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Western Farm Labor Issues

by

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*Labor and wages,
Agricultural*

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WESTERN FARM LABOR ISSUES

Philip L. Martin*

This paper examines three farm labor issues: How mechanization affects the demand for farm labor; the probable effects of immigration reform on the supply of farm workers; and the effects of 10 years of collective bargaining on the farm labor market. The evidence suggests that mechanization, immigration reform, and collective bargaining have had or will have fewer effects on the farm labor market than is often assumed. However, the farm labor market is vulnerable to future shocks if it remains isolated from nonfarm labor markets.

Agriculture is considered the largest single industry in the United States and in each of the western states. Farm labor is not an issue in most of United States agriculture because farmers and their families do about two-thirds of the nation's farmwork and hired workers only one-third. However, as with other farm averages, sector-wide statistics are misleading because hired workers do 60 to 80 percent of the farm work in the western states and 100 percent of the harvest work on many commercial fruit and vegetable farms.

The labor-intensive agriculture of the western states differs from midwestern field crop agriculture in its structure, methods of production, and marketing arrangements. Western farms that grow labor-intensive fruits, vegetables, and horticultural specialties (FVH) such as nursery plants and flowers are often large and specialized operations that depend on hired workers to be available to satisfy peak seasonal labor needs. Most such farms

make larger-than-average investments to produce these specialty commodities. Finally, many of the perishable fruits and vegetables are packed under marketing orders that regulate the characteristics of the product and how it is shipped. Most labor-intensive commodities are transported to east coast markets within three to four days at a cost that often equals the farm price.

The fruit, vegetable, and horticultural specialty sector of U.S. agriculture has annual farm sales of \$19 billion. Health-conscious Americans have increased their consumption of fruits and vegetables, and affluent consumers purchase more greenhouse products such as flowers (farm receipts from greenhouse and nursery products now exceed farm receipts from cotton). However, the farm labor market on which FVH agriculture depends remains controversial. This paper examines three current farm labor issues:

- mechanization and the employment of farmworkers;
- immigration reform and farmworker characteristics;
- collective bargaining and the operation of the farm labor market.

The evidence suggests that mechanization, immigration reform, and collective bargaining have had or will have fewer effects on the farm labor market than is often assumed.

Mechanization and the Employment of Farmworkers

The primary labor story in agriculture is that mechanization pushed farmers and farmworkers out of agriculture as industrialization pulled them into nonfarm labor markets, reducing agriculture's share of the American work force from 95 percent to 3 percent in less than 200 years. Western agriculture has also experienced labor-saving mechanization--USDA estimates that the total hours of farm work in the Pacific states fell from 1.1 billion in 1950 to 560 million in 1983 (USDA, 1985). However, most of this decline

occurred in livestock and field crop production (Table 1). The hours required in vegetables increased, and hours in fruits and nuts fell modestly, so that by 1983 almost 85 percent of the Pacific states' crop hours were absorbed in fruits and vegetables. Crop output rose 109 percent, including a rise of 80 percent in fruit and nut output and a 115 percent increase in vegetables.

Within fruit and vegetable agriculture, mechanization has been offset by expansion, so that the employment of farmworkers has been relatively stable for three decades. The major labor-saving changes include:

- the mechanization of the tree nut, processing tomato, and wine grape harvests;
- the substitution of herbicides and precision planting for hand weeding and thinning crews;
- the switch from hand-lifted 30 to 70 pound field boxes to bulk bins and forklifts to move harvested commodities from fields to packing sheds.

The most dramatic labor-savings occurred when harvest machines replaced 80 to 90 percent of the handworkers in a single commodity, but herbicides and bulk handling probably displaced more workers because they affected virtually all commodities (Mines and Martin, 1983).

Mechanization displaced workers, but the expansion of fruit and vegetable agriculture in the western states created jobs for farmworkers. Since the mid-1950s, the production of fruits and vegetables in California has doubled. Western states with a more controllable environment replaced the northeastern "garden states" as major sources of labor-intensive commodities. The western states comparative advantage resulted from several factors, including low cost land and cheap water for irrigation, abundant labor supplies through the

bracero program until 1964, research and managerial expertise, and the completion of the interstate highway system in an era of low energy costs.

