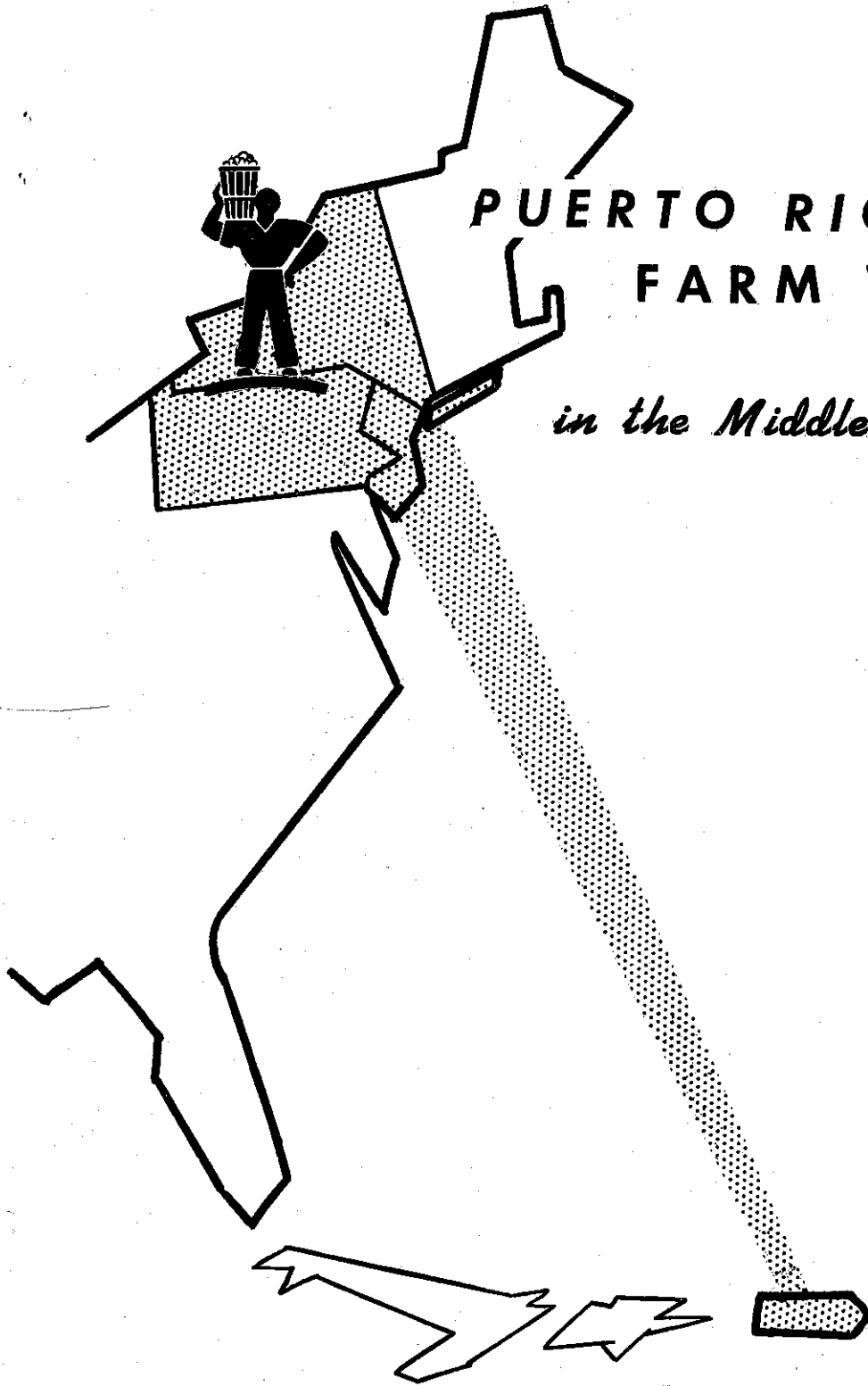


*H. L. Johnston*  
*Mig. State*  
*Puerto Rico*



# PUERTO RICAN FARM WORKERS

*in the Middle Atlantic States*

HIGHLIGHTS OF A STUDY

**U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**Bureau of Employment Security**

Division of Reports and Analysis

Washington 25, D. C.

November 1954

## Major Findings

Newcomers to the seasonal farm labor force on the Eastern Seaboard, Puerto Rican farm workers account for a significant proportion of the seasonal worker supply for farms in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, particularly in August and September.

