



AgEcon SEARCH
RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search
<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>
aesearch@umn.edu

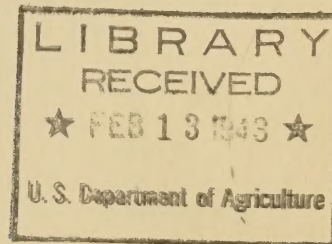
*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

1.941
R3F224

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
U.S. BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

1.941
R3F224

THE FARM LABOR SITUATION ON WISCONSIN DAIRY FARMS



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In selecting the area for field study, in planning the study, and in obtaining information from available sources and from informed persons, the following agencies and offices actively participated with the Bureau of Agricultural Economics: The Federal-State Crop Reporting Service, the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Service, the Wisconsin USDA War Board, the Jefferson County USDA War Board, and the U. S. Employment Service.

CONTENTS

	Page
Summary	ii
I.--The dairy-farm labor force	1
Total labor supply maintained in 1942	3
Farm labor force and military service	4
Activities of the Farm Placement Service in Jefferson County	6
II.--Wage rates on Wisconsin dairy farms	6
Relation of farm wages to prices of farm products and farm income	7
Industrial wage rates compete for farm labor	8
III.--Effect of labor supply on production	9
Price of dairy cows and sale of cows at stockyards	10
Auction sales	11
Trend in production of milk	12
Milk prices	12
Prices of feed, seed, and fertilizer	13
IV.--Potential sources of labor supply	13
Recruitment of dairy workers from cut-over areas of northern Wisconsin	15
Appendix	16

B. E. S. FEB 13 1943

SUMMARY

1. Family labor provided 88 percent of all labor used on Jefferson County farms in 1942. Hired labor made up 12 percent.
2. There was a little less labor hired (.53 months) in 1942 than in 1941 on the average Jefferson County farm. Extra family labor made up the difference.
3. Livestock numbers were increased in Jefferson County in 1942 over 1941 with no increase in labor force.
4. Farm operators worked longer hours, wives spent more time at farm labor, and sons spent more time out of school to help in 1942.
5. Men of military age provided 20.4 percent of the total labor supply on Jefferson County farms in 1942. Labor of farmers' sons of military age made up 10.8 percent and hired men of military age made up 9.6 percent of all farm labor.
6. Drafting of farm workers has not disrupted production in Jefferson County. Less than 100 farm workers have been drafted, while 645 have been deferred.
7. Uncertainty of whether workers of military age will be available for work for longer than 3 months at a time is an important hazard to production planning. It is retarding possible increases in production.
8. Net farm income increased proportionately more in 1942 than the total farm wage bill even though farm wage rates increased more than farm prices. Short-time day labor is difficult to find but is being provided by farmers' sons and operators of small farms. Year-round married hands are being maintained by those with housing facilities.
9. Curtailment in the dairy labor force has not yet been an important factor in curtailing dairy production in Wisconsin. Cow numbers are still highest in history in the State.
10. Production of milk in Wisconsin for the 12 months ending October 1942 was 105 percent of the previous 12 months. Milk production on 30 Jefferson County farms, taken at random from milk plant records, is 3 percent above a similar period last year.
11. Productive dairy cows are not being sent to slaughter. Unproductive cull cows bring good prices as beef but still much below the price paid by an active demand for milk cows.

THE FARM LABOR SITUATION ON WISCONSIN DAIRY FARMS^{1/}

This report is made at the request of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture for information on the dairy situation in Wisconsin. Items of information requested include information on wage rates to dairy workers, labor supply, maintenance of dairy cow numbers and production, and price and marketing problems affecting returns to dairy farmers. All the field work for this study was done from November 17 to November 21, 1942.

Jefferson County, in southeastern Wisconsin, was selected for a study of individual farm situations. Farm labor situations and farm adjustments were discussed with the farm operators and recorded for 102 farms in the county. In addition, three groups of farmers of about 10 each were called together by the County Agricultural Agent to discuss with members of the BAE staff and a representative of the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station the dairy-production problems with special reference to farm labor. These three groups of farms represented (1) those farms with less than 12 cows, (2) those with 12-19 cows, and (3) those with 20 cows or more. The County USDA War Board assisted in the selection of well-informed farmers to attend these meetings.

Jefferson County is considered typical of southern Wisconsin dairy production, representing one-half of the production in the State. Milk is produced for cheese factories, condenseries, creameries, and for whole milk within the County.

I.--The Dairy-Farm Labor Force

The agricultural census shows 28 percent of all Wisconsin farmers hired some labor in September 1940. Eighteen percent hired labor by the month. In Jefferson County, 36 percent of all farms hired some labor and 26 percent hired labor by the month, according to the 1940 census.

On the 102 farms in Jefferson County on which records were taken, 62 percent hired some labor in 1942 and 58 percent hired labor in 1941.

From the standpoint of appraising the effect on dairy farms of further depletion of hired workers or loss of family workers, the following points are significant:

- (1) Eighty-eight percent of all work on farms in Jefferson County was provided by the farmer and his family in 1942. In 1941, 85 percent.

^{1/} Prepared by the North Central Regional Office of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The study was completed November 25, 1942.

- (2) Twelve percent of all work on farms in Jefferson County was hired in 1942. In 1941, 15 percent.
- (3) Sons of military age performed 10.8 percent of all work on farms in Jefferson County in 1942. In 1941, 11 percent.
- (4) Hired labor of military age performed 9.6 percent of all work on farms in Jefferson County.

Hired labor was more important on farms with larger numbers of cows. Farms with less than 12 cows hired only 1.3 percent of their labor, whereas farms milking 20 or more cows hired 27.4 percent. (Appendix table 10)

Relative proportions of hired labor and family labor
on Jefferson County farms in 1942 ^{1/}

Source of labor	: Proportion of total labor used in 1942		
	: 20+ cows : 12-19 cows : 11 or less cows		
	: <u>Percent</u>	: <u>Percent</u>	: <u>Percent</u>
Hired labor	: 27.4	: 10.0	: 1.3
Family labor:	:	:	:
Operator	: 44.5	: 55.0	: 74.8
Wife	: 5.1	: 11.7	: 18.9
Son	: 21.6	: 20.0	: 3.0
Other	: 1.4	: 3.3	: 2.0

^{1/} 102 farms in Jefferson County. (See also Appendix table 10)

The amount of man-labor used per cow varied with the size of the cow herds and the size of the farms. The larger farms kept more cows per man and handled more crops per man than did the smaller farms.