The expansion of labor-intensive commodity production was dramatic in several commodities, sharply increasing the demand for labor. Grape acreage has tripled since 1950, and only 40 percent of California's 320,000 acres of wine grapes are harvested mechanically. Strawberry acreage first declined and then jumped to almost 14,000 acres in 1985 (each acre or football field of strawberries requires 1,200 to 1,500 hours of harvest labor). Commodities such as avocados, broccoli, and kiwifruit also expanded sharply, creating jobs for farmworkers.

Expansion has offset mechanization during the past three decades, maintaining average employment and the total work force near their 1960 levels despite a 30 percent reduction in work hours. Average farmworker employment in California has been 200,000 to 220,000 since 1960 (Figure 1), that is, snapshot estimates made each month in 1984 indicate that farmworker employment ranged from a low of 140,000 in February to a high of 270,000 in September and averaged 220,000. The total farm work force has remained at 600,000 to 700,000--indicating that each year-long equivalent job slot in California agriculture is filled by three different workers during the year.

Despite this relatively stable employment pattern, there is a public perception that mechanization has been displacing farmworkers. Some of the labor-displacing harvest machinery has been developed at the University of California (UC), a land-grant university charged with increasing production efficiency and promoting the welfare of farmers, farmworkers, and rural communities. Some critics allege that UC mechanization research has as its "basic policy goal" the development of "machines and other related technology

in order to reduce to the greatest extent possible, the use of labor as a means of agricultural production." (CAAP, 1979).

In 1979, attorneys for California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) filed a lawsuit on behalf of 19 farmworkers that charged UC with unlawfully spending public funds on mechanization research that displaced farmworkers. CRLA construed mechanization research broadly, alleging that the development of machinery, crop varieties, chemical herbicides, growth regulators, and labor-saving methods of handling, transporting, and processing commodities represent unlawful expenditures of public funds. CRLA asked a California judge to halt all such publicly-supported research until an external review procedure is established to ensure that UC research projects have satisfied the broad mandates of agricultural research legislation, viz, "to promote the efficient production, marketing, distribution, and utilization of products of the farm . . . and to promote a sound and prosperous agriculture and rural life."

The CLRA mechanization lawsuit included five specific charges. UC mechanization research allegedly:

- displaces farmworkers;
- concentrates production on large farms and thus eliminates small farmers;
- raises prices to consumers;
- lowers the quality-of-life in rural communities;
- unlawfully thwarts the collective bargaining efforts of farmworkers.

A careful review of the evidence for each of these charges indicates that the CRLA argument is based on weak and inconsistent data (Martin and Olmstead, 1985). For example, the mechanical tomato harvester developed by UC in the 1960s reduced the tomato harvest work force from 44,000 in 1963 to about 8,000

in 1983, even though processing tomato production more than doubled. However, over 85 percent of the 1963 work force consisted of Mexican braceros--usually young Mexican men admitted to the United States to do seasonal farm work. Today, there are more American workers employed than in 1963--mostly Mexican-American women and their children--to sort tomatoes on the harvest machines. Thus, it could be argued that the mechanical tomato harvester actually created jobs for American workers.

The evidence adduced in support of the other charges is also flawed. The number of tomato farms decreased 36 percent between 1959 and 1978, but this represents a slower rate of decrease than in the 20 years before mechanization--from 1945 to 1964, the number of tomato farms dropped 63 percent and the average tomato acreage per farm tripled. Similarly, CRLA compared retail price trends in several commodities, failing to note that the pizza and pasta revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s almost doubled per capita consumption of processed tomato products.

