

100 copies

Welcome Stranger!

**A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY EFFORTS
TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS
FOR AGRICULTURAL MIGRANTS**

Goodbye Friend



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

W. Willard Wirtz, Secretary

BUREAU OF LABOR STANDARDS

Arthur W. Motley, Director

June 1963

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Bulletin 258

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PREFACE

The Department of Agriculture estimated that in 1961 half a million migratory farmworkers left their homes to travel in the migratory stream to cultivate and harvest our farm produce. They took with them nearly a half million children under 14 years of age--264,000 of them were from white families and 151,000 from nonwhite families.

What are the wants, hopes, and fears of these migratory parents as they start out with their families for work in an unknown community in some distant State? They want the same basic things for their families as others do, and ask--

Will I get a clean and sanitary place in which to live?

How will my children be treated?

Will there be a safe place to put my younger children while I work in the fields, and a place for them to play?

Will there be a school for my children?

Where will I buy my food?

If a member of my family becomes ill or I get hurt, can I get a doctor?

How much will I be paid? Will I have to pay part of it to the crew leader?

What will I do if the crops are not ready for picking?

Will it be possible for me and my family to go to church or a movie?

Many citizens want to help the migrants feel at home while in the community. Some have united in advance of the arrival of the migrants to coordinate the resources of the community to bring this about. It is the purpose of this bulletin to describe one practical approach, which proved effective in two communities last year, with the hope that it may serve as a guide to groups which undertake community programs for and with agricultural migrants in the coming harvest seasons.

This bulletin was prepared by Thelma H. Harper, Regional Consultant, under the general direction of Gwen Geach, Chief, Branch of Field Services, Division of State Services, Bureau of Labor Standards.

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A Guide to Community Efforts To Improve Conditions for Agricultural Migrants

PART I

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS OF A COMMUNITY COUNCIL

THE ORGANIZATION of a community council begins wherever the greatest interest lies. This may be a concerned employer, an individual citizen, a church group, a pastor, a public health nurse, a labor union, local employment service personnel, the Salvation Army, or others. This nucleus of interest based on real concern can provide the best starting point around which to build the organization. It brings together the various specialized services of public and private agencies and the vital services of volunteers can conduct a well-rounded program to meet the total needs of migrants which organizations and agencies working separately cannot do.

As a first step, it is usually advisable to have the leader of the nucleus group arrange an open meeting to which all agencies, public and private, and organizations which might contribute to the overall service, are invited. The leader of the nucleus group might also preside, setting forth the general purpose of the meeting--that of mobilizing community resources in an all-out effort to meet the total needs of migrants. Those invited will vary slightly from one community to another but generally would include the following:

Church groups.

Grower associations.

Unions.

Private agencies such as Salvation Army, Travelers Aid, Red Cross, and Community Chest.

Chambers of Commerce.

Medical societies.

Public agencies such as Fire Marshal, Health, Welfare, Education, Employment Security, and State Extension Service.

Civic clubs.

Parent-Teachers Associations (PTA).

Following the opening of the meeting, an explanation of the Council's purpose and the type of organization desirable should be presented. It is well for an appropriate person, perhaps a local official, to commend the nucleus group for its work in the past, and for its foresight in bringing to the attention of all the fact that migrants are the responsibility of the entire community--not just one group. Before the actual organization is begun, it is advisable to allow time for divergent views to be expressed.

When agreement is reached that a communitywide approach to migrant problems should be undertaken, officers of the Council are elected--usually a president, vice president, executive secretary, and treasurer. It is advisable, if possible, that the president be a well-known leading citizen in the community, as his name will lend prestige to the undertaking. He should be genuinely interested, but not necessarily a working officer. The vice president should be one who would usually be available in the absence of the president. The secretary is the keyman in the organization. He is the communicator, the one who knows at all times what each committee of the Council is doing; views the program as a whole and ties it together in a meaningful way for the migrants and the community. If this person can be employed on a full-time or even a part-time basis through public or private funds, or a combination from various sources, it will do more than any other one factor to effect a successful program. The Council may also have a volunteer recording secretary. The treasurer may serve also as the chairman of the Finance Committee.