For the most part, Puerto Rican seasonal hired workers come to the mainland for temporary farm work under the Puerto Rican Department of Labor's Migration Plan. The typical worker is a young man with agricultural skills acquired in Puerto Rico.

Of those on the continent a year or longer, many return to the home island either to visit relatives or to work during the winter lull in seasonal farm activities. Others shift to nonfarm jobs on the mainland to tide them over the winter season or migrate to Florida for seasonal agricultural work.

Farm jobs on which Puerto Ricans are employed in the survey areas are mainly in stoop labor crops: asparagus, beans, and tomatoes. In Pennsylvania, many are also employed in the tree fruit harvest.

Daily earnings showed considerable variation, averaging \$6.15 in New York, \$6.62 in New Jersey, and \$7.31 in Pennsylvania. The average worker had earned \$531 during his stay on the mainland in 1953 from both farm and nonfarm employment.

Employers find Puerto Rican workers as satisfactory as continental farm labor but less experienced. With few exceptions, employers interviewed expect to continue to engage Puerto Rican workers, and the outlook is for the growth of this employment pattern. More than half of the Puerto Rican workers interviewed intend to return again to the mainland for agricultural work; a significant number expect to settle permanently on the continent.

## Preface

In 1953, the Bureau of Employment Security studied the employment patterns of Puerto Rican farm workers in Florida and in the Middle Atlantic States. Highlights of the Florida phase of the study were reported in the release entitled "Employment of Puerto Rican Farm Workers in Florida." The highlights of the Middle Atlantic survey are presented in this report. The survey in Florida and the Middle Atlantic States was designed to describe and evaluate the migration and employment patterns of Puerto Rican workers on the mainland with a view toward identifying problems associated with this type of employment from the standpoint of the worker and the employer. The results of the study are expected to be useful in further developing programs for the use of Puerto Rican labor to relieve shortages of seasonal hired farm workers on the mainland and to help alleviate seasonal unemployment in Puerto Rico.

Under the general direction of the Washington office of the Bureau, the field survey in the Middle Atlantic States was conducted by the regional offices of the Bureau of Employment in New York and Philadelphia in cooperation with the Migration Division of the Puerto Rico Department of Labor and the State Employment Services of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

At the time the study was made from 60 to 70 percent of Puerto Rican farm laborers in the three States were concentrated in the areas in which the survey was made. Conditions in these areas were considered representative of conditions in other areas where Puerto Rican workers were employed in these States.

In New Jersey, the survey was conducted in Gloucester, Cumberland, and Salem Counties in the southwestern part of the State. In these counties, Puerto Ricans comprised almost one-half of the seasonal farm labor force. In Pennsylvania, the survey covered Adams and York Counties, where approximately one-fifth of the labor force was Puerto Rican. The New York survey was made in Southern Erie and Northern Chautauqua Counties. There, Puerto Rican farm laborers constituted two-thirds of the seasonal labor supply.

The sample for the survey consisted of 487 workers and 61 employers. The employee sample was designed with a view to obtaining representation of Puerto Rican farm workers employed under terms of a contract approved by the Puerto Rico Department of Labor, as well as workers who made their own job arrangements. The

61 employers in the sample were considered representative of large-scale and small-scale employers, and of employers using contract and "noncontract" Puerto Rican farm labor. Most of them were members of the farm employers' associations.

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# PUERTO RICAN FARM WORKERS

## *in the Middle Atlantic States*

BY WILLIAM MIRENGOFF \*

FARMERS in States along the Eastern Seaboard are assisted in planting, cultivating, harvesting, and processing their vegetable and fruit crops by local seasonal workers, southern migrants, and Puerto Ricans. In recent years, the contribution of Puerto Rican farm workers has assumed considerable importance. In August 1954, more than 15,500 Puerto Ricans were employed in seasonal farm jobs in the Middle Atlantic States according to reports of the Bureau of Employment Security. About 7,000 worked in New Jersey alone, comprising 36 percent of all seasonal farm workers in that State. Another 3,700 were in Pennsylvania where they were 16 percent of the seasonal farm worker supply, and 3,000 were reported in New York State, 5 percent of the seasonal farm work force there. Others held farm jobs in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia. In all of these States, farm workers from Puerto Rico are an integral part of the seasonal labor force, supplementing the number available from "statewide" sources.

Migration of Puerto Rican farm workers on a large-scale began in 1947 under a Migration Plan sponsored by the Puerto Rico Department of Labor in cooperation with the Federal, State, and local employment service offices. In the following year, some 5,000 workers were placed on mainland farms for seasonal work. By 1953, when this survey was made, the annual number of workers transferred had grown to about 15,000.

