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REPORT OF OPERATIONS OF MEXICAN FARM LABOR PROGRAM
MADE PURSUANT TO CONFERENCE REPORT NO. 1449

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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U. S. Department of Labor
Bureau of Employment Security
Farm Labor Service

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Report on Operations of Mexican Farm Labor Program
Made Pursuant to Conference Report No. 1449
House of Representatives, 84th Congress, First Session

January 1 - June 30, 1961

Summary

Fewer Mexican nationals were contracted during the last half of 1961 fiscal year than for the corresponding period of last year. The January-June total was 90,376 compared to 111,867, or approximately 21,500 less than for the same six months period last year.

Increased supervision of food, transportation and photographic services produced good results. No violations of standards were reported.

Agreement was reached with Mexican railroad officials whereby improved schedules were put into effect and more modern equipment used in transporting workers.

Estimated cash available in the revolving fund for future operations amounted to \$2,022,245.22 on June 30, 1961.

The Secretary made approximately 500 wage determinations.

Payroll and housing inspections constituted the major compliance activities. Payroll inspections totaled 22,278 and revealed 2,376 violations. There were 6,915 housing inspections which revealed deficiencies in 2,110 cases.

Contracting of Mexican Nationals

During the six months January 1 through June 30, 1961, 90,376 Mexican nationals were contracted, compared with 111,867 for the corresponding period of 1960. The decrease was due in part to the increased availability and better utilization of domestic labor, as well as to improved recruitment methods. An additional factor was the further tightening of operating procedures in connection with the use of Mexican nationals in competition with domestic workers. Increased wages in some areas may have encouraged shifts to machine methods with lower use of both foreign and domestic workers.

There were 252 active grower associations with 31,559 user-employers employing Mexican nationals. In addition there were 2,203 active individual employers of Mexican nationals during this six months period. Contracting was authorized in 61 work areas in 19 States.

Operations Evaluated at Centers and Stations

Evaluations were made of operations at the Monterrey and Guaymas Migratory Stations and at the El Centro, Eagle Pass, and Nogales Reception Centers. Operating standards were improved and closer supervision recommended.

As a result of revised standards and increased supervision during the past six months, food service, transportation, and photographic operations have been performed in such a satisfactory manner that no violations were reported.

Contract Services

Construction and Alterations

At El Centro, additions and alterations to the kitchen, dining and toilet facilities were still in process of being made in mid-1961. Plans for similar improvements at the Hidalgo (Texas) Reception Center were completed.

New Migratory Stations at Guaymas and Monterrey, Mexico, to be paid for by the Mexican Government were planned with this Government on a tentative basis, pending passage and signing of a bill extending Public Law 78.

Transportation

Mexican railroad officials agreed to use better and more modern equipment and improved schedules in connection with the transporting of workers.

The agreement was implemented in the Monterrey area. Better schedules were put into effect, and 20 large-capacity coaches replaced box cars.

The coaches accommodated much of the bracero traffic to the Hidalgo and Eagle Pass Reception Centers.

Health Examinations and Facilities

Operations of the U. S. Public Health Service have been improved to the extent that the cost to the program is materially reduced.

Staff Meetings Held to Improve Operations

Assistant Managers and Supervisors Meeting

A meeting of all Assistant Managers and Supervisors of Reception Centers and Migratory Stations was held in El Paso, Texas, January 16 through 18, 1961. This meeting was devoted mainly to discussions of operating

problems at the Reception Centers and Migratory Stations. Problems considered were below the managerial level. However, they were the kind that confronted assistant managers and supervisors of the different offices on a daily basis. Representatives of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the U. S. Public Health Service participated. A brief training course was conducted by the Farm Labor Training Officer on methods of improving supervisory and executive competence, communications, and leadership skills.

Managers' Meeting

A meeting of Reception Center and Migratory Station Managers was held at El Centro, California, June 19-22, 1961. In attendance and participating in the program were officers of the Farm Labor Service, representatives of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, officials from the Mexican Department of Labor, and representatives of two Mexican railroads.

Topics discussed were: Selection of Workers, Transportation and Subsistence, Fiscal Problems, Contractual Services and Request for Workers. Of major importance was the panel discussion on "Request for Workers." The different points of view of those concerned in making requests for workers from Mexico were discussed, as were the procedures to be followed.

Extension of Migrant Labor Agreement

The Migrant Labor Agreement with Mexico was extended without change through December 31, 1961, by exchange of notes between the two Governments on June 27, 1961. This six months extension makes its expiration date correspond with Public Law 78, the extension of which is under consideration by Congress at the present time.

Revolving Fund

The following table shows the status of the Farm Labor Supply Revolving Fund as of June 30, 1961.

Cash Balance		\$ 2,649,052.51
Accounts Receivable (due from Contractors & Vendors)		<u>8,122.66</u>
		\$ 2,657,175.17
Less: Unearned advances by employers	\$ 224,822.25	
Accounts payable	194,713.70	
Reserve to return to Mexico	<u>215,394.00</u>	
		<u>634,929.95</u>
Estimated balance available for future operations		\$ 2,022,245.22

Skip Assessments

Pursuant to the stipulations of Section 502(3), Public Law 78, as amended, \$26,809.47 in "skip" assessments were collected from 575 accounts.

Skip assessments are computed at the normal cost to the employer of returning workers from the area of employment to the Reception Center of initial entry into the United States. The law requires such payments in cases where contracted workers are not returned to the Reception Center or repatriated to Mexico in accordance with the Standard Work Contract.