Variation in labor used on farms of varying size^{1/}

Item	20+ cows		12-19 cows		11 or less cows	
	1942	1941	1942	1941	1942	1941
Days of man-labor:						
Per cow	28.5	28.8	34.5	37.5	47.1	44.7
Per acre	3.93	3.81	5.31	5.43	5.28	5.34

^{1/} 102 farms in Jefferson County

These variations which show greater efficiency of man-labor on the larger farms can be partially explained by greater use of labor-saving machinery. On farms with 20 cows or more, 89 percent used milking machines. On the 12- to 19-cow farms, 47 percent used milking machines. On the farms with less than 12 cows, 9 percent used milking machines. Other factors not covered in this survey may be responsible for a part of this difference.

Total Labor Supply Maintained in 1942

Less labor was hired in 1942 than in 1941 on the 102 farms in Jefferson County. Family labor increased to make up the difference. Each group of farms had substantially the same amount of labor both years. From the 102 farm records it is calculated that on the average, each farm hired 0.53 months less labor in 1942 than in 1941.

Source of labor supply on different size farms^{1/}

Item	20+ cows		12-19 cows		11 or less cows	
	1942	1941	1942	1941	1942	1941
Labor used (total mos.):	25.19	24.45	18.90	19.32	15.07	15.24
Hired Labor	6.91	7.35	1.89	2.12	0.20	1.24
Family labor						
Operator	11.20	11.05	10.40	10.36	11.27	11.27
Wife	1.28	0.93	2.20	2.14	2.84	2.02
Sons	5.45	4.89	3.79	3.83	0.45	0.40
Daughters	0.10	0.05	0.09	0.34	0.04	0.04
Other	0.25	0.18	0.53	0.53	0.27	0.27

^{1/} 102 farms in Jefferson County

In recording the changes in the labor situation on the 102 individual farms in Jefferson County, it was pointed out many times that the farm operator was putting in longer working hours and, particularly, that the wife was doing more farm work.

Not only had the wives worked more, but also more months of labor were furnished by farmers' sons. Several cases were found where sons were taken out of high school and college this year to help full time on the farm. These are sacrifices being made to meet existing pressures.

Figures given above on total labor used smooth out the picture of the peak needs which develop on individual farms, such as putting up hay, corn shredding, silo filling, and harvesting canning crops. These peaks must be met by more hours of labor, either by longer hours of the regular workers or by getting more workers. This seasonal demand in the past has been met partly by calling on farmers' sons on nearby farms or operators of small farms who could spare a few days labor from their own farms. This source is still available to some extent. In years past it has been possible to get extra help from villages and towns when needed. In 1942 it was almost impossible to find men from this source. It is expected to become practically nonexistent except for some industrial workers who are willing to help on the farm during their days off.

Farm Labor Force and Military Service

On Jefferson County farms in 1942, 20.4 percent of all labor on farms was provided by farmers' sons and hired men of military age (18-45).^{2/} The proportion provided by each is as follows:

- 9.6 percent of all labor on Jefferson County farms was provided by hired men of military age
- 10.8 percent of all labor on Jefferson County farms was provided by farmers' sons of military age.

The two draft board offices in Jefferson County provided the following information:

Total men called to military service to	
November 20, 1942.....	1,025
Number of farm boys called (estimated)	
Less than.....	100
Farm workers deferred.....	645

On the 102 farms on which records were taken in Jefferson County, the following situation was found with respect to 46 farmers' sons of military age (18-45) who had worked on their fathers' farms in either 1941 or 1942:

^{2/} Farm operators of military age are not included in this figure.

- (1) Number drafted..... 1
- (2) Number enlisted..... 4
- (3) Number deferred..... 12
- (4) Not yet classified or
not yet called..... 29

Uncertainty--A Production Obstacle: The fact that farmers are uncertain about labor from sons or from hired men of military age is an important hazard to production planning.

In Jefferson County 52 of the 102 farms surveyed used some labor in 1942 provided by men of military age, either sons or hired men, or both. None of these farms can plan definitely their production program for 1943 because of the threat of losing a portion of their labor supply on short notice. This fact was emphasized by individual farmers from whom records were taken and in the group meetings.

There is no evidence that actual disruptions caused by drafting farm hands in Jefferson County has decreased production in the county to date. But the uncertainty of losing farm labor to military service probably has retarded expansion on some farms and has been a definite disrupting influence to farmer morale.

During the time of the survey (November 17-21, 1942), a peacanning factory was attempting to get acreage contracted for 1943. Farmers were reluctant to sign contracts because of uncertainty of farm labor. The field agent found it necessary to permit farmers to sign with provisions to break the contract in case labor to carry out intentions should not be available.

An effort will be made soon to contract acreage of hemp in this general area, and particularly in Dodge County just to the north. Undoubtedly the farm labor situation will make it difficult to include hemp as a new crop in the community without decreasing canning crops or dairy production. Only a labor supply that can be relied upon throughout next year's cropping season will permit increased acreage of hemp without curtailing other vital production.

Farmers attending the group meetings recommended a policy of deferment of essential workers on high producing farms for a full crop season or a full year. It is argued that such a policy would result in production expansion on the farms affected because they could plan production with greater certainty. Attention was directed to the fact that on dairy farms the care and feeding of herds to maintain high production calls for a high degree of skill that can be learned only from many years of experience. Not all farm workers attain this high degree of skill. It was emphasized by the farmer groups that Selective Service should recognize these skilled workers in classifying men for military service.

Public announcements of the policy of Selective Service to classify or reclassify essential agricultural workers into Class C had not been made before farmers were interviewed. This new effort to stabilize essential farm workers will answer the objections to temporary deferments and will recognize skilled farm workers.