Under the Migration Plan, workers are protected by a standard contract approved by the Puerto Rican government. Workers entering under this contract must be paid prevailing rates of pay and must be guaranteed 160 hours of work a month. Employers are obliged to furnish them adequate housing free of charge and to provide workmen's compensation insurance. While the employer frequently advances the cost of transportation, the worker repays him from his earnings. Workers, under this plan, pay for group medical and surgical insurance through payroll deductions.

\* Assisted by other staff members, Reports and Analysis Division, Bureau of Employment Security.

*PR  
continued  
workers  
1947 -  
5000  
1953 -  
15000*

Today, in addition to workers who enter under this plan, there is a growing group who migrate to the mainland on their own, frequently returning to work for former employers. The term "walk-in" is applied to this group and also to Puerto Ricans resident on the continent who obtain jobs in agriculture. The Puerto Ricans studied included both workers who had come under the Puerto Rican Government migration program and "walk-ins." A large proportion of the noncontract workers had been hired through grower associations or by individual members of associations who automatically applied the terms of the government contract to them. Some of the "walk-ins," however, had made other arrangements with their employers.

The migration of Puerto Rican farm workers has been very different in character from that of the urban Puerto Ricans to mainland cities, although it has been motivated by the same economic factors, the greater availability of jobs, and the higher rates of pay on the mainland. But while the urban migrants have looked toward permanent settlement on the continent, the farm workers appear to come and go with the agricultural seasons, most of them returning to their families and to agricultural jobs in Puerto Rico in the winter.

The rate of migration is conditioned, of course, by the economic situation on the mainland. Thus, urban migration declined notably in the first 5 months of 1954 as a result of reduced job opportunities in industry. In agriculture, however, the shortage of "statewide" farm workers continues so that no comparable drop in the farm labor migration is to be expected.

## Characteristics of Workers

The worker sample consisted of 487 Puerto Rican male workers employed on farms in selected areas of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania in September 1953. Four hundred and fifty-seven had come to the continent in 1953, arriving with few exceptions between the beginning of April and the middle of August of that year. One-third of this group had worked before on the continent; for the others it was a new experience. Seventy-five percent of the Puerto Ricans who had worked on the mainland previously had made one or more of their earlier trips under the Migration Plan.

Characteristically, the Puerto Ricans surveyed were male workers; 70 percent of them were between 20 and 34 years of age. A majority were married, but only 3 percent had brought all or part of their families with them to the continent, and even fewer had their families living with them at the time of the survey. In these respects Puerto Rican farm workers differ significantly from the southern migrants who often work alongside them in the field. Southern migrants travel in family groups, with female as well as male workers. All ages are represented from school-age youth to persons 65 and over.

Only 320-  
with families

Southern migrants tend to be specialists in certain crop activities such as bean picking, fruit picking, or tomato harvesting. This may give them an advantage over Puerto Ricans who have less experience in those activities. All but 20 of the Puerto Rican workers, however, had agricultural backgrounds, many having worked in the canebrakes of their native land. Another disadvantage of Puerto Ricans is their lack of facility in the English language, making it difficult for them to discuss problems with their employers and making the job of supervision more complicated for farmers.

## Migration Patterns

One of the significant aspects of the employment of Puerto Rican farm workers on the continent is the fact that the peak agricultural employment seasons in Puerto Rico and the mainland complement each other. January through July is the sugar-cane cutting season in Puerto Rico. At the peak, in June, some 158,000 workers are employed in this activity. The citrus season corresponds in duration but the number of workers employed is smaller. Tobacco picking becomes significant in the October-April period each year, while the coffee-picking season starts in September and ends in March. Beginning about May, the Puerto Rican agricultural economy can release workers without loss of crops. From July through December, unemployment is prevalent among agricultural and food processing workers in Puerto Rico, and it is during that period that opportunities for seasonal farm jobs in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania beckon.

Ninety percent of the 487 Puerto Ricans interviewed during September 1953 had made their most recent entry on the mainland from the island between April and the end of August. More than 60 percent came after June 1. The influx into New Jersey from Puerto Rico assumed sizable proportions in late April and did not reach its height until the end of August. In New York it began in June, with the migration completed by early August, while in Pennsylvania it was even more concentrated, beginning in July and attaining its full strength by the end of August.

