



*Migrants . . .  
in Michigan*

## THE MICHIGAN STUDY COMMISSION ON MIGRATORY LABOR

### CO-CHAIRMEN:

Edgar G. Johnston  
Professor of Education  
Wayne University  
Detroit  
John F. Thaden  
Department of Sociology and  
Anthropology  
Michigan State College  
East Lansing

### MEMBERS:

Oscar Baker, Jr.  
Attorney, Member  
Civil Liberties Committee  
Michigan State Board  
Bay City  
Veril Baldwin  
President, Essential Oils Assn.  
President, National Onion Assn.  
Jackson  
Earnest H. Bennett  
Michigan State CIO Council  
Detroit  
\*Rev. Fred H. Broad, Jr.  
Michigan Council of Churches  
Lansing

C. E. Buskirk  
Grower, President  
Michigan Farm Bureau  
Paw Paw  
Merrill Eady  
Michigan State Grange  
Grant  
Max C. Henderson  
Executive Secretary,  
Michigan Field Crops, Inc.  
Saginaw  
Victor Hicks  
Clerk, Wayne County Circuit Court  
Detroit  
Robert Holmes  
Vice Pres., Teamsters Joint Council,  
American Federation of Labor  
Detroit  
Mrs. Marjorie Karker  
Michigan Farm Bureau  
Lansing  
Rev. Clement Kern  
Most Holy Trinity Parish  
Detroit

Merle L. Kerr  
First Vice Chairman, Federation of  
Community Councils  
Principal, Condon Intermediate School  
Part-time farmer, Lenawee County  
Detroit  
Mrs. Harry E. King  
Past President, Michigan Congress of  
Parents and Teachers  
Pontiac  
\*Rev. Ellis Marshburn  
Home Missions Division,  
National Council of Churches  
Benton Harbor  
Simeon Martin  
Michigan Farmers' Union  
Stanton  
Mrs. Dorothy S. McAllister  
Member, National Board, National  
Consumers League and National Board,  
International Social Service  
Grand Rapids  
Frank L. Noakes, Director of Research,  
Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way-  
Employees  
Detroit  
Dr. Frank F. Rosenthal, Rabbi  
Congregation Emanuel

The Suburban Temple  
Pleasant Ridge  
\*Robert P. Scott, Secretary  
Michigan Federation of Labor  
Detroit  
Edward F. Sladek, M.D.  
Michigan State Medical Society  
Traverse City  
Vergil N. Slee, M.D.  
Director, Barry County Health Center  
Hastings  
†Grover G. Stine, Director  
Saginaw County Social Welfare Board  
Saginaw  
\*Bacilio Tijerina, Leader of  
Spanish Speaking Community  
St. Johns  
Mrs. Ila Wermuth, Former Lecturer,  
Michigan State Grange,  
Holly  
Otto Yntema, Director  
of Adult Education  
Western Michigan College of Education  
Kalamazoo

\* Resigned  
† Deceased

## THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON MIGRATORY LABOR

### CHAIRMAN

O. K. Fjetland, Director  
Employment Service Division  
Michigan Employment Security Com-  
mission  
Detroit

### MEMBERS

Dean Lovett,  
Department of Agriculture  
Lansing  
John Reid,  
Department of Labor  
Lansing  
Sam Rabinovitz,  
Michigan Youth Commission  
Detroit

Dr. Fred S. Leeder,  
Department of Health  
Lansing  
Sgt. Charles Holton,  
Michigan State Police  
East Lansing  
Barrett Lyons,  
Department of Social Welfare  
Lansing

Henry J. Pnitz,  
Department of Public Instruction  
Lansing  
Andrew Kramarz, Chief  
Farm Placement Section  
Michigan Employment Security Com-  
mission  
Detroit



# Migrants In Michigan

A Handbook On  
Migratory, Seasonal, Agricultural  
Workers in Michigan



Compiled by  
The Governor's Study Commission on Migratory Labor  
with the assistance of The Inter-Agency Committee on  
Migratory Labor  
September, 1954

STATE OF MICHIGAN

MICHIGAN STUDY COMMISSION ON MIGRATORY LABOR



G. MENNEN WILLIAM:

GOVERNOR

September 9, 1954

CO-CHAIRMEN

Edgar G. Johnston  
Wayne University  
Detroit, Michigan  
John F. Thaden  
Michigan State College  
East Lansing, Michigan

The Honorable G. Mennen Williams  
Governor of the State of Michigan  
Lansing, Michigan

MEMBERS

Oscar Baker, Jr.  
Bay City  
Veril Baldwin  
Jackson  
Ernie Bennett  
Detroit  
Fred L. Broad, Jr.  
Lansing  
Carl Buskirk  
Faw Paw  
Merrill Eady  
Grant  
Max C. Henderson  
Saginaw  
Victor Hicks  
Detroit  
Robert Holmes  
Detroit  
Mrs. Marjorie Karker  
Lansing  
Rev. Fr. Clement Kern  
Detroit  
Merle L. Kerr  
Detroit  
Mrs. Harry E. King  
Pontiac  
Simeon Martin  
Stanton  
Mrs. Dorothy McAllister  
Grand Rapids  
Frank L. Noakes  
Detroit  
Rabbi Frank Rosenthal  
Huntington Woods  
Dr. Edward F. Sladek  
Traverse City  
Dr. Virgil N. Slee  
Eastings  
Grover G. Stine  
Saginaw  
Bacilio Tijerina  
St. Johns  
Mrs. Ila Wermuth  
Holly  
Otto Yntema  
Western Michigan College  
of Education  
Kalamazoo

Dear Governor Williams:

As Co-Chairmen of the Study Commission on Migratory Labor which you appointed in March, 1952, we present, as a partial report of the Commission's work, a booklet of questions and answers about migratory agricultural labor, entitled "Migrants in Michigan." The members of the Commission have contributed generously of their time and effort, attending, at their own expense, some fifteen meetings of the entire Commission in addition to sessions of sub-committees which provided the data for various sections of this report. In this they have had the invaluable assistance of the Inter-Agency Committee on Migratory Labor, made up of representatives of the various state agencies concerned with migrant problems.

The purpose of this publication is to provide factual data concerning the use of migratory labor in the state and concerning some of the problems incidental to its employment. The publication is timely, coinciding with a high degree of public interest in the migrant worker and his place in our economy.

It is the hope of the Commission that a compilation of previously unavailable data may be helpful to state agencies with responsibilities in this area as well as to other interested individuals -- growers, processors, teachers and school officials, church groups, and community organizations.

The present report is limited to background information about the migrant situation. The Commission plans, at an early date, to present in a separate report recommendations for appropriate action based on the facts revealed.

Sincerely yours,

*Edgar G. Johnston*  
*John F. Thaden*

Co-Chairmen



# AN INTRODUCTION

## What Is a Migrant, Agricultural Worker?

He is a resident of another state or country who seeks seasonal employment in Michigan and returns when the period of his employment is ended. Those from outside the United States are males unaccompanied by their families; those from other states usually migrate as family groups.

## Are Migrants Important to Michigan?

Agriculture is big business in Michigan. Agriculture ranks second to manufacturing as an income producer in this state. Michigan has a large diversified agricultural economy which is dependent upon a hundred thousand seasonal agricultural workers at the peak of the season. Over one half of them are out-of-state. As a rule, Michigan's workers do not leave their homes in large numbers for work in other parts of the state. The employment of over fifty thousand seasonal agricultural workers from other states and countries creates problems in recruitment, transportation, housing, sanitation, health, emergency aid, child labor, education of children, recreation of children and adults, and many others. They can be roughly grouped into three types, that is, about one-third are southern white, one-third are Negroes, and one-third are Mexican and/or of Mexican descent. In addition, some migrant workers are imported from Puerto Rico and British West Indies. This fact booklet attempts to present the nature and implications regarding one aspect or another of migrant workers. Migrant



workers spend most of their earnings in Michigan in communities where they work. Their total earnings while in the state during a single season probably exceed \$10,000,000. Local communities benefit from the presence of migratory workers, as they do from tourists and vacationists.

### **What Is the Purpose of the Governor's Study Commission on Migratory Labor?**

This is a commission appointed by Governor G. Mennen Williams in March, 1952, composed of 25 persons widely representative of the many and diversified interests of the State. Its primary purpose is "to study the problems of migratory labor and recommend to the Governor such corrective measures as are needed." By August, 1954, it had held 15 meetings. It is subdivided into four subcommittees, each of which meets periodically.

### **What Is the Governor's Inter-Agency Committee on Migratory Labor?**

The Inter-Agency Committee is the outgrowth of an earlier committee appointed in 1946 by Eugene B. Elliott then Superintendent of Public Instruction. This committee, The Committee on Education, Health and Welfare of Migrants included representatives of several state agencies as well as a number of lay people interested in migrant problems. The committee sponsored several conferences, published a bulletin

dealing with the migrant problem, and recommended to successive governors the appointment of a Commission on Migrant Labor. When Governor Williams appointed the Study Commission made up of lay representatives in 1952, the Inter-Agency Committee was set up to include representatives of those state agencies which were in position to make a contribution to solution of migrant problems. It includes representatives of the Farm Placement Section of Michigan Employment Security Commission, the State Departments of Agriculture, Health, Labor and Industry, and Public Instruction, the Michigan Youth Commission and the Michigan State Police. This committee meets periodically to consider migrant problems and has served as a major source of information and assistance to the Study Commission.