The effect of farm size and structure on the quality-of-rural community life is a much studied topic in which the conventional wisdom reinforces Thomas Jefferson's assertion that small family farms are best. CRLA relied on a 1940s comparison of two California towns allegedly similar except that one was surrounded by large farms and another by small farms. This study concluded that the small farm town had less income inequality and more business diversity (Goldschmidt, 1946). Unfortunately, a re-analysis of the two towns indicates that they were not similar in water availability, soil characteristics, or transportation facilities, making it difficult to argue that the two towns could have developed along similar paths (Hayes and Olmstead, 1984).

The fifth CRLA charge--that UC mechanization research thwarts collective bargaining--illustrates the difficulty of establishing cause and effect in the complex linkage between research, innovation, and labor markets. Seven farmworker unions represent about one-sixth of the California farm work force sometime during the year, and union fortunes have ebbed in recent years. However, union problems are due more to the influx of illegal alien farmworkers than to machines--indeed, agricultural mechanization has slowed in the 1970s and 1980s because farmworkers are readily available.

The CRLA lawsuit is pending, but 1985 rulings have removed the five empirical charges above from the trial itself. However, technology could reduce the demand for farmworkers during the next two decades (Brown, 1985):

- plant biogenetics could quickly develop uniformly-ripening commodities and dwarf trees to expedite mechanical harvesting;
- portable electronics could permit field sensors to accurately discard unacceptable fruits and vegetables, reducing packing costs;
- automated irrigation systems could eliminate thousands of jobs, since irrigation used about one-sixth of all farmworker hours in California in the mid-1970s.

The diffusion of these labor-saving technologies will depend on their costs and efficiencies and the cost and availability of farmworkers.

Immigration Reform and Farmworker Characteristics

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) apprehends two illegal aliens/undocumented workers each minute of every day, over one million annually. As with other data on illegal activities, apprehension data must be interpreted with caution. An INS apprehension is recorded each time an

individual is caught, so that repeat offenders inflate apprehensions, but on the other hand many individuals are never caught. Although the stock and flow of illegal aliens cannot be known with certainty, the consensus is that 4 to 6 million illegal aliens are working in the United States (SCIRP, 1981).

Congress has grappled with immigration reform since 1970. Four Presidential commissions and task forces later, immigration remains, in the words of Presidents Carter and Reagan, "out of control," but there is an emerging consensus on how to reassert control over foreigners who wish to live and work in the United States. The three prongs of immigration reform proposals include:

- sanctions or fines on employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens;
- amnesty or legal status for at least some of the illegal aliens who have settled in the United States;
- an expanded temporary worker program for agriculture.

Immigration reform legislation has been stalled by divided interest groups for whom the status quo is preferred to compromise, but it appears that reform legislation will be enacted in the 1980s.

Western agriculture plays a major role in the immigration reform debate because its representatives have been most strident in their demand for a "flexible" guestworker program. Western agriculture asserts that (Congressional Record, 1984):

- the demand for farmworkers is unpredictable, but the commodities are perishable, so that workers must be available when needed;

- farmers should be able to provide the names of their best illegal workers to U.S. consulates abroad, and these workers should have first priority to obtain work visas;
- legal guestworkers in the United States should be guaranteed prevailing wages, but growers without housing could pay a reasonable housing allowance in lieu of providing housing.

Western agriculture's demand for such a flexible guestworker program distinguishes it from farm employers in other states who are satisfied with revisions in the existing H-2 contract worker program. The H-2 program, enacted in 1952, requires advance notice of labor needs, certification that American workers are not available to fill the jobs being offered to aliens, and the provision of housing.

It is hard to evaluate Western agriculture's fear that immigration reform will spell disaster because no one knows how many illegal aliens work in agriculture. Federal farmworker statistics indicate misplaced fears: the 1981 survey of farmworker characteristics reported that fewer than half of the California-Arizona farmworkers were Hispanic (Pollack, 1983). Even if all Hispanic farmworkers were illegal aliens, and if the employer sanctions were 100 percent effective, half of the hired farm work force would remain available.

