. Data for other races is not shown in this report.

Hispanic Origin

Persons of Hispanic origin are those who indicate that their origin is Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or some other Hispanic origin. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Labor Force and Employment Status

Definitions of labor force and employment status in this report relate to the population 14 years old and over.

Labor force. The labor force comprises all persons classified as employed or unemployed during the survey week.

Employed. Employed persons include all civilians who, during the specified week (1) did any work as paid employees or their own business or profession, or on their own farm or who worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers on a farm or in a business operated by a member of the family, or (2) were not working but who had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent because of illness, bad weather, vacation, or labor-management dispute, or because they were taking time off for personal reasons, whether or not they were paid by their employers for time off, and whether or not they were seeking other jobs. Excluded from the employed group are persons whose only activity consisted of work around the house (such as own home housework, painting or repairing own home, and so on) or volunteer work for religious, charitable, and similar organizations.

Unemployed. Unemployed persons are those civilians who, during the survey week, had no employment but were available for work and (1) had engaged in any specific job-seeking activity within the past 4 weeks, such as registering at a public or private employment office, meeting with prospective employers, checking with friends or relative, placing or answering advertisements, writing letters of application, or being on a union or professional register; (2) were waiting to be called back to a job from which they have been laid off; or (3) were waiting to report to a new wage or salary job within 30 days.

Occupation

Data on occupation refer to the job held during the survey week. Persons with more than one job during the survey week were classified as employed in the occupation in which they worked the greatest number of hours during the week. The occupation groups are based on the classification system used in the 1980 Census of Population.

Industry

Data on industry refer to the job held during the survey week. Persons with more than one job during the survey week were classified as employed in the occupation in which they worked the greatest number of hours during the week. The occupation groups are based on the classification system used in the 1980 Census of Population.

Agriculture. The industry category "agriculture" includes more than the total of the two major occupation groups, "farm operators and managers" and "farm laborers." It also includes (1) persons employed on farms in occupations such as truck driver, mechanic, and bookkeeper, and (2) persons engaged in certain activities other than strictly farm operation such as cotton ginning, contract farm services, veterinary and breeding services, hatcheries, experimental stations, greenhouses, landscape gardening, tree service, trapping, hunting preserves, and kennels.

Nonagricultural industries. This category includes all industries not specifically classified under agriculture.

Household

Family. A family household is a group of two persons or more (one of whom is the householder) residing together and related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

Nonfamily. A nonfamily household consists of a householder who lives alone, or with one or more nonrelatives, and may also contain subgroups of persons who are related to each other but not to the householder.

Income

Income data are limited to money income received before payments of Federal, State, local, or Social Security (FICA) taxes and before any other types of deductions such as union dues or Medicare premiums. Money income is the sum of amounts received from earnings; social security and public assistance payments; dividends, interest, and rent; unemployment and workers' compensations; government and private employee pensions; and other periodic income. (Certain money receipts such as capital gains are not included.)

Household. Household income includes the income of all related persons plus the income of any unrelated persons in the household.

Family. The total income of a family is the sum of the amounts received by all income recipients in the family.

Median

The median is the value which divides a distribution into two equal parts, one-half of the cases falling below this value and one-half of the cases exceeding this value.

Rounding

Individual figures in this report are rounded to the nearest thousand and have not been adjusted to group totals, which are independently rounded. Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent; therefore, the percentages in a distribution do not always add to exactly 100.0 percent. The totals, however, are always shown as 100.0.

Source and Reliability of Estimates

Estimates in this report are based on data obtained from the March 1983 CPS conducted by the Bureau of the Census. The monthly CPS deals mainly with labor force data for the civilian noninstitutional population. Questions relating to labor force participation are asked about each member 14 years old and over in every sample household. Supplementary questions are also asked every March about household and family characteristics, and about money income and work experience for the previous year. For a more detailed description of the CPS, its sample size, and the estimating procedure, see (10, 13, and 14).

Since the CPS estimates in this report are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat from the figures obtained if a complete census had been taken using the same schedules, instructions, and enumerators. There are two types of errors possible in an estimate based on a sample--sampling and nonsampling. Standard errors that primarily indicate the magnitude of the sampling errors for data presented in this report are published in (18). Standard errors also partially measure the effect of some nonsampling errors in response and enumeration, but do not measure any systematic biases in the data. The full extent of nonsampling error is unknown. Particular care should, thus, be exercised in the interpretation of figures based on a relatively small number of cases or on small differences between estimates.

All major statements of comparison made in the text of this report are statistically significant at the 90-percent confidence level. This means that the chances are at least 9 in 10 that a difference identified in the text indicates a difference in the populations that is greater than chance variation arising from the use of samples.