Secretary Issues Approximately 500 Wage Determinations

In accordance with Article 15 of the Migrant Labor Agreement of 1951, as amended, the Secretary of Labor made 493 determinations embracing 536 agricultural wage classes in the period January 1 - June 30, 1961. The determinations of the prevailing wage rates of domestic agricultural workers are based on surveys and findings made by the State employment security agencies in the areas where Mexican national contract workers are employed. In the period covered by the report, prevailing wage determinations were made in the following States:

<u>STATE</u>	<u>Number of Wage Determinations Made</u>	<u>Number of Wage-Finding Classes Covered</u>
Arizona	102	104
Arkansas	3	3
California	63	96
Colorado	22	22
Montana	5	5
Nebraska	6	6
New Mexico	5	8
Nevada	4	4
South Dakota	2	2
Tennessee	1	1
Texas	273	279
Utah	6	6
	<u>493</u>	<u>536</u>

In accordance with authority contained in Section 503 of Title V of the Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, eleven adverse-effect determinations were issued during the period.

<u>STATE</u>	<u>No. Determinations Issued</u>	<u>No. Wage-Finding Classes Affected</u>
California	2	2
Colorado	2	2
Texas	7	13
	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>

Compliance Activities

During the six-month period, January 1 - June 30, 1961, FLSR's made a total of 1,852 investigations of complaints and other matters pertaining to the Migrant Labor Agreement and the Standard Work Contract. There were 907 cases of violation found.

Payroll inspections for this period were 22,278. Two thousand three hundred and seventy-six (2,376) cases of violation were found. Payments to Mexican workers as the result of payroll inspections, investigations, and other compliance activities amounted to \$145,099.66.

Studies are being made to clarify and improve the Minimum Acceptable Housing Standards with a view toward improving sanitation for the workers and obtaining greater cooperation from employers.

A reporting procedure to insure compliance with Bureau food service instructions was organized in this period. The procedure provides for evaluation, control, and investigation, where necessary, of food service records maintained by restaurant operators furnishing meals to Mexican nationals.

A pre-season housing drive for spring farm activity was recently completed in Arkansas. Twelve hundred units that will accommodate approximately 15,000 workers were inspected and approved. In addition, 63 units were rated "unacceptable" because they constituted a serious threat to the health and safety of the occupants, and they could not reasonably be made to conform to the standards. All employers who used Mexican nationals during the

spring season in Arkansas had their housing inspected prior to the issuance of an authorization to contract and occupancy by braceros. The pre-occupancy inspection of housing by the use of a task force is regarded as a highly successful operation.

A total of 6,915 housing inspections were made from January through June, 1961. Deficiencies were found in 2,110 cases.

Twenty-three (23) participants in the program were declared ineligible to use Mexican workers during this period because of serious violations of the Migrant Labor Agreement and the Standard Work Contract. The U. S. Government, in its capacity as guarantor, paid \$643.64 during this period.

Employers' indebtedness to the U. S. Government for guarantor payments, as of June 30, 1961, was \$23,754.34, an increase of \$389.36 from December 31, 1960. Total collections on this amount during this period were \$98.28. Seven thousand one hundred fifty-nine dollars and seventy cents (\$7,159.70) is still pending litigation and \$16,594.64 is awaiting collection through various other means.

Statistical Summary of Selected Activities

January 1 - June 30, 1961

I. Activities at Migratory and Border Stations

Station	Workers Interviewed	Workers Rejected	Workers Selected	Workers Transported
<u>Migratory Stations:</u>				
Monterrey	26,246	559	25,687	25,276
Chihuahua	21,305	267	21,038	18,848
Guaymas	<u>47,855</u>	<u>2,108</u>	<u>45,747</u>	<u>45,018</u>
Sub-totals	95,406	2,934	92,472	89,142
<u>Border Stations</u>				
Reynosa (Hidalgo)				2
Piedras Negras (Eagle Pass)				1
Juarez (El Paso)				<u>3</u>
Sub-total				6
<u>Total Workers Transported</u>				<u>89,148</u>

II. Activities at Reception Centers

Center	Workers Received	Workers Contracted	Workers Recontracted	Workers Rejected	Workers Returned to Mexico
Hidalgo	19,112	18,607	5,832	505	5,874
Eagle Pass	6,511	6,484	917	24	2,888
El Paso	21,038	21,901	1,172	126	6,239
Nogales	3,167	3,155	1	12	4,157
El Centro	42,068	41,229	6,073	839	24,841
Totals	91,896 ^{1/}	90,376	13,995	1,506	43,999

^{1/} This figure includes 2,748 workers who furnished their own transportation from Migratory Stations to the Border.

A total of 671,668 meals, including box lunches, were provided to Mexican agricultural workers by the United States Government. Meals were provided to workers after they were selected at the Migratory Stations in Mexico, enroute to and during their processing for contracting at Reception Centers and from the time they were subsequently received at the Reception Centers until they were returned to the appropriate Migratory Station in Mexico.

III. Number of Workers Contracted and Recontracted, by State

State	Number Contracted	Number Recontracted		
		Centers	Regional Offices	Total
Arizona	5,114	373	2,199	2,572
Arkansas	7,986	3,205	340	3,545
California	39,009	5,701	2,449	8,150
Colorado	6,583	8	253	261
Illinois	35	0	0	0
Indiana	0	60	30	90
Kansas	49	0	0	0
Kentucky	45	12	0	12
Michigan	2,000	0	0	0
Montana	2,640	0	0	0
Nebraska	2,129	0	0	0
Nevada	83	0	0	0
New Mexico	1,675	195	2	197
South Dakota	252	0	0	0
Tennessee	351	14	0	14
Texas	20,649	4,376	319	4,695
Utah	197	0	0	0
Wisconsin	30	51	0	51
Wyoming	1,549	0	0	0
Totals	90,376	13,995	5,592	19,587