There were 91 workers in the surveyed group who reported that they were on the continent in the previous September. The migration pattern of this group is particularly significant. All but 10 of them worked in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in the previous fall. From there 52 made their way back to Puerto Rico, and by January only 39 of those surveyed remained in the States, half of them working in Florida. The "shuttling" of Puerto Rican workers between the Middle Atlantic States and Florida is assuming considerable size, as shown by the earlier phase of this survey made in Florida.

Although Puerto Rican workers had been migrating to the States for seasonal farm work for 6 years, at the time the survey was made the majority of those in the sample were on their first trip to the mainland for work. Five of 8 came for the first time in 1953, 2 of 8 came for the first time in 1951 and 1952, while only 1 worker in 8 made his initial trip to the mainland prior to 1951. For the most part, workers who came in previous years either returned to Puerto Rico and remained there or found employment in nonfarm jobs on the continent. Few of them remained agricultural workers on the East Coast. Those who did so have made one or more trips home to visit relatives or to work.

To determine whether a pattern of annual migration of farm workers between Puerto Rico and the Middle Atlantic States is emerging, the surveyed group of workers were asked about their future migration and employment plans. A high proportion--31 percent--said that they intend to settle on the mainland, while 8 percent intend to return to Puerto Rico at the end of the season and remain there. More than half of the workers said that they intend to return to Puerto Rico and reenter the mainland for farm work.

On this score, there seems to be conflicting evidence. On the one hand, a majority of workers indicated their intention to continue to migrate for seasonal farm employment. On the other hand, experience over the past several years points toward a nonrecurring type of migration. The fact that most Puerto Rican farm workers surveyed were married and living away from their families tips the scale in favor of the conclusion that the majority are using this organized migration as a stepping stone toward eventual settlement on the continent, as an experiment to see whether they would be able to adjust to life on the mainland, or as a means of supplementing their incomes for one or two seasons.

## Employment Patterns

Almost all of the mainland jobs held by the surveyed Puerto Rican workers between September 1952 and September 1953 were in farm work. The number in nonfarm work did not fluctuate much and did not exceed 17 workers at any time. Among nonfarm jobs, work in food processing was the most common occupation, but Puerto Ricans were also employed in factory work, construction, and other occupations.

On the farms, Puerto Rican workers were used primarily in stoop labor crops. Vegetable harvesting accounted for 91 percent of their farm jobs in New York, for 68 percent in New Jersey, and for 66 percent in Pennsylvania. Most of the work was in the asparagus, bean, and tomato crops. The remaining farm jobs were largely in fruit harvesting and in fruit and vegetable cultivation. In



Pennsylvania, Puerto Ricans were used to harvest peaches. Only 31 percent of the workers expressed themselves as liking or disliking particular crop activities.

For purposes of this survey, a "job" was defined as a continuous period of work in one crop activity, or one type of nonfarm work, at a given location. Since workers were usually employed by associations, they were frequently shifted about from one farm to another, but as long as they continued to work at one activity, such as tomato picking, and as long as they worked within the same general area, it was considered one job. On this basis most of the workers had been employed in only one or two jobs during their period on the mainland. Fifty workers reported more than two jobs, however.

There is virtually no indication of unemployment among those on the mainland who were available for work. This is largely due to the fact that the majority worked for associations which scheduled their time of arrival and their employment among a number of growers in such a way as to avoid loss of work time. It is also related to the guaranteed duration of employment in the workers' contracts which makes it advantageous for employers to avoid time loss as far as possible. Among the small group of workers who had come to the continent in a previous year and who remained through the winter, a considerable percentage withdrew from the labor force or took vacations. During January and February, as many as 10 percent of Puerto Rican workers on the mainland reported themselves in this category.

Workers reported some involuntary unemployment in their most recent jobs, but it was generally of short duration. Among the 246 workers employed 12 or fewer weeks in their most recent jobs, only 5 had lost more than 1 week of work. Among the 241 employed 13 or more weeks, 23 were without work for more than a week. Only 4 workers in the latter group lost more than 16 days.

## **Wages and Earnings**

The most frequently reported hourly rate of pay for the Puerto Rican farm workers in September 1953 was 60 cents in New York and 65 cents in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. However, many workers were paid on a piece-work basis. In New York, most workers were employed picking beans at \$.025 per pound. In other parts of New York State, a 70 cents an hour rate was common.

Daily earnings showed considerable variation by State, the average being \$6.15 in New York, \$6.62 in New Jersey, and \$7.31 in Pennsylvania. Many farmers had bonus arrangements with their workers which made their daily earnings exceed their hourly rate multiplied by the number of hours worked.

