

**The Changing Nature of American Agriculture
and Its Impact on Hispanic Farm Labor:
Topics for Research and Analysis**

Dr. Refugio I. Rochín
University of California, Davis

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Abstract: This paper examines the large scale trends in America's agriculture leading to larger and fewer farms and changes in the farm population and hired worker patterns. The author draws out several important implications for Latino farm laborers, especially seasonal and migrant farm workers. The overall implication of these changes is that they will lead to a greater regulation of farm labor which, in turn, could lead to fewer employment possibilities for domestic Latino farm workers and greater utilization of imported farm labor. Also laid out are several issues for research related to these trends and their implications.

About the Author: Refugio I. Rochín

Dr. Refugio Rochín is a professor of Agricultural Economics at the University of California at Davis. He has published extensively on the economic status of Latinos in the United States, as well as on the conditions affecting the agricultural economy of California. Dr. Rochin is a frequent consultant to national and international agencies concerned with rural development. He is also a Scholar of the Tomas Rivera Center, a national policy institute with offices in Claremont, California and San Antonio, Texas.

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The Julian Samora Research Institute is committed to the generation, transmission, and application of knowledge to serve the needs of Latino communities in the Midwest. To this end, it has organized a number of publication initiatives to facilitate the timely dissemination of current research and information relevant to Latinos. The Julian Samora Research Institute Research Report Series (RR) publishes monograph length reports of original empirical research on Latinos in the nation conducted by the Institute's faculty affiliates and research associates, and/or projects funded by grants to the Institute.

The Changing Nature of American Agriculture and its Impact on Hispanic Farm Labor: Topics for Research and Analysis

It is indeed a pleasure for me to speak at Michigan State University. I left this campus with my doctoral degree in Agricultural Economics in the summer of 1971 and went on to Davis, California where I am currently employed. I didn't, at the time I left, expect to come back to make this kind of presentation. It wasn't necessarily the weather. It was not knowing whether I would be doing work on farm labor. I have had many diverse interests, mostly related to international agricultural development. But I am pleased that my training at Michigan State rewarded me with the desire, experience, and skills to address a broad set of human resource issues and participate in a conference such as this. My training here was very good. It was applied and it was very open.

I've changed the focus of my presentation because the idea of just concentrating on structural changes bothered me. I don't have any excuses for leaving that focus. But I broadened my topic somewhat to talk about general changes in agriculture and related issues of Hispanic workers. I think there are more changes occurring in agriculture than just structural changes that affect Hispanics. Part of the problem in looking at structural issues alone is that I haven't been dealing specifically with the way structure relates to agricultural employment. I have been dealing with other issues such as, issues of demographics, capital formation in Hispanic communities, Hispanic education and training, affirmative action, as well as labor projections to the year 2000 and the types of labor markets we can expect then.

Thus, I am going to talk more about the changes in agriculture from a global and socio-demographic point of view. Initially, it may not relate directly to the Hispanic presence in agriculture. Later, however, I will argue that Hispanics are playing an increasing and important role in agriculture. And then I will proceed with some of the institutional and structural issues that I think this Institute and other social science researchers are interested in with regard to Hispanics in rural communities and agriculture.

Changes in Agriculture and Employment

First, I want to talk about America's agriculture—i.e., agriculture as a place of employment and a source of income for our work force. A general trend to note is that despite increasing farm production and productivity, agriculture's role in the United States economy for income

generation and employment continues to shrink. That is, the importance of agriculture as a source of income for people and employment is declining relative to the total GNP. Total hired employment in agriculture has declined steadily from an annual average of about 3.7 million workers, in 1960, to about 2.5 million today (Table 1). And that is a remarkable decline, especially considering the amount of output and surplus that is produced by our agricultural sector. Furthermore, it is hard to see any state today where agriculture is a major source of employment or a major generator of income for workers.

Table 1
Number of Hired Farmworkers by Days of Farmwork: 1960 - 1985*
(Numbers in Thousands)

	Hired Worker Total	Days of Hired Farm Work			Farm**	% of Total Population
		Fewer Than 150	150 and Over	% of Total		
1960	3,692	2,864	828	22.4	15,638	8.7+
1965	3,099	2,468	631	20.4		
1970	2,487	2,009	478	19.2	9,712	4.5+
1975	2,634	2,095	539	22.1		
1979	2,651	1,893	758	28.6	6,051	2.7
1981	2,492	1,817	675	27.1	5,850	2.6
1983	2,596	1,861	735	28.3	5,789	2.5
1985	2,521	1,732	789	31.3	5,355	2.2

*Source: Oliveira, Victor J., and E. Jane Cox. "The Agricultural Work Force of 1985: A Statistical Profile." USDA/ERS/Ag. Econ. Report 382, Washington, DC, March 1988.