***The seasonal worker from another state or country is vitally important to Michigan Agriculture. The Governor's Study Commission on Migratory Labor was appointed to study the problems of migrants and make recommendations for corrective measures. This pamphlet is not intended to present a comprehensive list of recommendations but it does intend to give the reader an appreciation of the problems involved in migratory labor.***



cucumbers, and near the top in the production of canning beets, asparagus, sugar beets, celery, onions, cantaloupes, strawberries, cabbage, snap beans, cauliflower, carrots, and tomatoes, many of which depend heavily upon seasonal workers.

The U. S. Census of Agriculture for 1950 lists 41 counties in Michigan which are among the first 100 ranking counties in the United States in the production or acreage of some specified fruit, vegetable, or other crop. For example, Grand Traverse County ranks first among the first 100 ranking counties in the United States in the number of pounds of cherries harvested in 1949—a total of 31,394,639 pounds. This required numerous cherry pickers. Besides Grand Traverse County, there were 14 other counties in Michigan that were among the first 100 ranking counties in the United States in 1949 in the production of cherries. These 14 counties combined produced two and one-half times as many pounds of cherries as Grand Traverse County. These counties are: Oceana, Leelanau, Berrien, Mason, Benzie, Antrim, Manistee, Van Buren, Allegan, Charlevoix, Kent, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Mecosta. (See map page 5).

Michigan has much muck soil in many different counties and so the production of onions is widespread. In fact, among the 100 top ranking counties in the United States in the acreage of dry onions harvested, in 1949, are 14 Michigan counties, namely Newaygo, Jackson, Allegan, Calhoun, Ingham, Ottawa, Arenac, Kent, Lapeer, Ionia, Eaton, Muskegon, Montcalm and Van Buren.

Twenty counties in Michigan are among the 100 ranking counties in the United States in the production or acreage of

two to eight different crops. For example, Van Buren county ranks

- 18th in quarts of strawberries harvested
- 20th in pounds of grapes harvested
- 22nd in bushels of apples harvested
- 25th in bushels of peaches harvested
- 29th in pounds of cherries harvested
- 32nd in bushels of pears harvested
- 45th in bushels of plums harvested
- 98th in acres of dry onions harvested for sale.



**Table 1. Seasonal Labor Force in Michigan's Agricultural and Food Processing Industries in 1952<sup>1</sup>**

Date	Total Labor Force	Total out-of State Labor	%	Agricultural		Food Processing		Puerto Ricans	Foreign	
				Total	out-of State	Total	out-of State		Mexican Nationals	British West Indians
April 30	8,571	3,450	40.2	7,561	3,150	1,010	300	0	0	91
May 15	13,901	6,600	47.5	11,491	5,900	2,410	700	0	0	91
May 30	40,768	27,467	67.4	34,868	24,267	5,900	3,200	257	476	88
June 15	55,111	35,436	64.3	47,351	32,136	7,760	3,300	307	542	88
June 30	74,548	41,259	55.3	66,748	37,599	7,800	3,660	213	1,233	88
July 15	95,798	53,623	56.0	85,898	49,958	9,900	3,665	213	2,604	88
August 15	80,100	39,250	49.0	70,280	37,500	9,820	1,750	350	4,187	100
Sept. 15	53,072	23,185	43.7	42,022	20,385	11,050	2,800	190	1,082	285
Oct. 15	26,645	7,407	27.8	19,450	6,407	7,195	1,000	48	425	521
Nov. 15	9,282	1,240	13.4	3,376	340	5,906	900	6	11	88

<sup>1</sup>Post Season Farm Labor Report—State of Michigan 1952, page 12, Annual Report of Michigan State Employment Service, Farm Placement Section, Michigan Employment Security Commission, 1952.



Allegan County ranks among the 100 ranking counties in the United States in the production of peaches, pears, onions, apples, cherries, plums, grapes, and strawberries; and Berrien County in the production of strawberries, apples, cherries, pears, grapes, plums and tomatoes. The Counties of Oceana and Kent each rank among the 100 ranking counties in the production of six different crops.

Michigan has 11 counties that are among the 100 top ranking counties in the United States in the production of pears; 10 in the production of apples; seven in the production of plums; five in the production of strawberries and of grapes; four in the production of pears and of Irish potatoes; three in the production of tomatoes and of green beans (snap, string or wax); and two in the production of cabbage. The care and harvesting of some 30 commercial fruits, vegetables and other crops require the employment of over 100,000 seasonal workers, a majority of whom are from out-of-state.

### **What Are the Areas of Intense Seasonal Crop Activities Requiring Migrant Workers?**

The Farm Placement Section of the Michigan State Employment Service has delineated 15 "Areas of Intense Seasonal Crop Activity," as indicated on map on page six. Area No. 2 on that map shows a small muck crop area in the Yankee Springs area of Allegan and Barry Counties. Area No. 4 is a small bush fruit area in Muskegon and Ottawa Counties. The largest area is No. 11, which embodies all or parts of 18 counties and in

which 11 different crops are raised. Twelve different crops are raised in Area 1. There are about 230 trade-center or town-country communities lying wholly or partly within the 15 areas of intense seasonal crop activities.

### **How Does the Seasonal Agricultural Labor Force Vary in Number?**

The most recent and most accurate data on size of the seasonal labor force appear in the report of the Farm Placement Section of the Michigan State Employment Service titled "Post Season Farm Labor Report—State of Michigan 1952." Their figures appear in Table 1.

In 1952, the seasonal labor force in Michigan rose from about 8,000 on April 30 to about 96,000 on July 15. From that date it tapered off to about 9,000 on November 15. The out-of-state labor force rose from about 3,400 on April 30, to a peak of about 53,000 on July 15 and then tapered off to slightly over 1,000 on November 15. The out-of-state labor force comprised two-thirds of the total labor force on May 30 and over one-half from May 30 to July 15. The total labor force in agriculture reached a peak of 86,000 on July 15, of whom 50,000 were out-of-state. The total labor force in food processing industries reached a peak on September 15 with 11,000. The imported labor force from Mexico reached a peak of 4,200 on August 15, from Puerto Rico of 350 on the same date, and from British West Indies of 500 on October 15.

## In What Crops Are Out-of-Country and Off-Shore Workers Chiefly Employed?

The largest group of out-of-country workers are Mexican Nationals. In 1952, they were employed in blocking and thinning sugar beets and picking pickles, and a few were also used in the apple harvest. British West Indians, in 1952, were mainly used in the intensive fruit and vegetable areas of eastern Michigan. Some were also imported during September to prevent losses in the tomato harvest.

The off-shore labor force, in 1952, consisted of Puerto Ricans who were contracted to work in the sugar beet and pickle fields.

Although foreign and off-shore workers comprised only a small proportion of last year's labor force, they were enough to prevent crop losses.



***If certain Michigan crops are to be harvested each year, its domestic labor power must be supplemented by about 55,000 out-of-state and out-of-country seasonal migrants. There are 15 areas of intense seasonal crop activity in this state. Michigan ranks high in the nation in the production of sour cherries, plums, peaches, blueberries, grapes, sweet cherries, pears, commercial apples, cucumbers, beets, beans and many others. To maintain this productive record, Michigan farmers need migrants.***

## RECRUITING AND EMPLOYMENT

### What States Supply Michigan with Agricultural Workers?

Usually the largest single group of workers in Michigan are Texans of Mexican descent. A majority of them are signed up in Texas by recruitment agents of sugar beet growers associations and pickle companies. Missouri and Arkansas rank next in supplying Michigan with agricultural laborers. A drought which reduced labor demands in their home states caused more to come in 1952 than in past years. Other states supplying large numbers of workers are Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi, and Oklahoma.

### Is the Need for Agricultural Workers Increasing?

Michigan's rapid growth in population creates a growing demand for consumption goods, especially commercial fruits and vegetables, hence an increasing need for out-of-state seasonal workers. Between 1940 and 1950, the population of Michigan increased 1,100,000. Only in three states were there larger increases. Of this increase, nearly one-third of a million were contributed by in-migration. During the decade, 1950-1960, an increase equal to that of the past decade can be expected. This foretells the need of increased production of commercial fruits and vegetables within the state and the growing dependence upon other states for agricultural laborers. Although



mechanization has decreased the need for out-of-state workers in sugar beets, it is very unlikely that mechanization will largely replace workers in other agricultural commodities.

### **How Does the Period of Employment Vary for Different Crops?**

Some crops, like asparagus, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, grapes, and pears require workers for a relatively short period, normally one or two months. Some crops, like asparagus, need them early, May and June. Some crops, like grapes, need them late, October. Many crops are in need of workers in May, some of which, like sugar beets and some truck crops, are in need of them again in November. Apples, chicory, potatoes, tomatoes are other crops still in need of workers in November. Varying seasons for 30 different crops require the migrant to move from one crop to another within the state. Some migrants are professional one-crop workers who follow the ripening strawberry crop, or whatever it may be, northward from some southern state to Michigan. Normally, the migrant worker who goes from one crop to another within the state experiences intervals of enforced leisure. (See chart page 14).

### **How Does the Michigan State Employment Service Aid Agricultural Migrants Who Seek Work?**

The Farm Placement Section is a specialized branch of the Michigan Employment Security Commission dealing entirely with employment in the agricultural and food processing of this state. It is a part of a nationwide system administered under

the Bureau of Employment Security of the United States Department of Labor. Besides a state staff there is a field staff of seven crop area specialists and 31 seasonal farm placement specialists. The Farm Placement Service has two main objectives. One is to insure that there will be sufficient workers available at the right place at the right time. The other objective is to find jobs for all farm workers both seasonal and year-round, who apply for employment. Other units of the Michigan Employment Security Commission assist the Farm Placement Sec-





tion in carrying out its objectives. The seasonal labor situation in Michigan changes greatly from week to week and season to season. As a result of these changes the Farm Placement Section and co-operating groups must constantly develop new plans to keep the labor force in balance within demands.