Activities of the Farm Placement Service in Jefferson County

From January 1 to November 20, 1942, the Farm Placement Service of the U. S. Employment Service in Watertown, Wisconsin, received orders from farmers in Jefferson County for 132 single workers of the regular or year-round type and for 29 married couples. The Placement Service was able to fill 82 of the orders for single men and 13 of the orders for couples--a total of 95 placements. In addition, 48 orders for day hands were filled--a total of 143 placements of farm workers. Lack of adequate housing was the greatest obstacle to placing more married farm workers.

For 1941, records are not available as to the number of orders: The total number of placements--single year-round workers, couples, and day hands--was 137. The manager of the U. S. Employment Service office stated as his recollection that the pressure of orders in 1942 was not significantly greater than in 1941. Whether this was because the need for workers in 1942 was not significantly greater than in 1941 or because of unawareness on the part of Jefferson County farmers that the U. S. Employment Service existed, is a question. According to the manager, no difficulty was experienced by the Employment Service in filling day-labor orders this season. The demand on the Employment Service office for seasonal farm labor in Jefferson County, the manager stated, is a very limited one.

During the interviews on 102 farms in Jefferson County, no farm operator volunteered a reference to the U. S. or State Employment Service in connection with his efforts to obtain farm labor. Apparently the services offered by the U. S. Employment Service require further publicizing and cooperative working relationships with farm groups and agricultural organizations if they are to be effective.

II.--Wage Rates on Wisconsin Dairy Farms

Wisconsin farm wage rates in the past have followed farm prices closely. During the last year farm wage rates have increased somewhat faster than farm prices. On October 1, 1942, Wisconsin farm wages averaged 29 percent higher than a year earlier. The index of farm prices in Wisconsin increased from 155 to 176, or 21 points, during the same period. (Appendix table 1)

On October 1, 1942, monthly farm wage rates for the State averaged \$55 per month and day rates \$2.90 with board, as compared with \$42.50 per month and \$2.25 per day on October 1, 1941. Wages paid, not including board, averaged \$75.75 per month and \$3.75 per day on October 1, 1942, \$58 per month and \$2.90 per day a year earlier.^{3/}

In crop reporting District VIII^{4/} average farm wages increased 30 percent between October 1, 1941, and October 1, 1942. Monthly wages with board, for instance, increased from \$46.39 to \$60.45. (Appendix table 2)

^{3/} Data from Crop Reporting Service, Walter Ebling, State Statistician. Crop reporters' estimates of locality wage rates. (Appendix table 1)

^{4/} Includes the six south central Wisconsin counties--Dane, Dodge, Columbia, Green, Jefferson and Rock.

Crop reporters in Jefferson County indicate that average wage rates per month, without board, during the period October 1941 to October 1942 rose from \$58 to \$81 (\$23 increase); average rates per month with board, from \$43 to \$57 (\$14 increase); average daily rates without board, from \$2.70 to \$3.45 (\$0.75 increase); and average daily rates with board, from \$2.20 to \$2.75 (\$0.55 increase). Wage rates in Jefferson County did not advance as rapidly in 1942 as did wage rates in crop reporting District VIII. During 1942, there was evidence of a wider range in farm wages than in previous years, and a common wage or mode was less definite. This uncertainty as to common wage rates in 1942 is to be expected in periods of rapid change and results, in part, from the fact that those farmers who lost labor or were threatened with loss would offer much higher wages than those who had experienced no labor problem.

Data from current orders for year-round dairy farm workers on file at the U. S. Employment Service office in Watertown, Jefferson County, indicate that monthly rates, without board, varying from \$50 to \$80 (six cases, average \$70), were being currently offered, also monthly rates with board varying from \$30 to \$60 (15 cases, average \$45).

The 102 records taken on farms in Jefferson County include 64 farms on which some labor was hired. Out of the number hiring labor, only 11 hired married men and provided them with a house. Monthly wages for single hired men with room and board furnished average \$55 in 1942 and \$52.50 in 1941. (Appendix tables 3 and 4) Monthly cash wages for married hired men who were provided a house and perquisites averaged \$69.54 for 11 workers in 1942 and \$50.50 for 10 workers in 1941. Perquisites included, in addition to a house, milk, butter, eggs, meat, fuel, electricity, and garden space. No estimates were made by individual farmers on the value of these perquisites. It is likely, however, that the total value of perquisites furnished, including a reasonable rent for the house, would be \$35 a month. Board and room for single men can be valued at \$25 a month.

The wide ranges in rates shown in Appendix tables 3 and 4 are characteristic of farm wage rates. The range in cash wages cannot be explained entirely by differences in workers' ability nor by perquisites in addition to cash. In order to show wages for able-bodied men, the wages for handicapped and youthful, inexperienced workers were tabulated separately. (Appendix table 5) Adult handicapped workers were those not able to do a full man's work due to age, physical handicaps, habitual drunkenness, or those mentally slow or otherwise unreliable.

Relation of Farm Wages to Prices of Farm Products and Farm Income

Wage rates and farm prices both increased rapidly in 1942. Wage rates went up faster in comparison to rates in previous years than did farm prices. (Appendix table 11)

This should not be interpreted to mean that farm wages have outrun farmers' ability to pay. Net farm income and the total wage bill would be better comparisons than wages and prices. This information is not readily available for Wisconsin, but for the United States, the net farm income has increased faster than the total wage bill. In view of increased volume of production in Wisconsin, the same situation likely exists in this State with respect to comparative ability to meet farm wage rate increases.

Indexes of farm income and farm wage bill in the
United States (1935-39 = 100)

Year	Net income from agriculture ^{1/}	Farm wage bill ^{1/}	Farm prices of all farm products ^{2/}	Wage rates ^{3/}
1935-39	100	100	100	100
1940	101	108	92	107
1941	142	128	115	125
1942	203	161	150	158

1/ Farm Income Situation, September 1942.

2/ Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporter, October 1942; 1942 estimated on basis of first nine months of 1942 compared with similar period of 1941.