Names and work of committees will vary but the following, with an outline of their general functions, has proved effective in some communities. It is usually advisable to have a committee chaired by a volunteer who is interested in that particular aspect of the work, with its members including representatives of agencies and organizations which specialize in the respective programs.

Committees of the Council

The Executive Committee

This committee, comprised of officers and the chairman of each of the following committees, has the responsibility of policymaking, program planning, use of funds, and establishment and maintenance of relationships with other organizations--local, State, regional, or national.

Housing, Sanitation, and Health

Members should include volunteers and representatives of the Health Department and the Employment Service. In most localities, these two agencies are involved in establishing and maintaining housing standards. Interests of this committee include preventive health measures, medical services, health education, sanitation, and camp maintenance.

Social and Religious Services

Members should consist of volunteers and representatives of public and private welfare agencies and churches. Its various services might include the operation of day-care centers for children of migrants--since both parents in migrant families work, there is need for planning adequate care and protection for their children, usually through the provision of day-care services and facilities approved or licensed by the public welfare agency. Other services which the committee might provide are worship services, recreation programs, family counseling, and emergency financial assistance; also, receiving, sorting and distributing clothing and other items in kind, which could be sold to the migrant for a nominal charge unless he was unable to pay, in which case they could be provided free of charge. The money realized could be used by the committee to buy other needed items. When financial assistance, casework, or homemaker services are provided by the Welfare Department, or when the Council of Churches or other church organization provides a minister to migrants, these specialized persons may effectively perform their duties within the framework of the Council's program.

Education

Membership should be comprised of volunteers and representatives of the public schools' teaching and administrative staff, vocational education, the Extension Service, and private organizations. Programs of interest to this committee might include special summer schools for migrant children, literacy courses, adult education in home skills, rights and responsibilities of citizenship, first-aid and home nursing courses, and other suitable instruction.

Recreation

Members should be volunteers and representatives of private organizations concerned with recreational activities such as church groups, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, YMCA, YWCA, and boys' clubs. Often this activity will interest civic clubs or chambers of commerce which will contribute funds for purchasing athletic equipment, games, refreshments for social gatherings, and for renting movies. An important feature of this committee's work is renting or obtaining the use of a facility

where out-of-door and in-door programs may be held, carefully supervising all such activities. In one community, the "week-end cultural center," as the facility was termed, provided instructions for men and women in the preparation and care of living quarters. For the migrant, learning the usual amenities of community living is a worthwhile byproduct of this type of program; for the participating residents, it offers the opportunity to know and appreciate migrants as fellow human beings.

Finance

This committee, chaired by the Council treasurer and comprised of businessmen and women, has the responsibility of providing funds needed for the operation of the Council. It keeps an account of income and disbursements, and reports to the Council on the state of finances at each meeting or whenever called upon by an officer of the Council.

Public Relations

This committee should be comprised of volunteers and representatives of the local press, radio, and television stations. In conjunction with the officers of the Council and committee chairmen, its members prepare and maintain a current speaker's kit concerning the program which may be used in speeches or press releases, radio, and TV programs. The committee informs, interprets, and promotes understanding and community acceptance. It stresses the contribution the migrant makes to the economic life of the community and the Nation. Through human interest stories, it tries to dispel the old image of the migrant as a nameless farmhand and create a new image of him as an individual human being.

Study and Analysis

This committee should include persons who are interested in studying the legal, economic, and social framework in which the employment of agricultural migrants operate in the community, the State, and the Nation. Their findings should result in a more informed Council and community; this may result in the passing of resolutions by the Council concerning legislation and administrative practices. Through such expressions by people who work directly with the migrants, there is an opportunity for a realistic presentation of various problems to those concerned on the State and national levels.