Federal farmworker statistics suggest that Western agriculture is squandering the several million dollars spent to lobby for a flexible guestworker program. However, state and local surveys contradict the federal survey and find that most farmworkers are immigrants. A 1983 California survey found that 80 percent of the farmworkers interviewed were immigrants--persons born abroad who usually entered the United States as young adults (Martin, et al., 1985). Since immigrants can enter the United States

legally and illegally, the critical question is how many immigrant farmworkers are illegally in the United States.

Most of the farmworkers interviewed in the 1983 survey were legal immigrants--over two-thirds of the immigrant farmworkers had INS greencards that permit them to live and work in the United States and, after five years, to apply for United States citizenship (Table 2). Although some of these greencards were undoubtedly forged documents, most of the greencard workers had settled in the United States with their families, and most such families included U.S. citizen children (all persons born in the United States are entitled to U.S. citizenship).

The California survey suggests that most farmworkers are part of settled families and could provide employers with the documentation anticipated in immigration reform legislation. The survey also yielded insights into farmworker characteristics and earnings:

- unlike the nonfarm work force, most farmworkers are single or part of large families--one-third were single and one-third lived in families of five or more;
- ~~follow-the-crop~~ migrancy has declined as transportation costs rise and temporary rural housing disappears. More farmworkers migrate back-and-forth across the border each year than ~~follow-the-crops~~ across county lines in California;
- hourly wages average \$4.66, with the coastal valleys offering the highest wages. Piecerate earnings were the equivalent of \$5.97 hourly, and the overall average of both hourly and piecerate workers was \$5.15.
- most farmworkers are at least partially integrated into the social service system--two-thirds draw unemployment insurance benefits.

This survey suggests that the major cause of low annual earnings is long spells of unemployment.

How would the flexible guestworker program requested by Western agriculture alter these characteristics? The flexible program would likely:

- reduce the total number of hired workers by up to 50 percent--
in California, this implies a reduction from 600,000 to 300,000 as large growers and employer associations turn to young Mexican men instead of older men, women, and teenagers who do not work as fast;¹
- reduce the variance in wages as employment is centralized on large farms, packinghouses, and employer associations;
- reduce the costs of fringe benefits, since guestworkers presumably have less interest in off-the-job health insurance, pensions, and vacations and would not be eligible for Social Security or unemployment insurance benefits.

The flexible guestworker program requested by Western agriculture would likely yield a more homogeneous work force of young immigrant men.

Such a flexible and homogeneous work force hurts domestic farmworkers and has benefits and costs for farm employers. Many domestic farmworkers will gradually be "weeded out" of piecerate harvesting crews because they do not work fast enough, and domestic farmworkers with nonfarm job options will get out of agriculture. Farm employers will benefit from smaller and more efficient work crews, but at the cost of dependence on workers who can be taken away by government action. As in the past, the ready availability of efficient Mexican fieldworkers dulls employer incentives to mechanize and leaves farmers vulnerable to abrupt changes in government policy. Perhaps the most serious long-run danger to such a dependency on government for labor is

that the locus of effective power in farming shifts from the fields to the Congress and the courts, making the lobbyist as important as the farm manager to agriculture.

Collective Bargaining and the Farm Labor Market

The U.S. farm labor market matches over one million seasonal workers with seasonal jobs each year. For many farmers, an entire year's farm income depends on harvesting a perishable commodity within three to four weeks. Farmworkers, who may find farm jobs only 20 to 30 weeks each year, scramble to maximize their earnings during these short harvests. Perishability and seasonality yield an inherent conflict-of-interest between employers and workers--employers prefer a surplus of workers to minimize crop losses and wages, while workers prefer a shortage of labor to maximize periods of employment on one farm and wages (Fisher, 1952).

This inherent conflict-of-interest between farmers and workers has been distilled into contradictory assertions. Farmers often argue that labor is the only input whose cost they can partially control, and that they cannot afford to pay higher wages because they cannot obtain higher prices to offset higher costs. Farmworker advocates, on the other hand, argue that cash-poor farmers are often rich in assets, and that farmworkers do not share in appreciating land values. For several decades, farmers and farmworkers have clashed over the laws that regulate the operation of the farm labor market in order to influence the relative power of employers and workers.