3/ Agricultural Situation, August 1942; 1942 estimated on basis of increase for July 1942 over July 1941.

Industrial Wage Rates Compete for Farm Labor

Competition with Jefferson County dairy farms for labor comes not only from industrial enterprises within the county, but also from concerns in the Milwaukee and Madison areas and elsewhere. According to the manager of the U. S. Employment Service office in Watertown, the average starting rate in that town for common labor at factory assembly work, feeding machines in woodworking establishments, and structural steel assembling was, in November 1942, \$0.50 to \$0.55 per hour. The working week at Watertown averaged 41 hours. In August 1942, according to the State Industrial Commission, average hourly earnings in Watertown, including skilled and unskilled workers, were \$0.634. At Fort Atkinson, also in Jefferson County, a starting rate of \$0.65 per hour was being offered, with a 50-hour week prevailing. However, the manager of the U. S. Employment Service office stated that at both Watertown and Fort Atkinson, industrial employers had followed a policy of not seeking workers from dairy farms. It was the opinion of the manager, moreover, that at current rates a man with a family would receive a larger real income at dairy-farm employment than at unskilled industrial labor in Jefferson County or in the more distant industrial areas within the State.

In the case of unmarried men, or couples without children, however, the competitive situation differs since, in this case, employment may be more readily sought in more distant industrial

areas. In the Milwaukee district of the U. S. Employment Service, according to the assistant manager of the district office, starting rates for unskilled labor at general factory work run from \$0.60 to \$0.65 per hour. In the case of people with some mechanical knowledge, such as might come from experience with farm tractors or other motorized equipment, starting rates begin at \$0.75 to \$0.85 per hour. Depending on the type of work and the capacity of the individual, an inexperienced worker, beginning at a rate of \$0.60, may be shifted to a rate of \$0.85 within as short a period as two weeks. Working hours per week in the Milwaukee area were stated to be 48 at the time of inquiry. Thus the competitive threat in the case of unmarried dairy workers has been one of some significance.

Military service paying \$50 per month, plus room, board and clothes, offers significant competition for single men of military age.

Only three sons from the 102 farms studied who had worked on the farm in 1941 or 1942 had left to take work in industrial concerns. Two were driving milk trucks this year who had worked full time on the farm last year. No record was taken on the day laborers who worked on these farms and who may have later taken industrial employment.

III.--Effect of Labor Supply on Production

Although the total labor supply on farms in Jefferson County was substantially the same in 1942 as in 1941, more dairy cows and other livestock were kept. This increase put additional demands upon the available labor.

On the 102 farms, the changes in livestock were as follows:

	<u>1942</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>1941</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Change</u> <u>Percent</u>
Cows	2,037	1,949	+ 4.5
Heifers (freshened)	414	340	+21.7
Hogs fed out	1,697	1,341	+26.5
Hens	13,515	12,705	+ 6.4

The larger farms increased livestock numbers more than the small farms.

1/

Change in livestock numbers on different size farms
1941 to 1942

Item	: 20+ cows		: 12-19 cows		: 11 or less cows	
	: 1942	: 1941	: 1942	: 1941	: 1942	: 1941
Cows	: 26.6	25.4	16.4	15.5	9.6	10.2
Heifers (freshened)	: 5.2	4.7	3.6	2.5	1.8	1.8
Hogs	: 31.0	24.0	6.0	4.0	8.0	7.0
Hens	: 109.0	105.0	169.0	161.0	80.0	55.0
Crops in 1942:	:					
Corn (acres)	: 31.0	<u>2/</u>	20.0	<u>2/</u>	14.0	<u>2/</u>
Small grains (acres)	: 36.0		21.0		15.0	
Hay (acres)	: 34.0		21.0		16.0	
Special crops (acres)	: 4.3		1.0		0.8	
Size of farms (acres)	: 192.1	192.1	106.8	106.8	85.7	85.7

1/ 102 farms in Jefferson County

2/ Crop acreages not recorded for 1941

Estimates of Numbers of Milk Cows for Wisconsin: Since January 1, 1937, the number of cows in the State has increased steadily up to January 1, 1942. Taking January 1, 1939 as the base equal to 100, the relative numbers of cows estimated for the State were as follows:5/

1937	-	98.0
1938	-	99.0
1939	-	100.0
1940	-	103.0
1941	-	105.0
1942	-	108.2

Crops have been better than average for the last six years. This has encouraged the raising of heifers and less culling of cows.

Price of Dairy Cows and Sale of Cows at Stockyards

Prices of milk cows in Wisconsin, as reported by the Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporter for October 1942, have increased since 1933. In 1939 the average price per milk cow was \$70.60. In August and September 1942, the price of \$113, or 60 percent above the price in 1939. A number of farmers in the county reported prices of \$150 and over for good cows. Beef cattle prices per 100 pounds increased in approximately the same proportion--from \$5.93 in 1939 to \$9.60 in September 1942. Obviously, good milk cows are not being sold for beef so long as they will sell for more as milk cows. A very strong demand from cow buyers filling orders from many States keeps cows from reaching the stockyards unless they are no longer productive milkers.

5/ Data from Agricultural Statistician's office.

Records of cows sold for slaughter on the 102 farms surveyed in Jefferson County were not abnormally high. Cull cows to the extent of 10 percent of the total number of cows in the herds were sent to the butcher. Only two cases were found where cow numbers were drastically reduced because of labor shortage. One herd of 8 cows was sold after the hired man left. Another herd of 29 was reduced to 22 the day after the hired man left--all seven cows going to the butcher. There was no evidence on the other 100 farms that more than normal numbers of cull cows were going to slaughter.

Receipts of Cattle at Milwaukee Stockyards: The increase in cow numbers as shown by the farm survey in Jefferson County, and by the estimates of the State and U. S. Department of Agriculture, is also consistent with the cattle receipts at the Milwaukee stockyards since 1938. These cattle receipts are indicative of the numbers of cows culled. Again taking 1939 as the base year equal to 100, the relative cattle receipts were as follows:

1938	-	103
1939	-	100
1940	-	93
1941	-	91
1942	-	102.6 (for first 10 months)

Beginning with February 1942, each month of this year has shown more cattle marketed at Milwaukee than for the same month in 1941. In September and October, the receipts of cattle were higher than for the same months of any of the previous 4 years. For 10 months of 1942, the total number of cattle received was 15.5 percent above the number received for the same months of 1941, and 2.6 percent above the number received for the same months of 1939.