PART II

THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Executive Secretary of the Council coordinates the work of each group with every other group. He serves no special interest but serves all; he can feel empathy toward the migrants who misuse earnings, fail to provide for their families, and abuse their employer's property, and with the employer who reacts with resentment and criticism to such behavior. He must be an intelligent, sensitive individual--dedicated to the service of others--if he is to succeed in this challenging, sometimes very discouraging, task of bringing out the best in all kinds of people in a common service. It is largely through the efforts of the Executive Secretary that the Council does more than coordinate the programs of the various committees; the Council corrects gaps in existing programs and organizes new programs and functions as an entity bringing to migrants and to the community a coherent, total service.

Guidelines prepared by the Bureau of Labor Standards, U. S. Department of Labor, for community groups in the selection of an executive secretary and for his use in the performance of his duties, point to the basic qualifications of maturity and dedication. They are in part:

Desirable Qualifications

1. A deep interest in, and knowledge of, the migrant situation in the area and general knowledge of the migrant situation in the State and the Nation.
2. Knowledge of community and State resources which are available or might be made available to the migrant Council.
3. Ability to see the total picture objectively; to consider all viewpoints; to maintain satisfactory relationship with various types of people.
4. Skill in delegating work; in guiding volunteers.
5. Willingness to stay in the background; giving credit to others.
6. Acceptance of overall supervision from Council Chairman; acceptance of technical guidance in their respective fields of competence from such agencies as the Employment Security

Commission, Labor Department, Health Department, Welfare Department, County Agents' Office, and Office of Education.

7. Establishment and maintenance of good relations with other organizations concerned with migrants--on State or national level.

8. Ability to keep a continuing factual report of operations, with view to evaluation of project at end of season and recommendations for the following season.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Acts as ex officio member of each committee; assists each in its program plans and action. Observes each program frequently.

2. Keeps the chairman and vice chairman informed of all programs. Requests chairman to call meeting of Executive Committee whenever necessary and regular meetings at specified intervals.

3. Keeps aware of response to programs through personal contacts with migrants and Council members.

4. Notes gaps observed in any program and seeks ways to fill them.

5. Prepares weekly and monthly progress reports for the Executive Committee, and possibly other groups such as the State's committee on migratory labor.

6. Prepares a final report with recommendations for the following season.

PART III

RELATIONSHIP OF COUNCIL WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The State Committee on Migratory Labor

In an effort to coordinate programs for migrants at the State level, 28 States have established official committees. These vary in size from fewer than 10 to more than 40 members. The majority of these committees were appointed by the Governor; six, however, were created by legislative action. As State administrations change, the Governor's committees are usually reappointed by the incoming Governor.

Composition of the committees varies; some are restricted to public agency representatives and others include representatives of interested citizen organizations as well.

Financing of these committees varies from the appropriation of funds by the State legislatures to no method at all. In several States, constituent agencies finance committee activities; a few receive private funds.

Some committees are more active than others. At their best, they are an effective means of promoting interest and action on a State level and in promoting interest and programs in local areas of migrant concentration, such as summer schools for migrant children, health clinics, day-care centers, and community acceptance of the migrant.

A close relationship between the local Council and the State committee can be mutually helpful. Each constituent agency of the State committee is in a better position to support and strengthen its aspect of the work within the framework of the overall State and local program. In one State, for instance, housing conditions were markedly improved through efforts of the Council in effecting a closer coordination in the respective roles of the Employment Service and the Health Department on the State level as well as between their local counterparts. Another example of more effective service through a close relationship between State committee and local Council was expressed by the Social Worker for Migrants provided by the State Department of Public Welfare. She said her work was more effective and reached more families because she functioned as a member of the local Council, correlating her casework services with the work of the Migrant Ministry staff worker, the public health nurse, day-care staff, recreation volunteers, and others.

Another advantage of cooperation between State and local bodies is the exchange of information and recommendations. Communication can flow both ways. The local group is in a position to recommend changes in legislation and practices; the State committee, to suggest specific programs of action to the local Council.