The farm labor market is regulated directly by two types of labor laws: labor standards laws establish minimum wages, maximum hours, unemployment insurance, and health and safety standards, and labor relations laws establish

the rights and duties of workers, employers, and unions. In the Western states, farmworkers employed on the largest farms are covered by most labor standards laws, although frequently at different levels (e.g., overtime wages in California agriculture are required after 60 hours instead of 40 hours). However, only California has an active statute that establishes labor relations rights and duties.

The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) of 1935 established basic labor relations policy for private sector workers, but farmworkers were excluded because farmers insisted that "their workers" did not want or need unions. Farmworkers remain excluded from the federal NLRA, but six states have enacted statewide agricultural labor relations statutes.

California's Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA) of 1975 is the best-known state statute. The ALRA guarantees farmworkers "the right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organization, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection" (ALRA, 1975). The ALRA granted rights to farmworkers, defined unfair labor practices that employers and unions can commit, and established an Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) to supervise elections and to resolve charges that worker rights were violated.

The ALRA and ALRB have been controversial (Martin, 1985). Farmers charge that the ALRA includes too many remedies for workers and that the ALRB is biased against growers. Farmworker advocates note that relatively few penalties actually have been collected and that the ALRB fails to aggressively investigate worker charges.

The ALRA and ALRB have dominated much of the past decade's farm labor discussion in California, but there are collective bargaining agreements on

only 400 California farms, 1 percent of the state's farm employers (Table 3). The ALRB has conducted over 900 elections, and unions won over 70 percent. However, over one-third of these union election victories have not resulted in collective bargaining agreements.

Seven unions represent California farmworkers, and two Southern California dairy workers' unions account for almost 60 percent of the 408 collective bargaining agreements. The United Farm Workers (UFW) is the largest fieldworker union, with about 115 contracts covering 21,000 farm jobs. Other fieldworker unions include the Teamsters, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Workers, and both the International and Independent Unions of Agricultural Workers.

Cesar Chavez and the UFW are the most visible representatives of California farmworkers, and the UFW has been pushed by labor and product market realities to minimize reliance on traditional union weapons such as the strike and control over the supply of workers entering the industry. Farmworker unions cannot conduct effective strikes because the availability of illegal immigrant workers usually prevents a complete stoppage of harvesting. Since most commodities are overproduced and short-run product demand is inelastic, a partial strike can increase grower prices and total revenues. Instead of hurting growers, the 1979-1980 winter lettuce strike is estimated to have tripled grower prices and doubled revenue (Carter, et al., 1981).

Instead of efforts to halt production with strikes or control the entry of immigrant farmworkers by advocating immigration reforms, the UFW has adopted consumer boycotts and political action as the primary weapons to increase its bargaining power. The consumer boycott strategy targets a particular food retailer by asking consumers not to patronize that store until it agrees to refrain from handling a particular grower's products. Since most

food retailers are low-margin, high-volume operations, the UFW believes that it must persuade only 5 to 10 percent of a store's customers to switch elsewhere in order to have a significant effect on store profits. Many food retailers have changed suppliers when faced with a boycott and the UFW claims considerable success with this targeted boycott strategy.

The UFW has been very active in California politics. The UFW is a major contributor to key legislators, and the union has made its considerable printing facilities available for producing campaign literature. At present, the union and grower groups appear to have reached a stalemate in the legislature and have turned their attention to the administration of the ALRB.

One controversial issue before the ALRB is how to calculate make-whole remedies that farmers are required to pay to farmworkers. Under the ALRA, a farm employer who does not bargain "in good faith" with the union certified to represent farm employees can be required to make the employees whole for any wage or fringe benefit losses they suffered while the employer violated the law. This make-whole remedy requires the ALRB to calculate a hypothetical wage and fringe benefit package--the package that would have been agreed to if there had been good faith bargaining. Initially, the ALRB decided that the UFW bargained for standard contracts, so that any employer who did not bargain in good faith and paid employees less than the standard UFW contract had to pay the difference to workers employed during the bad-faith period. Since this 1978 Adam Diary decision, the ALRB has sought to be more sensitive to differences in wages and fringe benefits by commodity and area, but a formula to prevent litigation has not yet been found.