Low rates of culling for several years must be followed by higher rates of culling. Apparently the turning point came about February 1942, and may have been increased by the heavy frost early in September. This frost materially lowered the yield of soybeans and lowered the quality of the silage.

Auction Sales

Good farms are not being left idle in Jefferson County. Inquiries have been made in recent days at the County Agent's office and at a financing and loan company office at Fort Atkinson by persons seeking farms to rent. One of the local finance offices, which has financed auctions and other sales for many years in the county, was able to give information on 18 of the 20 sales that were advertised in one of the local papers from July to November. Deaths of owners, illness, age, and changing occupations accounted for 9 of the 18 farm sales. One of these farmers had the sale early in order to get ahead of gas rationing (the peak of sales comes in February since March 1 is the usual beginning date for farm leases). At one auction the new renter bought \$3,000 worth of the cattle, feed, and machinery sold at the auction. In three cases the auctions represented only a sale of surplus cattle that had been accumulated by farmers who were also dealers in cows. In four cases, farmers were

moving to other farms. Three of these were moving to smaller farms and had to dispose of a part of their herds. Two of these had been renting farms and were moving to smaller farms which they had bought. Two tenants had to sell out and move when the farms they had been operating were sold.

A report on farm auctions covering four counties in Wisconsin is being prepared for publication by the Wisconsin College of Agriculture. Preliminary results are in agreement with the above.

Trend in Production of Milk

Total production of milk on 30 farms taken at random from milk plant records in Jefferson County so far this year is almost 3 percent above a similar period last year.^{6/} Production during the first half of the year was heavy but production during July, August, September, and October was slightly below that in 1941. The trend in milk production for Wisconsin was also heavy during the first part of the year and lower the last part of the year, but it did not get below the 1941 level until October. Total production of milk in Wisconsin in 1942 is 5 percent above 1941.

Three samples of 10 farmers each were taken in Jefferson County. The samples of 10 farmers producing Grade A milk and of 10 farmers producing for a creamery showed heavy production early in the year and somewhat lower production in July, August, September, and October.^{7/} The sample of 10 farms producing for a cheese factory showed much less decline in production in the summer and fall months. The production in 1942 was about 3 percent above 1941 for the group.

The prices paid by cheese factories for milk did not fluctuate as widely as that paid for other uses. The feed-milk price ratio for Wisconsin was much more favorable in the summer and fall of 1941 than at any time in 1942. In fact, the ratio was the most unfavorable in April, May, and June of 1942 of any months in the last 2 years.^{8/} This, in all probability, had much more effect on production than scarcity of labor because the number of cows kept on farms in 1942 was larger than in 1941.

Milk Prices

Prices paid for milk reached higher levels in 1941 and 1942 in Jefferson County than at any other time in the last 5 years. By October 1941, the price paid for milk delivered to a local cheese factory was \$2.15. Milk to Grade A receiving stations reached a high of \$2.61 in November 1941. Prices declined from that time until June 1942 when the price for Grade A milk reached \$2.11. From this low point it advanced to \$2.81 in October.

^{6/} See Appendix table 6

^{7/} " " " 7

^{8/} " " " 8

Prices paid by cheese factories were actually lower in 1942 during July, August, September, and October than during the same months a year ago. Grade A milk prices, however, were higher in 1942 than in the same months in 1941.^{9/}

Prices of Feed, Seed, and Fertilizer

Prices for concentrate feeds in Jefferson County were higher in 1942 than in 1941.^{10/} The increase ranged from 2 percent for 38 percent dairy ration to 73 percent for cottonseed meal. Oil meal and brewers' grains increased only 7 and 9 percent, respectively. Bran was not being fed as much as in 1941, it being largely displaced by brewers' grains and oil meal. Old soybean stocks were largely depleted by November 1942 and the new crop was not yet on the market. More feeds of all kinds, except bran and middlings, were being sold in 1942 than in 1941.

Almost all seeds increased 20 percent or more in price from 1941 to 1942. Alfalfa seed increased from \$13.80 per bushel to \$22.50 per bushel; clover seed from \$9.60 to \$12.50; sweet clover from \$4.85 to \$8.40; and hybrid corn from \$4.50 to \$5.50. The price of hybrid seed was expected to be \$6.50 in 1943.

Twine increased from \$3.95 per bale to \$4.66 per bale. Fertilizers which were available increased only slightly according to a local handler. Fertilizer with an analysis of 3-12-12 sold for \$39.80 in 1941 and \$40.30 in 1942. One with an analysis of 0-12-12 was \$34.10 in 1941 and \$34.60 in 1942.

IV.--Potential Sources of Labor Supply

The greatest potential source of labor supply, of course, is from farm families within the community. As has been pointed out, only 12 percent of the total months of farm labor on Jefferson County farms was hired in 1942.

Over half of the men hired by the month were either men whose usual occupation is working on farms or who were former farm operators. Only a few have come directly from cities or villages. Of the day help, about half are boys from neighboring farms or small farmers who can spare a few days from their own farms.

Skepticism was generally expressed concerning the possibility of getting satisfactory help from professional people, high school students, or other residents of villages or cities, unless such persons had had farm experience at some time. A few indicated that they had tried such help and had not been satisfied. They reported that boys, in particular, were mostly interested in driving tractors or handling other machinery, and that the period of work was too short to justify training them for such work. Youthful workers present the same kind of problems to an employer that they do to their own parents. Farmers with a knack for good supervision make good use of high school boys.

^{9/} See Appendix table 8

^{10/} " " " 9

In a number of cases relatives or friends from cities and towns helped out in haying or other busy periods. One farmer commented that he believed there were many retired farmers who might help greatly if they could be prevailed upon to work for a wage. Many of these are already working on farms operated by members of their own families. Several men who were working on farms had regular nonfarm jobs but worked part days, week ends, or odd days at farm work.