**Source: US Bureau of the Census/USDA "Rural and Farm Population": 1987, CPS, Series P-27, No. 61. Pre-80 Farm Definition (See Appendix).

In 1950 there were 20 states in which agricultural employment for both hired and family labor amounted to 30% or more of the total employment. In 1970, only 10 states had 7.5% or more workers employed in agriculture. Today, though I have not been able to find recent statistics, I doubt that there are two or three states that employ 10% of their total workers in agriculture.

Changes in the Farm Population and Hired Workers

Along with the decline in agricultural employment has been a steady decline in the number of people living and working on farms. In 1960 the farm population of 15.6 million represented 8.7% of the nation's total. In 1970 it was 4.8%. In 1985 the farm population was estimated at 5.3 million people, and constituted less than 2%

of total population nationwide (Table 1). So people living on farms and working on farms are becoming a shrinking part of our society.

Juxtaposed to a declining farm population, however, is a fairly constant number of hired workers who are working annually 150 (and over) days on a farm. Concomitantly, fewer and fewer people are working less than 150 days on farms. The former group constitutes more skilled, “professional” farmworkers. The later group is made up mostly of students and women of the farm population.

Larger and Fewer Farms

Accompanying the decline in the farm population are some of the structural things I was asked to address. There is a general trend towards fewer, larger, and more efficient farms (Carlin and Bernal, 1988). As farms have become more specialized, and production and sales have become more concentrated, the characteristics and distribution of the farm population have also changed. Larger farms in the United States today (those defined by the Department of Agriculture as farms with annual sales of \$100,000 per year and more) now account for a slowly growing share of the farm population. Their share is about 18 to 20% of the farm population, but that share is growing. Mid-sized farms (that have annual sales of \$20,000 to \$100,000) account for about 30% of the farm population, but that share is decreasing (see U.S. Census/USDA, 1988).

We have about 50% of the farm population still living on small farms, those earning less than \$20,000 per year. That number stays pretty steady because, with inflation and the way farms are defined as any economic activity producing \$1,000 of annual sales per year, we get more small farms just coming into existence as others leave. Such farms might be growing direct market produce like radishes and carrots and lettuce and things like that, but they quickly become farms because of those small annual sales. Some of them also graduate to the mid-sized category as their sales increase to \$20,000 annually.

So, the major trend that is apparent (although it might be just a definitional phenomenon and a fact of inflation) is that the larger farms are gradually taking an increasing share of the farm population and accounting for an increasing source of farm employment for people in the labor force. At the other end of the spectrum we find that smaller farms in the United States employ relatively few hired or seasonal labor. They have practically no year round hired workers. Of the mid-sized farms, only 8% report having at least one paid employee who worked at

least 150 days on the farm. Only about 4% of this mid-size farm category report having at least one paid employee who worked any length of time on average during the farm year.

One thing that should be mentioned along with the decline in the mid-sized farms is the concomitant reduction in family farm labor, and the associated decline in the farm population. When the farm population declines—i.e., when the farm population loses more owner-operators of mid-sized farms—what we have then is a decrease in the supply of people who will work on farms, especially from school age students employed in the summer. This trend suggests that we will face a decreasing number of young people, domestic workers in particular, who will be available to work on America’s farms. Currently there’s a general exodus of midsized farm family members from agriculture and an exodus of the people living and growing up on farms who can supply other farms with labor.

Implications for Farm Labor

These changes have several implications for farm labor. If we have an increasing number of larger farms being the main sources of farm employment, then we can expect larger farms to govern the emerging conditions for hired farm labor. With larger farms, we can expect that farm skill requirements will gradually rise, on average, throughout the United States. Larger farms will require more workers for more specialized tasks, because large farming operations will tend to be more profit driven and more apt to use new technology with more productive workers. This pattern is particularly evident in California. The trend is also implicitly evident in Table 1, wherein we see a steady decline in people employed less than 150 days per year, i.e., those who are usually temporary, semi-skilled harvest workers.

Another implication for farm labor is that the work hours, pay scales, and supervision will be more structured on large farms. In many states already, the conditions of work and supervision are being monitored more closely by federal and state authorities. Maybe there is in this pattern a blessing in disguise for farm labor. In general, as the farm reaches a higher level of size and skilled workers, it will have to be monitored and operated more closely by the profit driven growers and government officials.