Farmworker unions have had limited but significant effects on California's farm labor market. Most union activity has been confined to

large coastal fruit and vegetable farms and southern California dairies. In some areas, such as Salinas Valley vegetables, union activity has brought minimum hourly wages to about \$7 hourly and average piece rate earnings to almost \$10. However, most California commodities and areas have not been affected directly by union activity.

The wages of unionized farmworkers increased substantially between 1979 and 1984. Over this 5 year period, the average hourly earnings of all private nonfarm workers rose 35 percent, versus:

- 29 percent for all U.S. farmworkers
- 27 percent for all California fieldworkers²
- 50 percent for unionized mushroom, grape, and nursery workers
- 100 percent for unionized vegetables workers.³

Although the variance in union wages for farmworkers is increasing, the minimum \$7 for general vegetable labor in 1984 is 19 percent less than the \$8.33 average of private nonfarm workers, a smaller differential than the 70 percent of 1978, when union vegetable wages were \$3.35 and average nonfarm wages were \$5.69.

Conclusions

Labor-intensive western agriculture depends on immigrant workers to harvest commodities for average wages of about \$5. A slowdown in mechanization and continued expansion of fruit and vegetable production has stabilized the demand for farmworkers. Most of these workers are immigrants with legal greencard documentation, and most are not represented by unions.

The relative stability of the farm labor market during the past two decades could be shattered by new technologies, immigration reforms, and resurgent unions. If farm labor markets continue to be isolated from nonfarm

labor markets, most farm employers will remain unable to compete with nonfarm employers for workers. An isolated farm labor market dependent on immigrant workers is slow to adjust as nonfarm labor markets evolve, and is thus vulnerable to government policy shifts. The Western farm labor market faces a dilemma: integrate and compete with nonfarm employers for workers or further isolate and be vulnerable to future shocks.

FOOTNOTES

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Suzanne Vaupel and Danny Egan provided research assistance.

¹Examples of even more dramatic labor savings have been documented. A California lemon harvesting cooperative reduced its employment from 8,000 to 1,000 and increased the total number of cartons picked within 3 years by switching from a diverse group of farmworkers to "professional" Mexican farmworkers (Mamer, 1980).

²Wage comparisons are July 1979 versus July 1984 for all farmworkers (U.S.) and fieldworkers (CA) as reported in the USDA publication Farm Labor.

³These union wage changes are from an analysis of over 250 union contracts in the UCD collection.

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Table 1. Hours of Farm Work: U.S. and Pacific Region: 1950-1983

(millions of hours)						
<u>United States</u>						
	Total Hours	Livestock	Crops	Vegetables	Fruits and Nuts	Vegetables and Fruits: Percent of Crop Hours
1950	15,137	5,548	6,922	643	619	18
1960	9,795	3,826	4,590	438	531	21
1970	5,896	2,344	2,788	359	452	29
1980	4,281	1,264	2,443	314	496	33
1983	3,681	1,080	2,126	301	443	35

<u>Pacific Region</u>						
	Total Hours	Livestock	Crops	Vegetables	Fruits and Nuts	Vegetables and Fruits: Percent of Crop Hours
1950	1,093	296	623	124	291	67
1960	871	233	529	126	238	69
1970	649	148	423	129	203	78
1980	603	79	452	145	229	83
1983	559	72	420	147	207	84

<u>Percentage Changes</u>						
<u>United States</u>						
1950-1983	-76	-81	-69	-53	-28	94
<u>Pacific</u>						
1950-1983	-49	-76	-33	18	-29	25

Source: Economic Indicators of the Farm Sector: Production and Efficiency Statistics, 1983, (Washington: USDA, 1985). Tables 32 and 33.