### **What Employers' Groups Recruit Agricultural Workers?**

In past years, sugar beet growers have been among the largest users of seasonal laborers. Sugar beet, pickle, and canning companies, through their Employers Committees, frequently recruit workers for their growers. For years, beginning about the time of World War I, sugar companies have been recruiting sugar beet workers. During several decades they were largely foreign-born from the larger cities. Immigration Restriction Acts of 1921, 1924 and 1929 lowered the number of foreign-born in this country. This induced sugar beet processors to solicit Spanish-speaking Texans and those of Mexican descent. About 1938, Beet Growers Employment Committees were formed in most of the beet processing areas, primarily as a medium of recruiting beet field workers. This practice has continued up to the present. The six different sugar companies have nearly a hundred fieldmen. In 1939, 74 fieldmen contracted from 38 to 303 farmers each, (an average of 144) to grow sugar beets for their companies. One of their many tasks is that of obtaining laborers for beet growers at their request. Improved cultural practices have reduced labor requirements. The use of segmented seed, mechanical blocking machines and mechanical down-the-row weeders eliminated much of the work formerly connected with

blocking, thinning, weeding, and hoeing of sugar beets. Increasing use of mechanical harvesters reduce labor requirements in topping sugar beets. In 1952, hand topping was handled by 2,200 Latin Americans from Texas, supplemented by 300 Mexican Nationals who were contracted when a shortage of domestic workers developed.

The Michigan Field Crops, Inc., is a major recruitment agency of out-of-state labor. With the gradual expansion of pickle and cucumber growing in this state, various pickle companies have also done extensive recruiting of workers from other states, for their growers. Michigan ranks first among the states in both acreage and production of pickling cucumbers.

### **To What Extent Do Crew Leaders Aid Growers?**

Crew leaders who supply workers for farmers are usually unlicensed, once they leave their home state, and unregulated employment assistants. They recruit workers in their home state and use trucks, buses and other motor vehicles to haul workers from state to state and from farm to farm. They make employment arrangements for the worker group and generally are reimbursed by the grower for what they term as recruitment and transportation cost. This cost usually ranges from \$3.00 to \$5.00 for each worker. In some cases they act as supervisors and in other instances they use their trucks to haul the produce to the market or to a receiving station for which they receive additional compensation.

The crew may be composed of family groups, family groups and single adults, single male adults or single male and female adults. The danger of such unlicensed and unregulated indi-



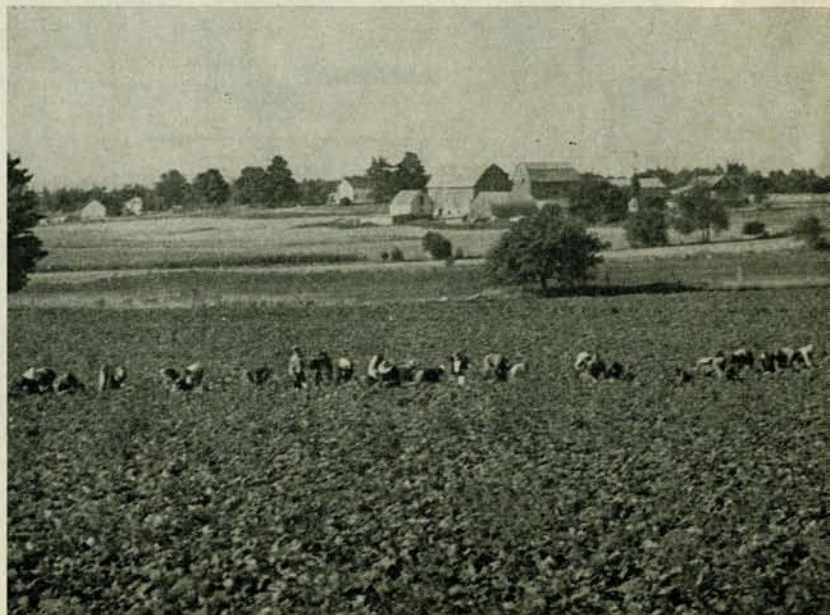
viduals operating has been two-fold: (1) to the employer because the crew may leave before completing the work activity, and (2) possible lower earnings to the worker because many growers offer a bonus for completing the activity. Also in a few instances the leader asks the workers to contribute a percentage of earnings.

### **What Booklets Are Available That Aid Spanish-Speaking Migrants and Their Employers in Understanding Each Other?**

Most migratory workers from Texas speak Spanish. Many do not speak any English, although they may have been born there. Their Michigan employers speak little, if any, Spanish. Therefore, the use of a simple, illustrative, bi-lingual (Spanish-English and English-Spanish) booklet of the most commonly used words would facilitate conversation and understanding between them. Such a booklet is now available. It is a small 72-page booklet titled "Spanish for Farmers." It contains 600 words pertaining to field, fruit and vegetable crops, farm animals, farm machines, household utensils, retail stores, transportation, money and time. It has been used extensively in southern states in recent years and is available from Mrs. Amelia Montes Skaggs, 149 W. Greening St., Las Cruces, New Mexico. (price 35 cents)

### **Are Out-of-Country and Off-Shore Workers Screened Before They Enter the United States?**

Recruitment of Mexican Nationals begins when the United States Secretary of Labor advises the Mexican Government of the estimated number of agricultural workers that will be required, 30 days in advance of the date when they are needed. The workers are examined at assembly points by the U. S. Public Health Service, Public Health Service of Mexico, and the U. S. Department of Labor, for suitability for agricultural employment, and by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service for conformance with immigration laws. Similar policy prevails in regard to workers from the British West Indies. The





# TIME TABLE *of* CROP ACTIVITIES

**LEGEND** CULTIVATE, HOE and WEED THIN FRUIT HARVEST

AREA	CROPS	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV
1	ASPARAGUS							
	STRAWBERRIES							
	BUSH FRUITS**							
	CHERRIES							
	ONIONS							
	TOMATOES							
	PEACHES							
	CUCUMBERS							
	CELERY							
	APPLES							
2	GRAPES							
	TRUCK CROPS*							
	MUCK CROPS***							
	CUCUMBERS							
3	MUCK CROPS***							
	CHERRIES							
	PEACHES							
	PEARS							
4	APPLES							
	TOMATOES							
	SUGAR BEETS							
	BUSH FRUIT**							
5	PEACHES							
	PLUMS							
	APPLES							
6	STRAWBERRIES							
	CHERRIES							
	BUSH FRUITS**							
	PEACHES							
	SNAP BEANS							
7	CUCUMBERS							
	APPLES							
	POTATOES							
	STRAWBERRIES							
	SNAP BEANS							
	CUCUMBERS							
	CHERRIES							
	PEACHES							
APPLES								
POTATOES								

AREA	CROPS	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV
8	TRUCK CROPS*							
	CHERRIES							
	POTATOES							
	SNAP BEANS							
9	CUCUMBERS							
	POTATOES							
	PEACHES							
	PEARS							
10	MUCK CROPS***							
	STRAWBERRIES							
	RASPBERRIES							
	TRUCK CROPS*							
11	SUGAR BEETS							
	CHICORY							
	STRAWBERRIES							
	RASPBERRIES							
	CUCUMBERS							
	TOMATOES							
	POTATOES							
12	APPLES							
	CHERRIES							
	MUCK CROPS***							
	SUGAR BEETS							
13	MUCK CROPS***							
	CUCUMBERS							
	POTATOES							
14	APPLES							
	PEACHES							
15	APPLES							
	SUGAR BEETS							
	STRAWBERRIES							
	CUCUMBERS							
	TOMATOES							
	BUSH FRUIT**							
POTATOES								
CHERRIES								
ONIONS								
TRUCK CROPS*								

\* TRUCK CROPS - CABBAGE, LETTUCE, RADISHES, ONIONS, ENDIVE, SPINACH, RED BEETS, SWISS CHARD, SWEET CORN, SQUASH, PARSLEY AND MELONS.

\*\* BUSH FRUITS - CURRANTS, BLACK RASPBERRIES, RED RASPBERRIES, BLACKBERRIES, DEWBERRIES, GOOSEBERRIES AND BLUEBERRIES.

\*\*\* MUCK CROPS - MINT, DRY ONIONS, POTATOES, CELERY, HEAD LETTUCE, RED BEETS, CARROTS.



Puerto Rican Employment Service pre-selects and screens candidates for agricultural work in the United States. All men selected are required to pass a health examination and must have certificates of good conduct from the police authorities in Puerto Rico.

### **Are Out-of-State Workers Subject to Any Screening Processes?**

Not at present. In 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1942, applicants in Texas for sugar beet work in Michigan were given fluoroscopic examinations for pulmonary tuberculosis. The result was that over 200 were rejected in 1941 and in 1942. This screening process in Texas has been discontinued. Health examinations of agricultural migrants and their children are conducted in several counties that have County Health Departments, notably Saginaw County, in order to safeguard the health of the resident population.