Through the State committee, the local Council is brought into contact with regional and national organizations, both public and private. The local Council, through its every-day experience with the problems, can provide valuable policy guidelines to these various organizations; they, in turn, can make valuable suggestions to the local group from their broader perspective.

National Organizations

The programs of approximately 30 national organizations are concerned with migrant agricultural workers. Almost half of these are church-related and include Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant groups. Some are large, well-established organizations with a wide scope of service to many segments of the population, including migrants, such as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, National Education Association, National Social Welfare Assembly, and Community Service Organizations, Inc. Other organizations more specifically concerned with migrants or with farmworkers generally are the Migrant Children's Fund, National Advisory Committee on Farm Labor, National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor, and National Sharecroppers Fund.

The programs of these organizations vary considerably, with each one covering one or more phases of the problem, such as legislation, community acceptance, transportation, recreation, social security, housing, health, education, welfare (including day care), and working conditions. Some of the organizations maintain regional or State offices.

Publications and other informational material prepared by some of these organizations can be most helpful to local Councils in expanding their view of the problem from the local situation to the national picture. Where the national organization has a local counterpart, such as the YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, National Travelers Aid Association, the Council membership may include representatives of these organizations whose participation is strengthened by support of the respective national office.

PART IV

FEDERAL AGENCIES WITH AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN MIGRATORY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Federal agencies with active programs concerning migrants are primarily the same as those whose State and local counterparts serve migrants. Foremost among them are the Departments of Labor; Health, Education, and Welfare; Agriculture; Interior; the Housing and Home Finance Agency; and the Interstate Commerce Commission. Because of the interstate nature of migrant work and its accompanying problems, these departments work closely with State and local agencies and organizations in planning and promoting programs. From their overall vantage point, they can suggest legislative standards and practices to the States, based on experiences of other States, and also promote interstate practices designed to lend some measure of continuity and stability to the migrant's life. These might include school records, health cards, regulation of crew leaders, housing, transportation, and financial assistance.

Services Offered by the Bureau of Labor Standards

Illustrative of the service one Federal department offers in the field of migratory labor includes the work of the Regional Consultants of the State Services Division, Bureau of Labor Standards, U. S. Department of Labor, which is as follows:

Regional Consultants.--Regional Consultants for the Bureau promote adequate working and living conditions for migratory workers and their families. To this end, they encourage the establishment and effective functioning of State committees and local councils. They consult with these groups and with other public and private agencies, church and civic groups regarding appropriate programs, existing and needed legislation, and effective administrative practices. The Regional Consultants are assigned certain States with offices as follows:

WASHINGTON, D. C.
(National Office)

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Connecticut | New Hampshire |
| Delaware | New Jersey |
| District of Columbia | New York |
| Maine | Pennsylvania |
| Maryland | Rhode Island |
| Massachusetts | Vermont |

CHICAGO

2041 Bankers Building
105 West Adams Street
Chicago 3, Ill.

DALLAS

1416 Commerce Street
Room 1012
Dallas 2, Tex.

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Illinois | Michigan | Arkansas | Oklahoma |
| Indiana | Ohio | Louisiana | Texas |
| Kentucky | Wisconsin | New Mexico | |

KANSAS CITY

2213 Federal Building
911 Walnut Street
Kansas City 6, Mo.

SAN FRANCISCO

304 Appraisers Building
630 Sansome Street
San Francisco 11, Calif.

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------|------------|------------|
| Colorado | Nebraska | Alaska | Montana |
| Iowa | North Dakota | Arizona | Nevada |
| Kansas | South Dakota | California | Oregon |
| Minnesota | Wyoming | Hawaii | Utah |
| Missouri | | Idaho | Washington |

ATLANTA

404 Peachtree Building
1371 Peachtree Street, N. E.
Atlanta 9, Ga.

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Alabama | South Carolina |
| Florida | Tennessee |
| Georgia | Virginia |
| Mississippi | West Virginia |
| North Carolina | |

The Regional Consultants, upon request of the State and/or a local community, assist leaders in planning and conducting programs which are geared to the particular problems and resources of the requesting State and community. Since their interest concerns the total well-being of the migrants as individuals and as families, they endeavor to keep informed in a general way on all aspects of the situation; working and sanitary conditions, housing, health and welfare needs, and resources for meeting these needs. They also provide information on the specialized services available from other Bureaus of the Labor Department and other agencies of the national, State, and local governments.