A majority of the farm women are doing more farm work than in the past, but the amount they can do is definitely limited by the necessary housework. In one or more instances, farmers are hoping to hire girls from villages or elsewhere to do part of the housework so that the farm women can do more of the farm work. A few cases were also found of farm women hiring out for corn picking or other farm work.

In any case, it appears that, if the supply of labor is reduced from the present level, or if increased production of agricultural products is attempted in the area, farmers will have to arrange somehow to make use of a still greater proportion of workers who, because of youth, age, sex, or physical condition, are not well qualified for the armed services or for industry.

To a considerable extent, hired labor on the farms visited consists of men of 45 or over, boys, and physically handicapped men. Many of those men from 20 to 44 years of age had failed to pass the physical examination for the armed forces. Thus, less than half of the men hired, either by the month or by the day, are to any substantial degree subject to the draft or are likely to be drawn off by industry. This composition of the hired labor force is to some extent the result of adjustments already made to the limited labor supply. It may also be an indication of the sources which must be looked to for maintenance of the necessary labor force in case of further depletion. The age distribution of 80 men, hired in 1942, for whom this information is available, is as follows:

<u>Age group</u>	<u>Month help</u>	<u>Day help</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under 18 years	10	8	18
18-44 years:			
Able-bodied	20	14	34
Handicapped	6	1	7
45-59 years	6	3	9
60 years or over	4	8	12
Totals	56	34	80

Very little experience has been had in this county with farm help from outside the area, such as from northern Wisconsin. There appears to be a feeling--with virtually no evidence to support it--that such help would be inferior in ability or industry. If arrangements could be made for a few good workers from northern Wisconsin to come into the area, a considerable demand for such help might develop as the supply of local labor grows more scarce.

Recruitment of Dairy Workers from Cut-over Areas of Northern Wisconsin

Early in the 1942 season the question was raised whether it might be possible to recruit dairy workers for farms in southern Wisconsin from the cut-over areas of the north. A preliminary survey in seven towns of Oneida, Forest, and Price Counties was undertaken by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the U. S. Employment Service, the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Service, and the Farm Security Administration. In these towns was found a total of 205 employable males, 18 years of age or older, who were likely prospects, because of underemployment in their present status, for employment elsewhere. These males constituted 22 percent of the total number of employable males of that age. Of the 205 underemployed persons, 94, or 46 percent, were farm workers.

The possibility of recruitment in the cut-over areas having been demonstrated, a survey was made of the conditions of demand in Manitowoc County. A number of definite job openings for dairy workers were found to exist, and definite orders for year-round farm couples and single hands were obtained. Subsequently, a few experimental placements of persons from the cut-over regions were made in Manitowoc, Marinette, Eau Claire, and Outagamie Counties.

In October 1942, it became possible for the Farm Security Administration to assist in financing transfers of farm laborers to areas where they were needed. In cooperation with the above-mentioned agencies, a recruitment program was undertaken in Price County, the workers to be placed in Dodge County. At the time of this report a total of 46 farm couples and 29 farm hands had been registered in Price County as fully qualified and available for referral; of these, 24 couples and 14 farm hands had been referred for placement in Dodge County, at rates ranging from \$70 per month upwards in the case of the married men, and from \$50 to \$59 in the case of unmarried farm hands. Recruitment is now to be extended to other counties in the cut-over area and orders are being obtained from other counties in the South. The Farm Security Administration and the U. S. Employment Service are planning to expand this program, in anticipation of the needs in 1943.

APPENDIX

Table 1.--Wisconsin farm prices, purchasing power and
Income (1910-1914 = 100)

	Wis. Farm prices index 1/	Milk price index 1/	Farm wage index 2/	Ratio of prices rec'd. to prices paid 1/	Ratio of prices rec'd. for milk to prices paid 1/	Gross farm income 2/
						\$1,000
1938	103	101	110	82	80	316,160
1939	97	97	104	79	79	300,062
1940	103	109	109	83	88	334,748
1941	134	146	147	102	111	468,359
January	114	123		91	98	
February	111	117		90	94	
March	111	119		90	96	
April	118	123		94	98	
May	122	131		96	103	
June	129	141		101	110	
July	137	147		105	112	
August	144	157		108	118	
September	153	170		112	125	
October	155	176		112	128	
November	156	181		111	129	
December	158	183		111	129	
1942						
January	162	182		112	126	
February	160	173		109	118	
March	157	163		105	109	
April	157	157		104	104	
May	156	153		102	100	
June	157	151		101	97	
July	159	153		103	99	
August	163	160		105	103	
September	165	171		106	110	
October	176	183		113	117	

1/ Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporter, November, 1942.

2/ Crop Reporting Service, Madison, Wisconsin.

Table 2.—Average wage rates for hired labor in Wisconsin, crop reporting district VIII, and Jefferson County, 1938 -- 1942, inclusive