***Migrants are aided in finding work and becoming located on the farms by various government agencies and employer groups. Michigan participates in a nationwide system administered through the cooperative efforts of national and state agencies. Employers' committees are organized to assist in the movement of workers. Sometimes problems in this area arise as a result of the activity of unlicensed and unregulated individuals operating as recruiters. Migrants and growers are encouraged to deal with the regularly established agencies and reputable employers' groups.***

## **MOBILITY OF MIGRANTS**

### **How Do Seasonal Workers Travel to Michigan?**

Most workers travel in their cars, or trucks, at their own expense. Crew leaders transport their workers in trucks or fleets of trucks. Circumstances sometimes alter transportation procedures. In 1942, the war and defense activities created the possibility of farm labor shortage. This altered the economic relations between beet workers and sugar companies. Beet sugar companies in the western region offered to pay transportation costs of beet workers from Texas to their states. The sugar companies of Michigan were therefore obliged to adopt a similar policy. The cost of transporting Mexican Nationals is borne by the employer. Such costs include subsistence, lodging, and other necessary expense while workers are enroute. The employer is obliged to provide transportation and subsistence for contracted Mexican Nationals, or to pay such costs, for the return of the workers from the place of employment to a reception center, within five days after the end of the contract period. Puerto Ricans were brought to Michigan by air carrier in 1950, and air transportation is used extensively by Michigan Field Crops, Inc. for the transportation of Mexican Nationals from El Paso. Employers generally advance the fare. Workers repay this cost through systematic deductions from their earnings in accordance with the work agreement.





### Is Intra-State Migration of Laborers Necessary?

Soils, climate and growing conditions vary considerably within the state. Consequently most crops are grown more successfully in certain locations than in others. Nevertheless, many farmers who need seasonal labor for a specific crop attempt to practice diversified farming and grow a variety of crops so as to keep their workers reasonably occupied during the season and make it worthwhile to provide them with adequate housing. There is some tendency to space plantings to give workers steady work.

The composition of Michigan seasonal workers may change considerably during the season due to fluctuating climatic and agricultural and economic conditions. In 1952, for example, the steel strike affected the labor market and the farm placement program. Many of the unemployed steel and industrial workers were used locally in farm activities on a day-haul basis. Later, the expansion in industrial activities that followed the end of

the steel strike induced the shifting of workers from one area and job to another. Secondly, the drought in the South caused an early and unplanned in-migration of surplus workers. Thirdly, a small strawberry crop in Arkansas caused a large in-migration in May. Fourth, wind did considerable damage to muck crops and in some areas onions had to be replanted, thereby delaying need of labor requirements. Fifth, brown rot in pickles caused the abandonment of some fields. In 1953, warm humid weather advanced pickles and beans about two weeks ahead of estimated schedule. Drought, hail, excessive rains, and untimely killing frosts are other factors that periodically affect labor requirements in certain crops and localities.

### Are There Many Crops with a Slack Period?

Celery, cucumbers, muck crops, onions, snap beans, sugar beets, and truck crops normally have two periods of labor activity with varying intervals between the cultivation, hoeing and weeding season and the harvesting season. Other crops, notably peaches, have an interval between the thinning of fruit and harvest. These factors affect steady employment and induce mobility of workers.

***Migrants travel in cars, trucks, and in some instances airplanes. Mobility of migrants affected by slack periods among different crops, and by the weather. To some extent, unnecessary mobility is being prevented by the ingenuity of the farmer who introduces diversified crops to keep the migrant busy between the thinning of fruit and its harvest.***



# HOUSING FACILITIES

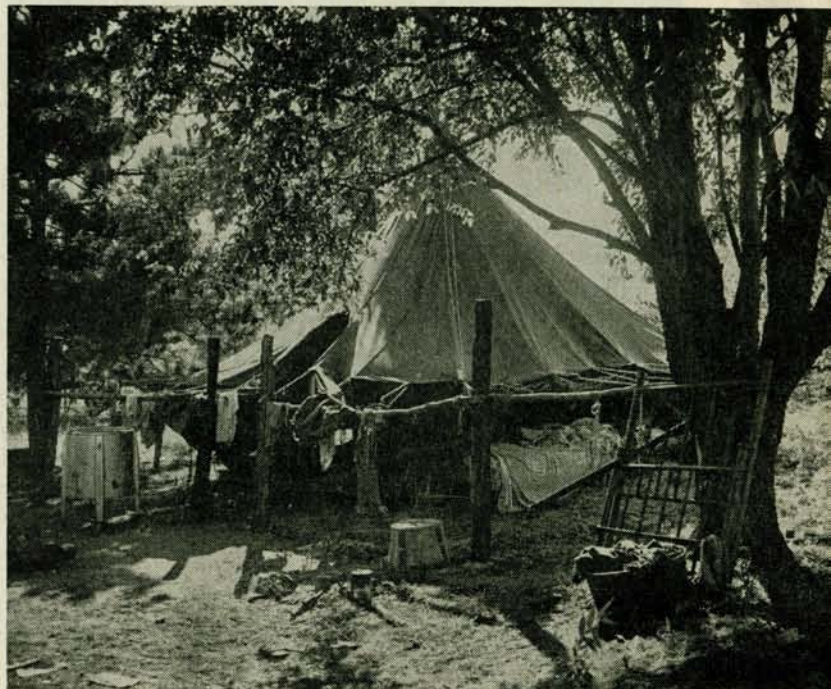
## What Is the Nature of the Housing Facilities of Seasonal Workers?

A wide variety of very poor to good housing prevails in most communities. It varies somewhat with the crop, length of crop season, size of plantation, family status of worker, and many other factors. One general classification might be as follows: (1) houses rented by the migrant worker, a rare occurrence; (2) housing provided by the grower; and (3) housing provided by the processor, or canning company. Growers are commonly expected to provide housing for their workers and many of the larger growers do. Assessments are sometimes levied against the grower who does not provide housing for his workers, by the processor who provides such housing for them.

The over 50,000 out-of-state seasonal workers are housed in every conceivable type of shelter, such as cabin houses, house trailers, wagon houses, leased, vacant farm houses, army pyramidal tents, barracks, tool sheds, granaries, chick houses, brooder houses, barns and garages. In general, the better housing prevails in the crop areas which demand the services of workers over a period of four months or more. There is also a tendency for good housing to be more prevalent on farms of the larger growers.

Many thousands of dollars are spent by growers and processors of this state annually to provide housing for their workers. Competition for out-of-state workers is such that many growers

and processors have come to realize that good housing is necessary to attract and hold the good workers. In recent years, numerous growers who employ about 100 or more workers have built \$10,000 or more housing units for their workers and contend that such investments have paid for themselves within a three-year period.





## **Is the Housing of Out-of-Country and Off-Shore Workers Different from That of Domestic Workers?**

The Mexican Nationals, British West Indians and Puerto Ricans are usually taken care of in barrack-type housing at no cost to the worker. This stipulation is an integral part of the agreement between the employer and the worker. From a score to several hundred workers are commonly housed in a single structure. By virtue of the terms of the contract that the employer shall provide the workers with adequate and hygienic housing, including a place of abode, clean blankets, individual bed or cot, mattress, water, light and fuel, the out-of-country and off-shore (Puerto Rican) workers are usually satisfactorily housed.

## **Are Growers Expected to Provide Housing for Their Workers?**

One normally expects farmers and growers to provide housing accommodations for their seasonal workers as they do for their year-round hired help. This is not the common practice when the farmer raises a crop under direct contract for a processor or canning company.

Sugar beet growing illustrates some complications in providing housing for workers. The majority of beet workers are family units and take care of the beet field work for three to seven farmers. This complicates the issue as to who should provide the housing. The typical sugar beet worker family actually works in the beet fields of individual growers less than

two weeks. For this and other reasons it is the prevailing practice for sugar companies in Michigan to furnish beet workers with housing facilities at no cost to them during the beet season. Farmers who do not provide housing facilities for their beet workers are assessed \$1.25 an acre.

Many growers and processors have discovered that good housing facilities for migrant workers are good investments—that good housing is a means of securing good, dependable workers, who will return year after year. That good housing facilities frequently pay for themselves in a few years is the testimony of an increasing number of employers. Permanent housing is gradually replacing the “16 by 16” army pyramidal tents used by many growers and processors in former years.

In 1954 the Monitor Sugar Company opened two well equipped permanent camps of cement block construction in Bay County and the Michigan Sugar Company operated 21 in the state.

## **Are There Any Federal Migratory Labor Camps in Michigan?**

No, although the Farm Security Administration had tentative plans for constructing one in Berrien County in 1941. It built 58 such camps in 10 states—California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Colorado, Arizona, Texas, Arkansas, Missouri and Florida—from 1936 to July, 1941. These have met some of the more urgent health and housing problems created by migrant agricultural laborers.



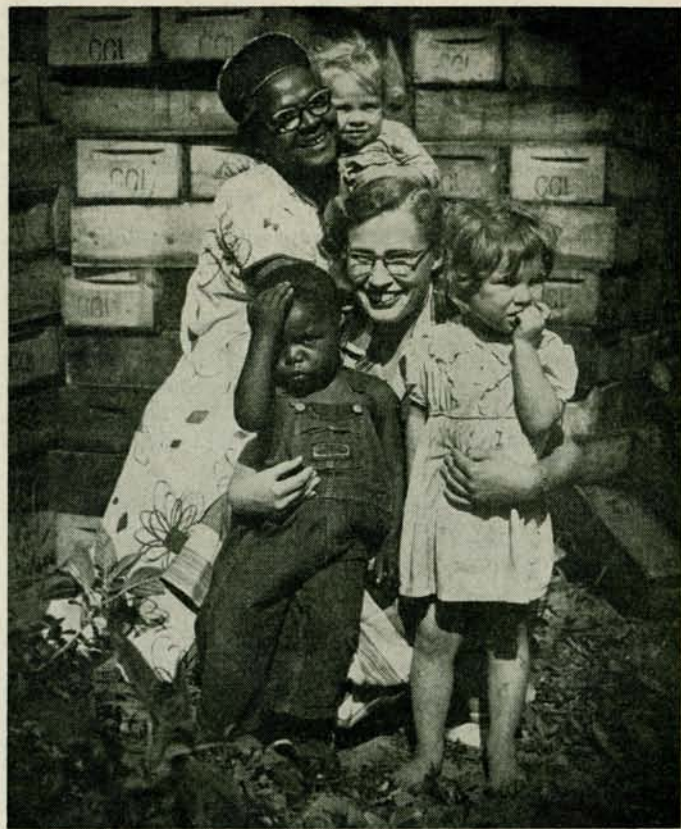
## Are Any Communities in Michigan Providing Housing for Migrant Workers?