A factor accounting for the higher daily earnings in Pennsylvania, as compared with New Jersey where the hourly rates were similar, was the longer hours. In New York, many more workers than in the other States reported working 6 or 7 days a week, so that lower daily earnings in New York did not result in lower total earnings there.

The average amount earned by the Puerto Rican farm workers during the survey year was \$531. The average, however, conceals a very wide spread, since it includes earnings of workers with varied periods of employment, ranging from fewer than 4 weeks to 44 or more weeks of employment. On the basis of the number of weeks they had been in the labor force on the mainland, the largest group, those in the 12-15 week category, were found to have average earnings of \$460. The second largest number were in the 4-7 week category with average earnings of \$168. Since the harvest season was not complete at the time the survey was made, it may be presumed that the estimated earnings will average higher than this figure before workers return to Puerto Rico. On the other hand, payroll records of several of the major associations employing Puerto Ricans indicate that worker estimates of their earnings over a season may have been overstated. The earnings of twenty-six workers who had been regularly employed on the mainland during the survey year averaged \$1,488.

## Employer Experience

The areas surveyed in the Middle Atlantic States had been utilizing Puerto Ricans for at least six seasons, and local farmers therefore had an adequate basis for judging their capabilities. To determine their views, 61 of the farmers, employing approximately 1,500 Puerto Rican workers, were interviewed. They included both large-scale and small-scale employers, many of whom employed mainland as well as Puerto Rican farm workers. The proportion of Puerto Ricans employed by these farmers in September 1953 was considerably larger than a year earlier--56 percent of all workers as compared with 44 percent in September 1952.

More employers had recruited their Puerto Rican workers through employers' associations than in any other way. The second largest group of employers had depended upon "walk-ins." Group hiring had been employed more frequently than individual hiring, but a combination of the two had been the most popular method.

The majority of employers found that Puerto Ricans were at least as satisfactory as other domestic farm workers in quality and quantity of work and in amount of absenteeism. On the other hand, mainland domestic workers need less supervision than Puerto Ricans. Employers generally reported that Puerto Ricans worked the same number of hours a day and days a week as the other workers, and a few found non-Puerto Ricans put in more time. Employers appeared to prefer using Puerto Ricans in the strawberry, snap bean, and tomato crops, and continental workers in apples, peaches, and raspberries.

Puerto Ricans, since they do not have their families with them, present fewer housing problems than domestic migratory workers. They were considered better tenants than the other migratory workers by most employers. Half the respondents reported no problems arising from their tenancy. The problem cited most frequently by the others was their failure to keep their housing quarters clean which may be explained by the fact that women are not present in the group. Cabins with cooking facilities were the type of housing supplied by half the employers. Barracks and mess-halls were the next most commonly provided facility.

In evaluating Puerto Rican farm workers, the chief concern of the employers interviewed, was the tendency of Puerto Ricans, similar to that of other farm workers, to quit a job before its completion. A majority of employers reported that quits were more common among them than among non-Puerto Ricans. The most common reason for quitting, according to the employers, was a desire to earn more money. Another group said, "transfer to other jobs" was the reason for quitting. These were probably to better paying jobs, and the number in this category might be added properly to those desiring to earn more. Workers tend to go to jobs which offer better hourly rates, or to piece-rate jobs because of the possibility of their yielding higher earnings.

Other reasons for quitting before the end of a period of work were illness, cold weather, a desire to return to Puerto Rico for personal reasons, and opportunities to get jobs in factories or food processing plants. In New York some growers explained that the Puerto Rican quit rate was higher than that of local workers because the latter were sometimes hired on a daily basis while the former were hired for the season. If a local worker failed to show up for work, he was not considered to have quit the job since he was not under contract to continue.

Fifty-four of the 61 employers interviewed planned to use the same or a larger number of Puerto Ricans the following year. Only 2 employers intended to employ fewer Puerto Ricans, while 4 were undecided.

The largest group of employers who expected to use Puerto Ricans the next year planned to employ them under the standard

work contract agreement. A slightly smaller group expected to use both contract workers and "walk-ins," while only 6 planned to employ "walk-ins" exclusively.