TABLE 2

California farmworker characteristics and earnings							
Characteristic*	Southern California	South Coast	Central Coast	Sacramento Valley	San Joaquin Valley	North Coast	California
All farmworkers (% distribution)	14.3	7.2	14.5	13.6	48.2	2.1	100.0
Mexican families	18.6	7.7	16.7	12.2	42.7	2.2	100.0
Illegal/undocumented	5.9	18.5	11.9	17.8	25.2	51.9	19.5
Farm work (weeks)	24.0	28.7	21.1	20.4	21.1	27.6	21.9
Men	27.4	32.3	23.5	23.9	23.6	32.1	24.8
Migrants (%)	31.8	26.8	45.4	47.0	33.0	46.2	36.7
Follow-the-crop	20.7	3.3	29.1	17.3	16.6	10.3	18.5
Jobs with hourly wages	58.4	47.8	61.3	68.6	6.42	92.6	62.3
Hourly wage (\$)	4.86	5.75	5.24	4.42	3.97	4.91	4.66
Piece-rate wage (\$)	6.69	8.64	7.54	5.71	5.10	—	5.97
Annual earnings† (Family of 4)	8,068	6,090	7,472	6,685	9,223	11,025	8,277
Number	(27)	(16)	(22)	(17)	(77)	(5)	(164)
Unemployment insurance (%)	80.1	71.7	70.4	74.9	59.4	37.0	66.7
Own car/truck (%)	73.9	76.1	80.6	76.6	70.5	63.0	73.5

SOURCE: UC-EDD Farmworker Survey, 1983.

* Sample size varied from 150 to 1,286 households.

† Weeks worked at \$175 weekly to reflect average wages of men, women, and children.

TABLE 3

California Farmworker Unions: 1984

Union	Members ¹	Monthly dues	Initiation fees	Number of elections certified	Commodities	Contracts	Jobs ²	Regions
United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO La Paz Keene, CA 93531	60,000-70,000	2%	\$25	342	Vegetables Horticulture Grapes and tree fruit Citrus Total	22 36 40 17 115	5800 3270 ³ 7850 4100 21,020 ⁴	Statewide
Western Conference of Teamsters ⁵ Local 890 207 Sanborn Road Salinas, CA 93901	11,000	\$12-15	\$100	4	Lettuce and mixed vegetables	3	3700	Salinas
Independent Union of Agricultural Workers Box 5519 Salinas, CA 93905	3500	\$12	\$25	16	Mixed vegetables	11	1200	Salinas Central Valley Imperial Valley
International Union of Agricultural Workers ⁶ 1206 W. Cook Santa Maria, CA 93454	3600	\$15	\$25	32	Lettuce Strawberries Vegetables	28	1400	Southern Coast Southern California
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Workers Local 788 ⁷ 471 Main Street El Centro, CA 92243	1800	\$10-35	\$25 \$50 \$200	16	Lettuce coolers Vegetable and melon packing sheds	16	1200	Imperial Valley Southern California
Christian Labor Association Local 17 14997 Euclid Avenue Chino, CA 91710	700	\$17	\$25	200	Dairy	200	700	Central Valley Southern California
International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 63 1616 W. 9th Street Los Angeles, CA 90015	250	\$19	-	35	Dairy	35	250	Chino Central Valley
Total	80,100-90,100	-	-	645	-	408	29,450	-

1. Members is the total number of farm workers employed on farms with union contracts sometime during the year.

2. Jobs is the average employment on farms with union contracts.

3. Includes nursery, mushroom, and egg employees.

4. This excludes cotton and grain contracts. Another UFW document claims 151 active contracts covering 27,000 jobs and 161 certifications on farms with 29,000 jobs where no agreement has been reached.

5. WCT was certified in a number of additional elections, but withdrew from them after the 1977 WCT/UFW pact.

6. Formed by ex-Teamsters from Local 946 when the Teamsters agreed to refrain from organizing field workers in 1977.

7. Locals 78A and 78B each have about 1800 members, with perhaps half in jobs covered by the NLRB.

Source: The unions.

FIGURE 1

California Farm Employment 1950-1981