Month and year	By month with board			By month without board			By day with board			By day without board		
	Dis- trict	Jefferson County	Wisconsin	Dis- trict	Jefferson County	Wisconsin	Dis- trict	Jefferson County	Wisconsin	Dis- trict	Jefferson County	Wisconsin
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.
1938 - January	25	27	28	41	45	1.35	1.46	1.50	1.90	1.95	2.15	
April	31	35	33	48	47	1.45	1.63	1.65	2.00	2.17	2.30	
July	32	35	35	48	47	1.60	1.72	1.70	2.10	2.21	2.30	
October	32	36	35	48	48	1.65	1.79	1.70	2.20	2.29	2.10	
1939 - January	23	24	25	39	41	1.30	1.41	1.40	1.85	1.91	2.00	
April	29	33	30	45	42	1.40	1.51	1.50	1.95	1.94	2.00	
July	30	33	32	46	45	1.55	1.64	1.60	2.05	2.10	2.10	
October	30	33	31	45	44	1.55	1.62	1.65	2.05	2.13	2.10	
1940 - January	23	25	28	36	39	1.30	1.35	1.40	1.80	1.83	2.10	
April	29	32	32	47	46	1.40	1.53	1.60	1.90	2.02	2.00	
July	31	35	33	46	46	1.55	1.64	1.70	2.10	2.21	2.15	
October	32	35	32	49	47	1.65	1.78	1.70	2.20	2.32	2.40	
1941 - January	27	29	30	43	47	1.40	1.52	1.50	1.90	2.01	2.00	
April	36	42	40	59	58	1.65	1.87	1.80	2.30	2.55	2.50	
July	42	46	45	61	58	2.10	2.29	2.16	2.75	2.84	2.80	
October	43	46	43	61	58	2.25	2.35	2.20	2.90	2.97	2.70	
1942 - January	40	41	41	60	62	2.05	2.15	2.50	2.65	2.79	2.60	
April	49	57	52	75	71	2.30	2.55	2.80	3.00	3.27	3.10	
July	52	56	53	74	77	2.60	2.83	2.50	3.30	3.59	3.30	
October	55	60	57	80	81	2.90	3.14	2.75	3.75	3.88	3.45	

1/ Crop Reporting District VIII includes six south central Wisconsin counties: Columbia, Dodge, Dane, Jefferson, Green, and Rock. State Crop Reporting Service, Walter Ebling, State Statistician.

Table 3.--Monthly wages paid able-bodied men,
1941 and 1942, Jefferson County

Rates per month	Single men with board and room.		Married men with house and perquisites	
	1942	1941	1942	1941
Dollars	Number	Number	Number	Number
35	--	1	--	1
40	2	--	--	2
45	1	1	--	1
50	6	2	--	2
55	--	1	--	--
60	2	2	6	--
65	1	1	--	1
70	--	--	1	2
75	--	--	2	1
90	--	--	2	--
Average rate	(\$55)	(\$52.50)	(\$69.54)	(\$53.50)

Source: Farm schedules taken November 17-21, 1942.

Table 4.--Daily wages paid able-bodied men,
1941 and 1942, Jefferson County

Rates per day	Single men with board		Single men without board	
	1942	1941	1942	1941
Dollars	Number	Number	Number	Number
1.25	--	1	--	--
1.50	1	3	--	--
2.00	7	7	1	--
2.50	4	5	--	--
2.75	1	--	--	--
3.00	10	1	--	--
3.50	2	--	1	--
4.00	3	--	1	--
4.50	--	--	6	--
5.00	--	--	7	--
Average rate	(\$2.76)	(\$2.07)	(\$3.47)	--

Source: Farm schedules taken November 17-21, 1942.

Table 5.--Wages paid handicapped adult workers and Youth, with board and room furnished, 1942, Jefferson County

Wage rates per month	Handicapped adult workers	Youth
Dollars	Number	Number
10	--	1
18	1	--
20	2	1
22	--	1
25	--	4
30	1	2
35	3	--
40	2	2
45	1	--
50	1	--
55	1	--
Average rate	(\$35.25)	(\$26.54)

Source: Farm schedules taken November 17-21, 1942.

Table 6.--Total production of 30 farms, Jefferson County, and daily milk production per farm, first of month, and milk-feed ratio, Wisconsin, November 1940 - October 1942

Month and year	Jefferson County,		Wisconsin ^{1/}		
	total 30 farms	Daily milk:	Percent:	production:	Percent:
	of	per farm	of	of	Pounds of
	last	first of	last	year	100 pounds
	year	month	year	year	of milk
	Production:	year	month	year	will buy
	Pounds		Pounds		Pounds
1940 - November	: 370,292		217		
December	: 454,920		211		
1941 - January	: 505,412		231		134
February	: 492,412		252		133
March	: 558,525		266		135
April	: 551,230		294		136
May	: 575,860		323		148
June	: 494,389		391		154
July	: 411,037		355		152
August	: 345,234		298		156
September	: 330,735		272		145
October	: 419,343		243		156
Nov. 1940-Oct. 1941:	5,509,389				
November	: 438,701	118	236	109	153
December	: 499,641	110	233	110	147
1942 - January	: 546,208	108	252	109	135
February	: 518,476	105	278	110	126
March	: 583,684	104	294	111	117
April	: 569,029	101	323	110	113
May	: 603,893	105	343	106	111
June	: 499,806	101	396	101	113
July	: 382,990	93	367	103	117
August	: 326,845	95	300	101	125
September	: 325,378	98	272	100	135
October	: 396,059	94	235	97	144
Nov. 1941-Oct. 1942:	5,690,710	103			
	:				
	:				

^{1/} Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporter.

Table 7.--Deliveries of milk from 30 farms, Jefferson County,
producing milk for cheese making, grade A milk
and for butter production,
November 1940 - October 1942

Month and year	10 farms		10 farms		10 farms	
	Producing for cheese: factories	Percent of last year	Producing grade A milk	Percent of last year	Producing for butter: making	Percent of last year
	Pounds		Pounds		Pounds	
1940 - November	97,348		116,527		156,417	
December	140,604		145,886		168,430	
1941 - January	155,537		157,330		192,545	
February	148,230		158,582		185,600	
March	162,954		173,872		221,699	
April	154,306		163,538		233,386	
May	149,322		173,601		252,937	
June	122,021		150,819		221,549	
July	81,457		126,126		203,454	
August	48,515		109,345		187,374	
September	57,099		100,167		173,469	
October	84,441		117,978		216,924	
Nov. 1940-Oct. 1941	1,401,834		1,693,771		2,413,784	
November	110,721	113	127,818	110	200,162	128
December	144,324	103	148,828	101	206,489	123
1942 - January	161,102	104	165,861	105	219,245	114
February	158,402	107	159,413	101	200,661	108
March	170,421	105	178,051	102	235,212	106
April	153,499	100	171,491	105	244,039	105
May	159,335	106	186,297	107	258,261	102
June	124,620	102	154,818	103	220,368	99
July	79,766	98	118,518	94	184,706	91
August	50,871	105	97,403	89	178,571	95
September	58,127	102	89,876	90	177,375	102
October	86,851	103	115,029	98	194,179	90
Nov. 1941-Oct. 1942	1,458,039	104	1,713,403	101	2,519,268	104

Table 8.--Prices paid farmers for milk delivered to cheese factories and grade A receiving stations in Jefferson County, and milk for all uses in Wisconsin.