## **Contract and Noncontract Employment**

In selecting the group of workers interviewed, an effort was made to include those working under the standard contract approved by the Puerto Rican Government, and those not working under contract in the same proportion as in the total number of Puerto Rican workers. Over 60 percent of the workers in the surveyed group, including some "walk-ins," were employed under the standard work contract or a variation of it. Of those workers who indicated that they intended to return to Puerto Rico and reenter the mainland, over 60 percent expected to come in under contract. While the majority of workers thus appeared to prefer the security of the work agreement, employers rated noncontract workers as more experienced and better in both quality and quantity of work, in the degree of supervision needed. The qualities which the employers praised in the noncontract workers would seem to derive essentially from their longer experience in mainland agriculture. Contract groups usually have a larger percentage of first entrants than noncontract groups. The influential nature of this difference in experience is borne out by the statement of one of the growers that, in the second year, contract workers are as good as noncontract ones.

Whether or not the migrations will continue to be largely seasonal, or whether increasing numbers will tend to settle on the mainland, will depend on a complex of factors both on the continent and in Puerto Rico. A rapid rate of industrialization in Puerto Rico and rising levels of living there would tend to deter migrants from permanent settlement on the mainland, as would any downward adjustment in the mainland economy. Conversely, if there are ample job opportunities for unskilled workers on the continent and present wage differentials are maintained, considerable numbers of seasonal farm workers are likely to remain. The ties that draw the workers back to the Island are weakened as the Puerto Rican population on the mainland grows and the seasonal migrant finds that he has friends and relatives on the continent as well as in Puerto Rico.

## Appendix

Table 1. Puerto Rican farm workers, interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, by date of last entry, and by previous entries

| Year of last entry | Number of workers | Number with no previous entries | Number with previous entries for work |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Total              | 487               | 323                             | 164                                   |
| 1950               | 3                 | 3                               | -                                     |
| 1951               | 5                 | 4                               | 1                                     |
| 1952               | 22                | 12                              | 10                                    |
| 1953               | 457               | 304                             | 153                                   |

Table 2. Puerto Rican farm workers interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, by occupation in Puerto Rico

| Usual occupation in Puerto Rico | Total | New Jersey | New York | Pennsylvania |
|---------------------------------|-------|------------|----------|--------------|
| Total                           | 487   | 134        | 184      | 169          |
| Farm work                       | 431   | 111        | 171      | 149          |
| Nonfarm work                    | 56    | 23         | 13       | 20           |
| Had done farm work              | 34    | 12         | 8        | 14           |
| Had not done farm work          | 20    | 10         | 5        | 5            |
| No information                  | 2     | 1          | -        | 1            |

Table 3. Puerto Rican farm workers interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania by age, September 1953

| Age          | All States        |         |
|--------------|-------------------|---------|
|              | Number of workers | Percent |
| Total        | 487               | 100.0   |
| 19 and under | 6                 | 1.2     |
| 20 - 24      | 143               | 29.5    |
| 25 - 34      | 193               | 39.6    |
| 35 - 39      | 63                | 12.9    |
| 40 and over  | 80                | 16.4    |
| Not reported | 2                 | .4      |

Table 4. Puerto Rican farm workers interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, by location, by months <sup>1/</sup>, September 1952--September 1953

| Year and Month | Total | All  |      |     |      |              |             |
|----------------|-------|------|------|-----|------|--------------|-------------|
|                |       | N.J. | N.Y. | Pa. | Fla. | Other States | Puerto Rico |
| <u>1952</u>    |       |      |      |     |      |              |             |
| Sept.          | 487   | 36   | 24   | 22  | 5    | 4            | 396         |
| Oct.           | 487   | 31   | 20   | 21  | 7    | 2            | 406         |
| Nov.           | 487   | 9    | 14   | 6   | 14   | 3            | 441         |
| Dec.           | 487   | 5    | 12   | 4   | 17   | 1            | 448         |
| <u>1953</u>    |       |      |      |     |      |              |             |
| Jan.           | 487   | 4    | 11   | 4   | 20   | -            | 448         |
| Feb.           | 487   | 7    | 10   | 4   | 21   | 1            | 444         |
| Mar.           | 487   | 12   | 13   | 5   | 18   | 2            | 437         |
| Apr.           | 487   | 48   | 22   | 7   | 10   | 1            | 399         |
| May            | 487   | 102  | 36   | 10  | 8    | 4            | 327         |
| June           | 487   | 114  | 96   | 44  | 5    | 5            | 223         |
| July           | 487   | 113  | 123  | 109 | 2    | 2            | 138         |
| Aug.           | 487   | 128  | 177  | 149 | 1    | -            | 32          |
| Sept. 2/       | 487   | 134  | 184  | 169 | -    | -            | -           |

<sup>1/</sup> The monthly averages may obscure week-by-week variations, especially when significant changes have occurred during the month.