The city of Benton Harbor, through its Market Commission, provides a reception center for workers migrating into the area. The Center consists of 40 steel and concrete housing units and three service buildings which are equipped for cooking, dining, laundry, bathing, and recreation. A charge of 75 cents a day is made per person. There is no discrimination as to race. Here workers are temporarily housed while awaiting referral to jobs. In Berrien County, where Benton Harbor is located, extensive use of migrant workers continues from mid-April to late November.

## Do Existing Michigan Laws Specify Minimum Housing Provisions for Migrant Farm Workers?

No. However, Puerto Ricans from the Island and foreign workers are protected by minimum housing regulations of the United States Department of Labor. These are as follows:

1. *Minimum Sleeping Standards:* buildings or tents structurally secure with good roof and flooring and windows and doors screened. Dirt floors not acceptable. At least 32 square feet of floor space per worker; 25 square feet of floor space where double-decker cots are used. No more than eight men on single cots in 16 x 16 tent (other sizes in proportion). Beds or cots, blankets and mattresses provided. Straw, grass, hay or cottonseed mattresses not acceptable.



2. *Minimum Cooking and Eating Standards:* cooking and eating space in addition to the minimum space requirements for sleeping. For workers required to board themselves, cooking stoves, cooking utensils, tables, seats, table utensils and fuel. One oil, wood, or gas stove, with not less than one burner for each five workers or fraction of five workers. Outdoor cooking facilities, unprotected from inclement weather, not acceptable.

3. *Minimum Sanitary Standards:* sanitary bathing facilities with adequate supply of water readily accessible to workers' quarters. Where showers are provided, at least one shower-head in operating condition for every twenty-five workers; where tubs are used, one size No. 3 tub in good condition for every five workers. Sanitary toilet facilities. For every ten workers, at least one usable enclosed toilet. Such facility shall be within 50 yards of living quarters. Adequate potable water within 100 yards of workers' quarters.

4. *Minimum Standards for Lighting and Heating:* where electricity is not available at least one lamp for each five men. Fuel for heating must be readily accessible to the workers.

These regulations indirectly help to provide better housing for domestic migrant workers because due to shortages of domestic labor, employers had to meet these standards in order to obtain labor from outside the United States. Since domestic qualified labor have the first opportunity for employment, these facilities are made available to them.

## Could Migrant Workers Live at State Parks?

Of 47 state parks in Michigan with facilities for camping, 15 are located in areas of intense seasonal crop activity. The state parks are operated by the Parks and Recreation Division of the State Conservation Department. Camp sites within these state parks may be used for a period or periods totaling not more than 30 days in one calendar month. Most state parks are available to campers and trailerites from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Campers need a trailer or tent. The charge is 50 cents per day per campsite and 20 cents per day extra if electricity is desired.

★ ★ ★

***Housing of migrants ranges from very poor to very good. Some areas in the state have made real progress in furnishing good housing. Growers who have invested in better housing facilities report that the expenditure has been well worthwhile. An outstanding example of a good reception center is the one at Benton Harbor. Housing is one phase of the migrant problem that may need legislation to improve conditions more rapidly.***



## HEALTH AND WELFARE

### Does the Migrant Labor Group Present Special Health Problems?

Yes. Generally speaking, the incidence of tuberculosis, venereal disease and dysenteries is much higher than in the native population of Michigan. These are contagious diseases which may spread easily within the migrant groups themselves and to the communities to which they come. The hazard is greater because of the sanitary problems of housing, water supply, sewerage, and food handling peculiar to this mobile group. Obtaining medical aid and hospital care is more difficult, often, because the migrants do not know the doctors and vice versa, and because prepayment plans have been much slower in providing for these groups than for the resident population.

### Is Hospitalization and Medical Care Available for Migrant Workers Who Have T.B. and Other Communicable Diseases?

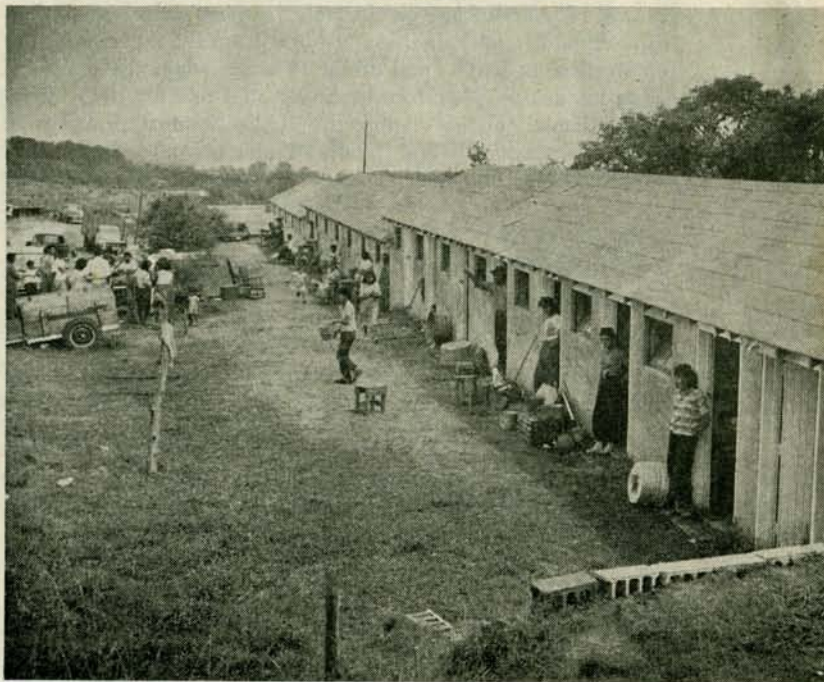
The state provides funds for T.B. care for non-residents. The county carries the burden of caring for those who are institutionalized with communicable diseases other than T.B.

### Do All Counties with Intense Seasonal Agricultural Activity Have County Health Departments?

At present there are 22 single county health departments and 17 multiple county health departments including 70 counties.

There are 13 counties without county health departments, 10 of which require much seasonal agricultural labor. These counties are: Berrien, Cass, Jackson, Ionia, Montcalm, Gratiot, Clinton, Lapeer, Tuscola and Huron. However, several have a county nurse. Moreover, the services of the Michigan Department of Health are available to these counties.

Although tuberculosis is a serious problem, a case-finding program, such as a survey with a mobile X-ray unit, is not profitable unless personnel is available to provide follow-up on suspects found. It is worthwhile only if infected individuals can be located and isolated, and their contacts investigated.





## **Is Emergency Hospitalization Available to Migrant Workers?**

The County Welfare Department may approve emergency hospitalization for non-resident indigents if they deem it to be necessary and no other funds are available for the purpose.

## **Is State Aid Available to Migrant Workers Who Become Disabled?**

Ordinarily, no. The County Bureau of Social Aid, the local office of the State Department of Social Welfare, gives aid to persons 18 years of age or older and in need who become permanently and totally disabled or blind from causes arising after coming here to live. Total disability arises when the person is bedridden or cannot perform tasks essential to daily living without assistance. To be eligible the applicant must prove need. Persons permanently and totally disabled from other causes must also prove one year's presence in the state, the blind five years.

## **Are Needy Migrant Workers Eligible for County Welfare Aid?**

That depends upon length of residence and other factors. The County Welfare Department administers general public welfare. To qualify, the applicant must meet the following eligibility provisions: (1) lived continuously in a county of the state for one year with intent to make it his home, but time spent in a public institution or on parole therefrom shall not be counted in determining the manner of residence; (2) has

not received during that year any public or private relief or support from friends, charitable organizations or relatives other than those legally responsible; (3) has not lost his resident standing by remaining away from this state for an uninterrupted period of one year. Absence from the state for labor or other special or temporary purposes, however, does not occasion loss of residence.

## **Are Needy Migrant Workers Eligible for Temporary Emergency Relief?**

County Welfare Departments may give temporary emergency relief to non-resident indigents if they deem it necessary.

## **Can Stranded Migrant Workers Receive Aid?**

County Welfare Departments provide necessary funds to return stranded non-residents to their home state if they are without funds and can reasonably prove legal residence in such state. The state reimburses the counties for these expenditures.

## **Does Michigan Have a Workman's Compensation Law Applicable to Seasonal Workers?**

Under Michigan statutes, farmers are not required to carry Workmen's Compensation Insurance or similar accident insurance for their workers engaged in farm work. Other employers of four or more are required to do so. Farmers in Michigan are not legally liable for damages resulting from an accident unless the injured worker can prove in court that the farmer was negligent or failed to provide reasonably safe work conditions.