Law and Regulations Affecting Farm Labor

There are several types of rules and regulations impinging upon the larger farms that employ large num-

bers of workers. I'll just give you a brief rundown of several of these laws and policies that affect the employers and which might be of benefit to farm workers on these farms.

One set of measures falls under the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Fair Labor Standards Act of the United States covers minimum wages, maximum work hours, overtime, and child labor standards. Right now an issue debated in Congress is the minimum wage. Minimum wage hasn't changed since 1980, and if that ever changes it would be put in effect through the Fair Labor Standards Act. The point to note is that the large farms must comply with the Act's regulations. Small farms with few hired workers are usually exempt. For the workers on large farms, there will be higher wages ultimately if the minimum wage is increased.

A second set of policies that affects the employers and might be a boon or help to the workers are the Occupational Safety and Health Act laws. These laws affect the workplace conditions, the sanitation of labor camps, and the places for labor camps, as well as the handling of chemicals and equipment on farms. As we have increasing employees on large farms, we will have an increasing number of employees covered under these types of Occupational Safety and Health Act regulations. Farm labor may benefit and may find farm work more suitable for long term employment.

A third law which also has implications for employees on larger farms is the Migrant and Seasonal Agriculture Work and Protection Act. The Migrant and Seasonal Agriculture Work and Protection Act traditionally has focused on the education and training and well being of migrant seasonal workers. Increasingly, it has become the act which incorporates the rules and regulations governing the use of labor contractors on farms. Generally, larger farms requiring more specialized labor and more workers, also need to have, as part of the evolving trend, more personnel managers. That means that larger farms, requiring more workers, will tend to leave labor problems to labor managers and/or contractors who are professionals. There are several implications for farms relying on labor contractors; some of these implications are good and some are bad for farm labor. The good is that the labor will have an intermediary that would, in most cases speak their language, bargain on behalf of workers, and find jobs. Many of the farm laborers today, especially Hispanic origin farm workers, only speak Spanish and need assistance in locating employment. Secondly, many of these intermediaries will be able to follow the rules and the laws affecting growers and will be able to deal

directly with the concerns of the workers in getting-growers to comply with these laws. On the negative side, however, employer intermediaries, especially labor contractors, do not have a history of good treatment of workers. They have been known to exploit workers by cheating them in pay and benefits. Nonetheless, we do have the Migrant and Seasonal Agriculture Work and Protection Act in effect, and it is becoming more prominent, having more bearing on the conditions of farm workers.

Immigration Reform

Another act that is of increasing importance to large farms and immigrant workers is the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (U.S. GAO Report, 1988). As farms are getting larger and needing more hired workers, and not having available domestic workers, the larger farms are employing increasing numbers of immigrant workers. This pattern is evident in the western states. As a matter of fact, the demand in California for alien workers has been supported and given more federal backing with the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. I don't know how many of you are familiar with this Act of 1986 (called IRCA), but it not only grants amnesty to workers who had been living here since 1982, enabling them to have legal residence, but it also has two sets of provisions specifically for agriculture. One provision, to assure that agriculture would have labor, is called the Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) Provision. This provision allows farm workers who worked a minimum of 90 days in perishable crops during 1985, a chance to legalize their status as SAWs. For some strange reason, cotton was included as a perishable crop. Under IRCA, California farmers were guaranteed that they would have special agricultural workers. Part of the provision was also that SAW workers would continue working in agriculture until they could legalize their status for permanent U.S. residence. About a half million people signed up under the SAW provisions as of the end of 1988. There may be more now because we have had people from Iran and India, and all these other places, claim that they are special agricultural workers. The process of cleaning out fraudulent cases is still going on. There is, then, this guaranteed pool of immigrant labor for agriculture for a few years.

Knowing that the SAW pool would dry up some day, IRCA contained another provision for a farmworker group called RAWs—Replenishment Agriculture Workers—which takes effect in 1990. RAWs will assure that we have an alien pool of workers that we can draw on to work in agriculture in case the SAWs decide to leave farm work. And if that doesn't work, we can still draw on

alien workers through an H-2A provision which allows for a kind-of “Bracero” program to continue in the future.

Thus, IRCA too has several implications for the future conditions of farm employees. Its special provisions for SAWs and RAWs affect the farm labor market and also the importance of large farms in our agriculture. More can be said about that. Maybe I can defer some of that analysis to Rogelio Saenz and Gilbert Cardenas, who specialize in these immigration issues to a much greater extent than I do.