<sup>2/</sup> First week in September.

Table 5. Puerto Rican farm workers, by year of first arrival and number of returns to mainland for work

| Year of first arrival       | Number of workers | Remained on mainland | Number of additional trips to mainland for work |    |           |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---|----|-----------|
|                             |                   |                      | 1   | 2  | 3 or more |
| Total                       | 487               | 323                  | 97  | 49 | 18        |
| <u>1947 and prior years</u> |                   |                      |   |    |           |
| 1947                        | 7                 | -                    | 5   | -  | 2         |
| 1948                        | 8                 | -                    | 1   | 3  | 4         |
| 1949                        | 17                | -                    | 2   | 6  | 9         |
| 1950                        | 18                | 3                    | 6   | 6  | 3         |
| 1951                        | 51                | 4                    | 17  | 30 | -         |
| 1952                        | 80                | 12                   | 64  | 4  | -         |
| 1953                        | 306               | 304 <sup>1/</sup>    | 2   | -  | -         |

<sup>1/</sup> The survey was made close to the end of the season. Most of these workers expected to return to Puerto Rico within a few weeks.

Table 6. Puerto Rican farm workers, interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, by future employment plans

| Intention   | Number of workers |           |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
|   | workers           | Percent   |
| Total   | 487               | 100       |
| Uncertain about future plans                        | 22                | 5         |
| Settle on mainland                                  | 153               | 31        |
| Return to Puerto Rico and remain there              | 41                | 8         |
| Return to Puerto Rico and reenter mainland for work | 271               | 56        |
| <u>Farm work</u>                                    | <u>248</u>        | <u>51</u> |
| Contract  | 155               | 32        |
| Noncontract   | 80                | 16        |
| Uncertain   | 13                | 3         |
| <u>Nonfarm work</u>                                 | <u>15</u>         | <u>3</u>  |
| Farm and/or nonfarm                                 | 8                 | 2         |

Table 7. Puerto Rican workers, interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, by labor force status and type of work each month, September 1952--September 1953

| Year and month       | All workers | Farm work | Nonfarm work | Not working |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| Number <sup>1/</sup> |             |           |              |             |
| <u>1952</u>          |             |           |              |             |
| September            | 91          | 70        | 13           | 8           |
| October              | 81          | 61        | 14           | 6           |
| November             | 46          | 28        | 14           | 4           |
| December             | 39          | 20        | 15           | 4           |
| <u>1953</u>          |             |           |              |             |
| January              | 39          | 20        | 15           | 4           |
| February             | 43          | 25        | 15           | 3           |
| March                | 50          | 31        | 17           | 2           |
| April                | 88          | 73        | 13           | 2           |
| May                  | 160         | 149       | 10           | 1           |
| June                 | 264         | 256       | 7            | 1           |
| July                 | 349         | 341       | 8            | -           |
| August               | 455         | 443       | 12           | -           |
| September            | 487         | 474       | 13           | -           |
| Percent              |             |           |              |             |
| <u>1952</u>          |             |           |              |             |
| September            | 100         | 77        | 14           | 9           |
| October              | 100         | 76        | 17           | 7           |
| November             | 100         | 61        | 30           | 9           |
| December             | 100         | 51        | 39           | 10          |
| <u>1953</u>          |             |           |              |             |
| January              | 100         | 51        | 39           | 10          |
| February             | 100         | 58        | 35           | 7           |
| March                | 100         | 62        | 34           | 4           |
| April                | 100         | 83        | 15           | 2           |
| May                  | 100         | 93        | 6            | 1           |
| June                 | 100         | 97        | 3            | -           |
| July                 | 100         | 98        | 2            | -           |
| August               | 100         | 97        | 3            | -           |
| September            | 100         | 97        | 3            | -           |

<sup>1/</sup> Average of four weeks.

Table 8. Methods used by employers interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, for recruiting Puerto Rican farm workers

| Methods of recruitment        | Employers using each method |      |      |     |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------|------|-----|
|                               | All three States            | N.J. | N.Y. | Pa. |
| Total <sup>1/</sup>           | 101                         | 20   | 46   | 35  |
| Employers' associations       | 50                          | 9    | 18   | 23  |
| State employment service      | 8                           | -    | -    | 8   |
| Walk-ins                      | 26                          | 6    | 16   | 4   |
| Previous contact with workers | 15                          | 5    | 10   | -   |
| Other                         | 2                           | -    | 2    | -   |

<sup>1/</sup> Some employers reported more than one method of recruitment.