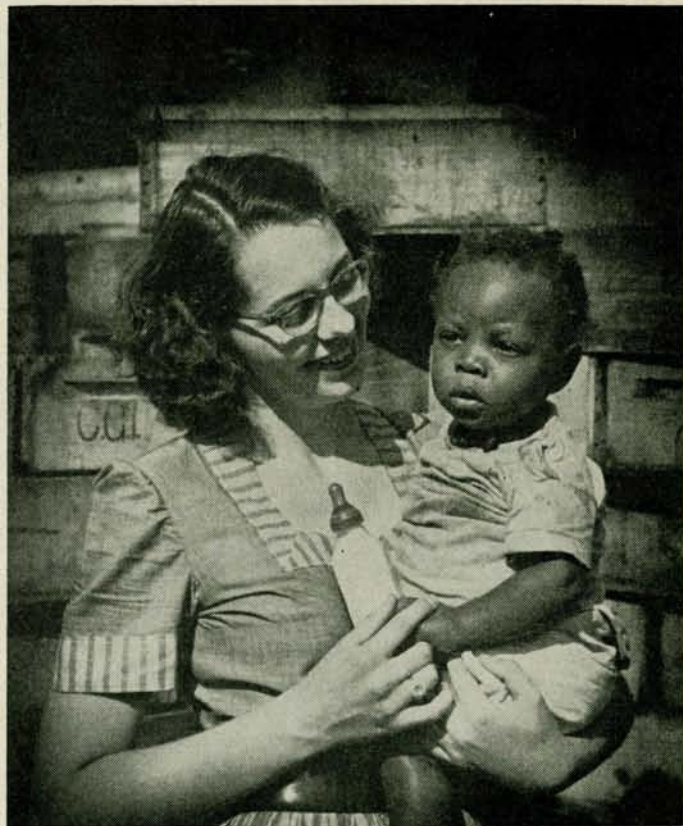


In Michigan, numerous large users of agricultural workers have provided protection for themselves and their workers by voluntarily purchasing Workmen's Compensation Insurance or liability insurance, notably those who are members of the Michigan Farm Bureau.

### **Are Any Migrant Workers Protected by Group Insurance?**

In August, 1953, the Michigan Hospital Service and Michigan Medical Service (Blue Cross-Blue Shield) announced that it had begun giving standard coverage on a month-to-month basis, to migrant workers, as an experiment. The migrant families were covered at the same rate as other farm groups, approximately \$9.00 a month for ward care for the entire family. Ninety-eight percent of the 140 cherry pickers on one large cherry farm at Traverse City, for example, signed up for group insurance. They signed up through their employer, who deducts the cost from their pay, as is customary in most Blue Cross coverage. In 1954 there were 326 subscribers working for five growers (two in the Traverse City and three in the Benton Harbor areas). Plans are being made for marked increase in enrollment for 1955.

***The incidence of some diseases is much higher among migrants than the native population of Michigan. Some progress has been made in the availability of group hospital insurance for the migrants. Improvements can still be made regarding health and welfare, but in many respects the progress being made is encouraging.***



# EARNINGS

## How Much Do Seasonal Workers Earn?

Data on this are meager, especially for domestic workers. Mexican Nationals, British West Indians and Puerto Ricans have guaranteed work and wages that domestic workers do not have. Each contracted Mexican National worker is guaranteed the opportunity for employment for at least three-fourths of the work days of the total period covered in his contract.

If the employer provides less employment than is called for by this provision, the Mexican worker must be paid the amount he would have earned in the guaranteed number of days. They must be paid the prevailing rate received by domestic workers in the area for the kind of work they are performing, or at the contract rate, whichever is higher.

The employer guarantees to provide the Puerto Rican worker 160 hours of agricultural and related work in each of four week periods during his agreement.

The President's Commission on Migratory Labor reports that in 1949, the average migratory farm worker of the United States, according to a survey by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, got 70 days of farm work and 31 days of nonfarm work, making a total for the year of 101 days. Average annual earnings of the individual migratory worker from both types of employment were \$514. This compares poorly with the average

cash earnings of factory workers in 1949 of \$2600. However, farm workers have an additional source of income in the benefits furnished by their employers—usually housing and transportation, averaging \$36. On the other hand, industrial workers have recently gained important benefits. These include such items as retirement benefits, sick benefits, holiday pay, and vacation pay, which average \$120 per year, and are increasing.

## What Was the Seasonal Farm Labor Wage for Different Crop Activities in 1953?

This tended to vary somewhat by areas. However, the following wage rates were commonly paid for harvesting the following crops in 1953:

Asparagus	2 cents per pound
Strawberries	6 cents per quart
Black raspberries	4 cents per pint
Red raspberries	5 cents per pint
Blueberries	6-8 cents per pound
Currants	4 cents per quart
Dewberries	5 cents per quart



Sweet Cherries	3 cents per pound
Tart Cherries	50-60 cents per lug
Peaches, Pears and Apples	15-20 cents per bushel
Grapes	20 cents per lug
Tomatoes	12-15 cents per hamper
Plums	60 cents per bushel
Pickles	50 percent of value
Snap Beans	50 percent of value or 2-2½ cents per pound
Potatoes	8-10 cents per bushel

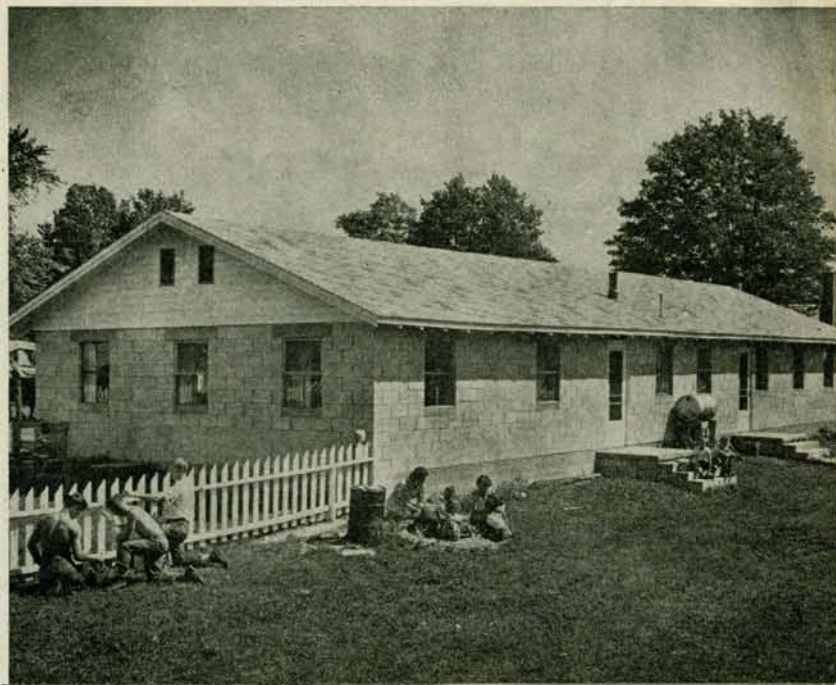
★ ★ ★

*More data are needed on the earnings of the migrant workers. In some instances, the out-of-country workers appear to be better protected than the native migrants as far as guaranteed work and wages are concerned. The seasonal farm labor wage for different crop activities tends to vary somewhat by areas. By comparison, industrial workers earn many more benefits than migratory workers.*

## MIGRANT CHILDREN AND EDUCATION

**How Many Children of School Age and of Compulsory School Age Are There Among the Seasonal Out-of-State Migrant Workers?**

At the present time there is no state-wide census of such children. It is known that among the resident population chil-



dren of school age, five to 19 years inclusive, comprise 22.9 percent of the total population; and children of compulsory school age, six to 15 years inclusive, comprise 15.9 percent of the total population. One can assume that a similar age distribution prevails among the seasonal out-of-state migrants. Application of the above percentage to the out-of-state labor force in Michigan in 1952 results in estimated number of children of migrants as follows:

Date	School age 5 to 19 years inclusive	Compulsory school age 6 to 15 years inclusive
April 30	800	500
May 15	1,400	1,000
May 30	6,300	4,400
June 15	8,100	5,600
June 30	9,400	6,600
July 15	12,200	8,500
August 15	9,000	6,200
September 15	5,300	3,700
October 15	1,700	1,200
November 15	300	200

According to the above assumptions, school age children of migrant workers reach a peak number in mid-July of 12,200. Compulsory school age children of migrant workers reach a

peak number in mid-July of 8,500. While the peak of migrant children comes during July and August, when schools are ordinarily not in session, it is clear that thousands of migrant children of school age are in the state during periods when schools are in session. On the suggestion of the Migrant Committee of the County Superintendents' Association, a question in regard to migrant children was included in the school census for May, 1953. It is hoped that this may provide more accurate data for future reference.

### Do Children of Migrant Workers Attend School While in Michigan?

Observations of various superintendents and education officials who are familiar with the situation in the field, indicate that possibly two-thirds of the children of migrant workers do not attend school at all in Michigan. The attendance of those who do enroll is irregular. A study made in four Michigan counties in September and October of 1943 showed only 18 percent of the children of school age who were listed on the school census, actually enrolled in school.

### Are They Normally Advanced in School?

For the great majority, the answer is "No." Studies of migrant children in Texas, in Colorado, and in Michigan show children of migrants retarded from one to three grades in school although their ability is comparable to that of resident children of the same age.





## **Why Are Migrant Children Retarded?**

The transiency of migrant families results in irregular school attendance. Some have limited school opportunity in states where they reside during the time when schools are in session. Attendance laws are frequently not enforced for migrants.

## **Do Children of Migrants Attend School in Their "Home States"?**

School attendance of children of migrant families is limited in their "home states" as it is in Michigan. Many leave their place of winter residence in March or April and do not return until November or December, so that only four or five months of school are available to them there.

## **What Factors Prevent School Attendance?**

Migrancy itself, with frequent change of residence, is a basic reason. In some cases migrants are unfamiliar with Michigan's compulsory school attendance law. The attendance law is frequently not enforced due to the shortage of attendance officers or their lack of concern about truancy of migrant children. Sometimes children are kept from school because of lack of text books or suitable clothing.