National Office of the Bureau.--The work of the Regional Consultants stationed in the field is supported and amplified by the Washington staff of the Bureau. There, publications and other materials pertinent to programs concerned with migrants, and labor standards applicable to their employment, are prepared and widely distributed. Among those currently available are:

Status of Agricultural Workers Under State and Federal Labor Laws. January 1963.

Selected References on Domestic Migratory Agricultural Workers, Their Families, Problems, and Programs. Bulletin 225. January 1961.

Housing for Migrant Agricultural Workers, Labor Camp Standards. Bulletin 235. November 1962.

Programs of National Organizations for Migrant Farm Workers and Their Families. Bulletin 236. December 1961.

State Migratory Labor Committees, Their Organization and Programs. Bulletin 215. March 1960.

The Community Meets the Migrant Worker, Current Programs and Trends. Bulletin 221. 1960.

The Day-Haul Program, Suggested Standards and Practices. Bulletin 245. 1962.

Copies of the above may be obtained by writing to: U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards, Division of State Services, Washington 25, D. C.

PART V

SELECTED REFERENCE MATERIALS FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS

In addition to the publications of the Bureau of Labor Standards listed on p. 11, others which might be of particular help to local leaders include:

The Citizen's Role in Community Planning for Group Work Services to Migrants. National Consumers Committee for Research and Education, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio. 1958.

A Way to Extend Voluntary Activity and Organization in Social Welfare, Migrant Workers. Mesa County (Colorado) Migrant Council, Grand Junction, Colo. 1957.

A Community Improvement Project for Baskin's Crossing and Danville. Community Service Foundation, Largo, Fla. 1958.

Guide and Survey Schedule. Commission on Children, Committee on Agricultural Migrant Workers, Springfield, Ill. 1956.

Migrant Work in Muscatine, Iowa. Muscatine Migrant Ministry Council, 217 5th Street, Muscatine, Iowa. 1959.

Nevada's Moapa Valley. Nevada State Employment Service, Las Vegas, Nev. 1959.

Common Ground. National Consumers Committee for Research and Education, Inc., Engineers Building, Cleveland, Ohio. 1959.

The Community Looks at Migrant Labor. Consumers League of New York, 501 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y. 1959.

These Are Your Neighbors, Agricultural Migrants in Ohio. Consumers League of Ohio, Engineers Building, Cleveland, Ohio. 1955.

Community Services Guide for Migrants and Their Families. Pennsylvania Governor's Committee on Migratory Labor, Labor and Industry Building, Harrisburg, Pa. 1959.

On the Season. Florida State Board of Health, Division of Health Education, P. O. Box 210, Jacksonville 1, Fla. 1961.

Homemaking for Our Migrant Families. National Consumers Committee for Research and Education, Inc., Engineers Building, Cleveland, Ohio. 1959.

Migrant Child Care Centers and Services. Annual Reports, Department of Public Welfare, Harrisburg, Pa. 1958-1963.

Education on the Move. Parts I and II. Governor's Commission on Human Rights, State Capitol, Madison, Wis. 1960 and 1961.

Health Projects for Migrant Farm Families, California's Experience. National Consumers Committee for Research and Education, Inc., Engineers Building, Cleveland, Ohio. 1963.

Migrants Are People. Article in Employment Security Review, U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Security, Washington 25, D. C. pp. 50-52. January 1963.