Table 9. Employers' plans for employment of Puerto Ricans in 1954 by State of interview

| Intentions of employers | Number of employers |            |          |              |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------|----------|--------------|
|                         | All three States    | New Jersey | New York | Pennsylvania |
| Total                   | 61                  | 26         | 23       | 12           |
| Same number             | 35                  | 13         | 16       | 6            |
| More                    | 19                  | 11         | 6        | 2            |
| Fewer                   | 2                   | -          | 1        | 1            |
| Undecided               | 4                   | 2          | -        | 2            |
| None                    | 1                   | -          | -        | 1            |

Table 10. Puerto Rican farm workers interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, by weeks in labor force on mainland, and average earnings, September 1952--September 1953

| Weeks        | Workers | Average earnings |
|--------------|---------|------------------|
| All periods  | 487     | \$ 531           |
| Fewer than 4 | 6       | 80               |
| 4 - 7        | 102     | 168              |
| 8 - 11       | 37      | 285              |
| 12 - 15      | 130     | 460              |
| 16 - 19      | 78      | 566              |
| 20 - 23      | 60      | 700              |
| 24 - 27      | 18      | 769              |
| 28 - 31      | 12      | 993              |
| 32 - 35      | 9       | 1,209            |
| 36 - 39      | 6       | 1,441            |
| 40 - 43      | 3       | 1,401            |
| 44 or more   | 26      | 1,488            |

Table 11. Puerto Rican farm workers interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, by wage rates, most recent jobs, September 1953

| State        | Unit of wage payment | Wage rate | Number of workers | Crop activities or nonfarm work  |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------|-------------------|--|
| New Jersey   | Hour                 |           | <u>134</u>        |  |
|              |                      | .65       | 68                | Asparagus, tomato, other vegetable harvest; peach, apple harvest, other farm work  |
|              |                      | .70       | 21                | Asparagus, tomato, other vegetable harvest   |
|              |                      | .75       | 29                | Asparagus, tomato harvest, peach harvest, other farm work, food processing         |
|              |                      | .83       | 1                 | Nonfarm work   |
|              | Hamper or basket     | .85       | 2                 | Vegetable harvest, food processing   |
|              |                      | .11       | 9                 | Tomato harvest   |
|              |                      | .12       | 2                 | Asparagus harvest  |
|              |                      | .025      | 2                 | Asparagus harvest  |
| New York     | Hour                 |           | <u>184</u>        |  |
|              |                      | .60       | 24                | Bean, tomato, fruit harvest, other farm work                                       |
|              |                      | .65       | 10                | Bean, tomato harvest   |
|              | Hamper or basket     | .70       | 3                 | Bean, tomato, other vegetable harvest  |
|              |                      | .05       | 3                 | Fruit harvest  |
|              |                      | .07       | 7                 | Bean, tomato, fruit harvest  |
|              |                      | .025      | 137               | Bean harvest   |
| Pennsylvania | Hour                 |           | <u>169</u>        |  |
|              |                      | .65       | 138               | Bean, tomato, other vegetable harvest, peach, other fruit harvest, food processing |
|              | Hamper or basket     | .90       | 1                 | Food processing  |
|              |                      | .10       | 12                | Bean, tomato, other vegetable harvest  |
|              |                      | .14       | 10                | Tomato harvest   |
|              | Pound                | .02       | 7                 | Bean harvest   |
| Unspecified  | -                    | 1         |                   |  |

Table 12. Puerto Rican farm workers interviewed in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, by average daily wage and number of days worked per week, in most recent period of employment

| State of interview | Total workers | Average daily wage | Number of days worked per week |    |     |    |    |                |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|----|-----|----|----|----------------|
|                    |               |                    | 5                              | 5½ | 6   | 6½ | 7  | No information |
| Total              | 487           | \$6.68             | 57                             | 46 | 265 | 33 | 82 | 4              |
| New Jersey         | 134           | 6.62               | 8                              | 20 | 52  | 6  | 48 | -              |
| New York           | 184           | 6.15               | 3                              | 2  | 116 | 27 | 34 | 2              |
| Pennsylvania       | 169           | 7.31               | 46                             | 24 | 97  | -  | -  | 2              |

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**Resource ID#7186**

**Puerto Rican Farm Workers In The Middle  
Atlantic States**