Unquestionably, the need or desire of migrant parents for the income their children can earn explains non-attendance

in a large number of instances. The attitude of the local community and school officials has a great deal to do in explaining attendance or non-attendance of migrant children. Recent reports from Hollandale, Minnesota, and Hoopeston, Illinois show that community interest in migrants results in definite increase in school attendance.

## **Why Should Michigan Communities Assume Responsibility for Education of Migrant Children?**

Michigan is committed to the principle of providing equal educational opportunity to all children. These children who suffer from unusual handicaps in securing an education deserve special consideration. Many of the migrant families spend more than half the year in Michigan. The labor of these families is essential to Michigan's economy. The state has an obligation to the children of these workers.

## **Are Local Districts Entitled to State Aid for Attendance of Children of Migrants?**

Yes. The school district receives state aid for migrant children on the same basis as for resident children. Information as to the amount of state aid per child and the method of distribution can be obtained from the Michigan Department of Public Instruction.



## Are Educational Opportunities Available When Schools Are Not in Session?

Church and community groups have, in some instances, provided summer sessions of four to eight weeks for migrant children. In several instances, the public schools have provided summer schools for children of migrant workers. A study of migrant concentration and potential attendance of migrant children indicates that at least one-half of the 230 Michigan communities with intensive seasonal crop activities might reasonably operate summer schools for migrants.

A special need is for nursery schools since many of the migrant workers are mothers of small children. New York and New Jersey have experimented successfully with public nursery schools for children of migrant workers.

## In View of Their Retardation and Irregular Attendance, What Can the School Do for Migrant Children?

Retardation among children of migrants is rarely due to lack of innate ability. Studies regarding the intelligence of migrant children indicate that as a group they are equally as capable of doing regular school work as non-migrant children as a group. Generally, persons who have had experiences with migrant children in the classroom recommend that these children be accepted into groups corresponding to their chronological age. It is best under these circumstances to attempt to fit the program of the room and of the school to the needs

of the individual child. This is a common procedure and acceptable educational practice for all children and there should be no exception in the case of migrant children. Perhaps the greatest contribution the school can make for migrant children is to make them feel welcome and to give them the satisfaction of achievement in work they can do.



## Do Child Labor Laws Apply to Children of Migrant Workers?

Under the 1949 revision of the Fair Labor Standards Act, children of school age are not permitted to work while schools are in session. The child labor requirements of this Act apply generally to farmers whose crops or produce go either directly or indirectly into interstate or foreign commerce, as in the case of a farmer who sends his products to a cannery, processor, or dealer who he knows or has reason to believe will send it outside the state either in its original form or as an ingredient of another product. For example; tomato growers who send their tomatoes to a cannery within the state are covered if the canned tomato products made from their tomatoes go out of state.

The U.S. Department of Labor reports that investigators for the Department found more than 5,000 violations in 1953 on farms in 42 states including Michigan. Under provisions of the Sugar Beet Act, children under 14 years of age may not be employed in beet operations and those 14-16 years of age may not be employed more than eight hours in a day. Children employed in agriculture are exempt from provisions of the Michigan State Child Labor Act. However, under Michigan's school attendance laws, children up to 16 years of age are required to attend school unless specifically excused. This law applies to all children.

## What Services for Children of Migratory Workers are Available in Local Communities?

All community services available to resident children should be made available to children of migrant workers. They will vary, however, from community to community. All of the services of the Juvenile Court of Michigan are legally available to any child found in the county of the particular court's jurisdiction. Practically, however, many courts are reluctant to assume the responsibility for a child of a migrant family who may become the permanent financial responsibility of the county through such action.



***The education of migrant children is one of our more important problems in this state. Thousands are in the state when schools are in session. Children of migrants are frequently retarded from one to three grades although their ability is not less than that of our own resident children. Does the state have a responsibility to provide equal educational opportunity to all children?***



# ADULT EDUCATION, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

## Are Opportunities for Adult Education Provided to Migrants?

No opportunities for adult education are provided to migrants with the exception of limited activities carried on by a few Catholic and Protestant church groups. Funds provided by federal legislation such as the Smith-Lever Act for land grant colleges can be applied to educational services for all agriculture. Current programs of Agricultural Extension are at present directed to stable farm families and to provide home-making education for both rural and urban women. In general, none is used for providing educational programs for rural migrant families.

The Michigan legislative appropriation for adult education distributed under the direction of the Department of Public Instruction may also be used for adult education services to migrant families. Very little of this money is available for programs for migrants because (1) local school districts must provide additional appropriations of their own; (2) primary school districts, in which most of the migrants actually reside, are not eligible to participate in the program even if willing and financially able; and (3) most graded school districts do not offer adult education programs outside of their own dis-

tricts. Neither are any adult education services provided by tax supported institutions of higher education other than the land grant college.

## What Opportunities for Adult Education Should be Provided for Migrants?

The highest percentage of illiteracy in Michigan exists in the migrant population. This is true for both youth and adults and includes the white and non-white and Spanish-speaking





migrant population. In addition to literacy education, adult education programs should provide both health education and instruction in home-making. This should include, in addition to simple sanitary and health practices, such areas as food preparation, nutrition, infant care, sewing and dressmaking. Exhibits in home practices should be provided; also demonstrations on feeding children, uses of dried milk, meal planning, and simple kitchen and clothes storage.

### **How Can Adult Education Be Provided for Migrants?**

A portion of the funds already available for services to stable farm and urban families could be diverted to providing adult education opportunities for migrants. The Agricultural Extension Service might set up demonstration units for home-making education. Home demonstration agents in areas where migrants are employed might be encouraged to provide services to migrants and to organize sewing and cooking clubs among migrant families. The latter are in greater need of such services than the more stable population for which these opportunities are available. For example, from January to June, 1950, the California Agricultural Extension Service assigned two home advisers to work with agricultural laborers in six counties in the San Joaquin Valley. As a result, 33 new adult education groups were organized; 181 demonstrations conducted; and 230 home visits were made. The number of agricultural laborers who participated in the program was 3,543.

County Agricultural Agents could also be helpful by cooperating with local communities in setting up desirable opportunities for adult education. Agricultural Extension should

also have included in its budget a special allocation providing for one or more field workers who would serve as consultants to community organizations carrying on projects related to migrant workers.

### **What Services Can Be Provided by Tax-supported Institutions of Higher Learning?**

Other tax-supported institutions of higher learning should be encouraged to allocate portions of their present budgets and services for adult education to assist local communities and school districts in setting up adult education programs for migrants. This might include providing consultants to local programs and organizations, the preparation of materials for use in migrant programs, and the training of local adult education leaders.

Tax-supported higher institutions conducting programs in teacher education could immediately cooperate in organizing workshops, institutes and special programs to acquaint in-service teachers with the best methods of teaching migrant children and to provide them with suitable audio-visual and other materials for classroom use. These institutions should also cooperate in setting up educational research projects directed toward the improvement of educational opportunities for both migrant youth and adults.

Colleges and universities, both private and public, should be encouraged to expand existing field work programs by providing opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students to undertake field work projects with migrants. Some



of this could include granting college credit for field work experience according to current practices in field projects extended to other groups. Opportunities of this kind might be provided in such areas as education, including observation and practice teaching, sociology, home economics, recreation, agriculture, public health, and adult education.

### **What Services Can Be Provided by the Department of Public Instruction?**

The Division of Adult Education of the Department of Public Instruction, consulting with various state agencies and Agricultural Extension, might be encouraged to provide local migrant communities with a check list of facilities and services that could be provided for migrants. The check list would help local leaders to develop programs, to make an inventory of available local resources, and to plan more realistically for additional services or facilities that could be provided.

### **What Services Can Local Public Schools Perform?**

Local public school adult education programs might be encouraged to provide special adult education services to migrant adults. Since primary school districts are ineligible for adult education funds in Michigan, the Department of Public Instruction could be requested to encourage County Boards of Education to set up experimental adult education programs for migrants on a county-wide basis. This could include the cooperation of existing public school adult education programs

within the county and the utilization of such services as may be available from institutions of higher learning also serving the area.

The cooperative experiments would provide, in addition to the services from the agricultural extension program, leadership for group meetings, library materials from both local and county libraries, audio-visual aids, and the utilization of local school district facilities for organized recreation programs available to migrant youths and adults.



## What Services Can Libraries Perform?

In areas served by county libraries, bookmobiles could be utilized during the migrant season to provide migrant children and adults with suitable reading materials. Employees of county libraries and qualified volunteers employed by local migrant committees could then conduct story hours for children, movies, film strips, and other demonstration programs of an educational or recreational nature for both children and adults. Local groups could be encouraged to provide both volunteer workers and necessary equipment to conduct such programs.

Even more effective results would be obtained if the Michigan State Library were provided with funds enabling the purchase of a demonstration bookmobile with equipment and materials suitable for educational and recreational needs of migrants. Such a bookmobile, under the direction of a qualified librarian, could be scheduled to visit areas with heavy concentrations of migrant workers thereby serving both as a useful facility for migrants and a demonstration and leadership training device for local communities. The following counties have bookmobiles: Branch, Cass, Genesee, Ingham, Iosco, Jackson, Kent, Lapeer, Lenawee, Macomb, Manistee, Mason, Menominee, Monroe, Muskegon, Presque Isle, St. Clair, Van Buren, Wayne, and Wexford.