November 1940 - October 1942

Month and year	Jefferson County		Wisconsin	
	Cheese factory	Grade A	All uses	1/
	: Dollars:	: Percent of:	: Dollars:	: Percent of:
	last year	last year	last year	last year
1940 - November	: 1.45	1.98		
December	: 1.50	1.90		
1941 - January	: 1.37	1.69	1.55	
February	: 1.32	1.69	1.48	
March	: 1.35	1.70	1.50	
April	: 1.46	1.80	1.56	
May	: 1.60	1.85	1.66	
June	: 1.70	1.89	1.78	
July	: 1.88	2.10	1.86	
August	: 2.00	2.15	1.99	
September	: 2.10	2.47	2.15	
October	: 2.15	2.55	2.23	
November	: 2.15	143	2.61	132
December	: 2.15	143	2.56	135
1942 - January	: 2.10	153	2.50	143
February	: 1.97	149	2.38	141
March	: 1.83	135	2.29	135
April	: 1.79	123	2.28	127
May	: 1.78	111	2.15	116
June	: 1.77	94	2.11	112
July	: 1.77	94	2.28	109
August	: 1.85	93	2.46	119
September	: 2.00	95	2.62	106
October	: 2.10	98	2.81	110
			2.32*	104

1/ Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporter, November 1942.

* Preliminary.

Table 9.--Prices of feeds, twine, seeds and fertilizer
in Jefferson County, 1941 and 1942

Item	Unit	1941		1942		1942 as a percent of 1941
		Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	
Bran	Cwt.	1.75	2.00	114		
Standard middlings	Cwt.	1.75	2.10	120		
Brewers' grains	Cwt.	1.75	1.90	109		
Oilmeal	Cwt.	2.25	2.40	107		
Cottonseed meal	Cwt.	1.50	2.60	173		
Soybean meal	Cwt.	2.15	2.40	112		
16 percent dairy ration	Cwt.	1.80	2.00	111		
32 percent dairy ration	Cwt.	2.65	2.85	104		
38 percent dairy ration	Cwt.	2.70	2.75	102		
Twine	Bale	3.95	4.66	118		
Alfalfa seed	Bu.	13.80	22.50	164		
Clover seed	Bu.	9.60	12.50	130		
Timothy seed	Bu.	3.00	4.50	133		
Alsike clover seed	Bu.	11.10	14.50	130		
Sweet clover seed	Bu.	4.85	8.40	173		
Hybrid corn	Bu.	4.50	5.50	122		
Soybeans	Bu.	1.75	2.40	137		
Wheat	Bu.	1.65	1.97	120		
Oats	Bu.	.65	.95	146		
3-12-12	Ton	39.80	40.30	101		
0-12-12	Ton	34.10	34.60	101		

Table 10.--Size of farm and source of labor, 1941 and 1942.
 (Farms grouped by number of milk cows.)
 Jefferson County

	20+ cows		12-19 cows		0-11 cows	
	1942	1941	1942	1941	1942	1941
Farms in county ^{1/}	: 602	<u>2/</u> 1,291	<u>2/</u> 1,107	<u>2/</u>		
Number farms surveyed	: 44	44	47	47	11	11
Size of farm (Average per farm)						
Acres	: 192.1	192.1	106.8	106.8	85.7	85.7
Cows	: 26.6	25.4	16.4	15.5	9.6	10.2
Heifers (Freshened)	: 5.2	4.7	3.6	2.5	1.8	1.8
Hogs	: 31.0	24.0	6.0	4.0	8.0	7.0
Hens	: 109.0	105.0	169.0	161.0	80.0	55.0
Crops in 1942 (Average per farm)						
Corn (acres)	: 31	<u>2/</u>	20	<u>2/</u>	14	<u>2/</u>
Small grains (acres)	: 36	<u>2/</u>	21	<u>2/</u>	15	<u>2/</u>
Hay (acres)	: 34	<u>2/</u>	21	<u>2/</u>	24	<u>2/</u>
Special crops (acres)	: 4.3	<u>2/</u>	1.0	<u>2/</u>	0.8	<u>2/</u>
Labor used (total months per farm) ^{3/}	: 25.19	24.45	18.90	19.32	15.07	15.24
Hired labor	: 6.91	7.35	1.89	2.12	0.20	1.24
Family labor:						
Operator	: 11.20	11.05	10.40	10.36	11.27	11.27
Wife	: 1.28	0.93	2.20	2.14	2.84	2.02
Sons	: 5.45	4.89	3.79	3.83	0.45	0.40
Daughters	: 0.10	0.05	0.09	0.34	0.04	0.04
Other	: 0.25	0.18	0.53	0.53	0.27	0.27
Milking machines used (Percent)	: 89	80	47	47	9	9

^{1/} Data from office of State Agricultural Statistician.

^{2/} Not obtained.

^{3/} Labor of women, children, and handicapped adults is shown here in months equivalent for labor of a man.

Table 11.--Indexes of farm wages and prices of 30 farm products in Wisconsin
(Comparable months, 1935-39 = 100)

Month and year	Farm wage rates ^{1/}	Farm prices ^{2/}	Ratio of wages to prices
1940 - January	110	96	115
April	102	92	111
July	105	93	113
October	106	93	114
1941 - January	122	102	120
April	128	111	115
July	141	129	109
October	142	136	104
1942 - January	188	145	130
April	176	148	119
July	174	150	116
October	183	154	119

^{1/} Wisconsin Farm Income and Prices of Farm Products, 1910-1942, Bulletin 221, Crop Reporting Service, Madison, Wisconsin, p. 130.

^{2/} Wisconsin Farm Price Index (30 items), Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporter, December 1940 and October 1942, Crop Reporting Service, Madison, Wisconsin.