## What Can Local Communities Do?

How can the local community organize to provide adult educational, recreational and religious services to migrants? Since such a program involves the services of many organized

community groups and requires extensive leadership, an area or local migrant committee or council might be organized. This committee should be representative of the entire area. It might also include more than one community or even an entire county, depending upon the nature of the crop and the character of the area.

Such a committee should include representatives of all organized groups that influence community opinion. It should include representation from tax-supported agencies such as the public schools, County Board of Education, and Agricultural Extension; recreational authorities; police and sheriff's departments; welfare agencies; health departments; religious groups, such as the Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Ministerial Alliance, Council of Churches, and other special church groups; community agencies including the Red Cross and social agencies; 4-H Clubs; Girl Scouts; Boy Scouts; Campfire Girls; growers and producers organizations; Chambers of Commerce; organized farm groups; and labor groups.

## How Can an Area Migrant Committee or Council Function?

Such a committee can draw up simple rules for representation, organization and procedure. It can function by conducting local surveys to determine needs and by setting up special committees to organize activities and programs to meet these needs.

Some activities that an area migrant committee or council can undertake include the following: The committee could



conduct a program of public information directed towards producers, growers, merchants, churches, parent-teacher associations, and all organized adult groups. This could be carried out by printed pamphlets, film strips, tape recordings, newspaper articles and radio programs, and also include speakers and panels for community groups. Such a public information program might provide information regarding (a) the number of migrants expected in the area during the coming season, (b) their origin and cultural pattern, (c) the extent of their contribution to the economic welfare of the community (grower, producer, merchant), and (d) the responsibility of the community for providing migrants with adequate facilities and services to meet their housing, recreational, educational, and religious needs.

The council might conduct, by printed pamphlet or otherwise, an informational program directed towards the migrants themselves for the purpose of acquainting them with the recreational, educational and religious facilities and services available to them.

Such a council or committee could, whenever possible, make use of the services provided to local communities by national and state groups, such as Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic organizations; and college, university and interested state departments and agencies. Utilizing the resources of these state and national organizations, the committee or council should provide a leadership training program for local workers and utilize whenever possible the services of both graduate and undergraduate students seeking field work experience under college or university sponsored field work programs.

## What Are Some Services That May Be Provided for Migrants?

Some services that might be provided for migrants include (a) health services: T.B. and V.D. surveys in cooperation with local and state health departments and the use of mobile x-rays, immunization, and cooperation with the health department and local physicians in setting up policies and procedures for medical services to migrants; (b) recreation: movies, sports, talent nights, crafts, and others; (c) educational opportunities for both youth and adults; (d) nursery schools and child care centers; and (e) religious activities including worship services, church school instruction, and visitations to homes and hospitals.



***Except for a few fine programs conducted by religious groups, no opportunities for adult education are provided to migrants. Since the highest percentage of illiteracy in Michigan exists among migrants, it would seem that adult education programs are needed. Present agencies, such as the schools and colleges, can do more in this area. Local communities should organize their own resources, using already existing agencies to extend more educational and recreational opportunities to the migrant population.***



## USEFUL ADDITIONAL READING

- "A Study of Educational Achievement of a Group of Children Working in Agriculture During School Hours", October-December, 1951. *Child Labor Bulletin* No. 202, U.S. Dept. of Labor, July, 1952, 3 pp.
- Anderson, H. Gordon, "Some Problems of Educating the Children of Migrants", *Special Bulletin on Story of Hollandale, Minnesota*, Office of Education, U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, April 30, 1953, 8 pp.
- Brock, Jack D., and M. C. Henderson, "Migratory Labor—Its Problems and Their Solution." *Sugar Beet Journal*, 12:80-83, May/June, 1947.
- Chisholm, J., "Helping Our Helpers". *Michigan Farmer*, 214, December 16, 1950.
- "Curriculum Studies Project—School for Migrant Children", Wau-pun, Wisconsin, Summer, 1952. Department of Public Instruction, Madison, Wisconsin.
- Ducock, Louis J., *Migratory Farm Workers in 1949*. U.S.D.A., Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1950, 20 pp.
- Ellis, G. M., "Barrier Traversed In Michigan's Traverse City", *Rotarian*, 81:29-31, August, 1952.
- Fontaine, Andre, "No Migrant Labor Problem Here", *Nation's Business*, December, 1951.
- Fuller, Varden, *No Work Today: The Plight of America's Migrants*, 1953, 28 pp. Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 190.
- Gaston, H. P., A. B. Love and J. S. Boyd, *Homes for Seasonal Farm Help*. Michigan State College, Extension Service, Farm Building Service Circular 711, June 1947.
- Gaston, H. P., "Housing Transient Labor", In *State Horticultural Society of Michigan*, 77th Annual Report of the Society, pp. 55-6. East Lansing, 1947.
- "Guide to Good Practices in Youth Day Haul Programs," *Bulletin* No. 173, Bureau of Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., 1954, 12 pp.

- Hearings Before Select Committee to Investigate the Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens*, House of Representatives 76th Congress, Third Session, pursuant to H. Res. 63 and H. Res. 491, Part 3. Chicago Hearings, August 19-21, 1940, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, pp. 1295-1324.
- Hearings Before Select Committee Investigating Defence Migration*. House of Representatives, 77th Congress, First Session, pursuant to H. Res. 113, Detroit Hearings, Part 19. September 23-25, 1941, pp. 7796-7855.
- Johnson, C. E., and K. T. Wright, *Reducing Sugar Beet Costs*. Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular 215, June 1949.
- Johnston, Edgar G., "Michigan's Step-Children". *School of Education Bulletin*, University of Michigan, 15:1-6, October 1943.
- Johnston, Edgar G., "The Education of Children of Spanish-Speaking Migrants in Michigan". *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters*, 32:509-520, 1946, Part IV.
- "Knowing and Understanding Our Latin-American Pupils", *Story of Plainview, Texas*, Office of Education, U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, December, 1952, 3 pp.
- Love, A. B., and H. P. Gaston, *Michigan's Emergency Farm Labor 1943-1947*, Michigan State College, Extension Bulletin 288, December 1947, 36 pp.
- Martin, Frances, "Spring and the Migrants", *Educational Leadership*, April 1951.
- "Migrant Agricultural Workers in Door County," Division of Children and Youth, Wisconsin Department of Public Welfare, Madison, Wisconsin, December 1951, 22 pp.
- "Migrant Workers Find Better World in Minnesota Town: Hollandale Citizens Join to Aid Children and Parents." *Labor Information Bulletin*, U.S. Department of Labor, August 1951.
- Migratory Labor In American Agriculture*, Report of the President's Commission on Migratory Labor. Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1951, 188 pp.



*Seasonal Farm Jobs, Michigan*. Michigan Unemployment Compensation Commission (Occupational Guide 45) 1951, 36 pp.

*Post Season Farm Labor Report*, State of Michigan, 1951, Detroit, Michigan State Employment Service, 1952, 32 pp.

*Preliminary Survey of Major Areas Requiring Outside Agricultural Labor*, Farm Labor Program. U.S.D.A., Extension Service, Extension Farm Labor Circular 38, September 1947, pp. 78-94.

*Proceedings of Southwest Regional Conference on Migrant Labor*, March 4-6, 1953, New Mexico Commission on Children and Youth.

*Regulatory Controls and Services Affecting Welfare of Migrant Farm Workers in Michigan—Problems and Suggested Solutions*, Detroit, Michigan State Employment Service, November 1951, 25 pp.

*Report and Evaluation on Migrant Adult Education, Richfield Springs, New York, 1953*. Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 3 pp.

*Report of Demonstration School for Children of Migrant Workers: Perrineville, New Jersey, 1953*. Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 5 pp.

*Report on Conference On Education of Migrant Children, East Mississippi Migrant Route States*. Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., May 1952.

Shotwell, L. R., "How One Town Licked the Migrant Problem", *Christian Herald*, 75:20-22, 53, March 1952.

Stark, Don, "To Have and To Hold Migrant Labor", *Michigan Farmer*, 215:5, May 19, 1952.

Stryker, Oscar D., and C. B. Hoff, "Foreign Agricultural Labor Program in Michigan", *Journal Michigan State Medical Society*, 47:1241-2, November 1949.

Thaden, J. F., *Migratory Beet Workers in Michigan*. Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, Special Bulletin 319, 1942, 47 pp.

"These Are the Children", *Report of the State Migrant Committee*, Wisconsin Welfare Council, February 1954.

Titus, Harold, "Migratory Sugar Beet Workers", *Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, Quarterly Bulletin*, 25:3-8, August 1942. (Condensed version of Michigan AES Spec. Bul. 319).

Wright, K. T., "The Importance of Sugar Beets to Michigan Farmers". *Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, Quarterly Bulletin*, 29:343-350, May 1947.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Study Commission is grateful to the Interagency Committee for assistance and advice. In many respects that Committee served as "the eyes and ears and legs" of the Commission.

The Commission is indebted to the Migrant Committee of the Michigan Council of Church Women, Western Michigan College of Education, Michigan Field Crops, and the Michigan Employment Security Commission for photographs used in the booklet. Except for pages 13 and 16, photographs are by Dale Rooks of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Professor Leonard Gernant of Western Michigan College of Education provided editorial assistance. Mr. Frank Blackford, formerly of the Governor's staff, and Mr. Lawrence Farrell, Executive Assistant to the Governor, were uniformly helpful and encouraging, and Mr. J. Lyle Sage, State Supervisor of Printing, was an invaluable assistant in technical phases of preparation and printing of the manuscript.

Additional copies of this booklet may be obtained from the Executive Office, State Capitol, Lansing; from the Division of Employment Security of the Michigan Employment Security Commission, 7310 Woodward Avenue, Detroit 2, or from members of the Commission.