Workers Compensation

Another set of laws that has implications for farm workers is the Worker Compensation Acts, such as FICA (Federal Insurance Contribution Act). FICA funds Social Security. As farms reach a certain minimal size, employing a certain number of workers, then those farms have to make provisions for the social security of workers. FICA provisions may be helpful to the workers in our agriculture. There are also some federal employment tax laws which Reagan passed which also have implications for the employers and the workers in agriculture.

Minority Workers in Agriculture

Having talked about the larger farms becoming more important for workers, and the structural changes related to demographic trends, plus the legal and regulatory conditions that might affect farm workers on larger and larger farms, we might now ask, “What about the Hispanics? Where are they in these trends.” Well, the changing structure of farms that we have observed has plenty to do with Hispanic workers. There is in the United States a distinct racial and ethnic aspect to the employment pattern of hired labor in agriculture. To understand this racial aspect we go back to the people who are available to work on farms. Recall the decline in owner/operators because mid-sized farms are going down in number, as well as the decline in so called category of unpaid family workers (Table 1). Furthermore, recall the growing demand for hired workers who are going to be more specialized workers on larger farms. The thing about these emerging patterns of employment is that where we see the increasing number of large farms growing in prominence, we also see particular types of people working on large farms. We see more minorities employed on large farms. Out West we have an increasing proportion of Hispanic workers employed on larger farms doing specialized tasks (Table 2). In the South we see more minorities, especially African-Americans, employed on

larger farms. In other parts of the United States with larger farms, we also see more Hispanics and more African-Americans working in agriculture. That is, larger farms tend to employ more ethnic minorities for specialized tasks than do mid- or small-farms.

Table 2
Demographic and Employment Characteristics
of All Hired Farmworkers by Geographic Region, 1985
(thousands)**

Characteristic:	U.S.	N.East	Midwest	South	West
All hired Workers	2,522	265	891	826	580
Racial/Ethnic Group:					
White	1,922	249	832	486	356
Hispanic	326	6	13	129	181
Black & Other	274	10	5	211	43
% White	76.2	94.9	97.7	58.8	61.4
% Hispanic	12.9	2.3	1.5	15.6	31.2
% Black & Other	10.9	3.7	1.0	25.6	7.4
Number Migrant (%)	199 (14.9)	6 (2.3)	47 (5.3)	65 (7.9)	42 (7.2)
Primary Employment:					
Attending School (%)	718 (28.5)	55 (32.1)	294 (34.5)	399 (24.1)	141 (24.3)
130 Days Farmwork (%)	789 (31.3)	102 (38.5)	211 (24.8)	266 (21.2)	216 (37.4)
Non-farmwork (%)	563 (22.2)	57 (21.5)	212 (24.9)	180 (21.2)	112 (19.3)
No. in Veg, Fruit & Hort.* (%)	587 (23.3)	67 (25.3)	61 (7.2)	192 (23.2)	267 (46.0)

*Refers to the crops worked with most on the farm where respondent worked the greatest number of days in 1985. The CPS data is collected in March and tends to underestimate Hispanic workers.

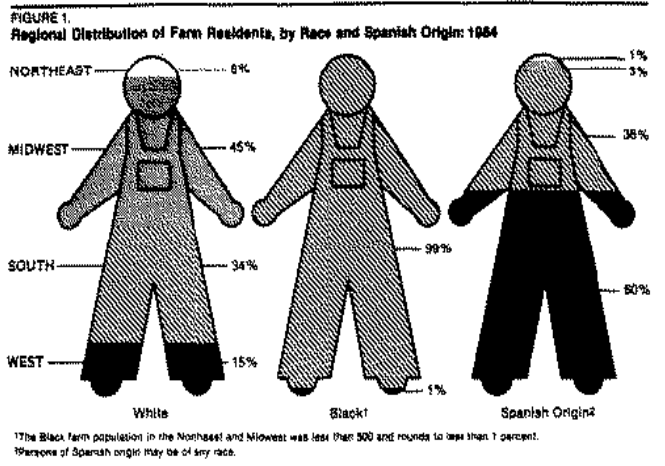
**Source: Oliveira and Cox, 1986. See Appendix for Regional Breakdown.

In the Midwest, however, where we also see the decline in mid-size farms, the picture of minority farm labor is not so clear. We know that in the Midwest we do not have a long history of having such major proportions of minority workers employed on farms. In fact, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 2, the farms of the Northeast and Midwest have the highest concentration of White workers, whereas in the West and South, we have close to 40% Hispanic and Black hired workers. In Midwest, we still have a prominence of mid-sized farms. We have the situation also where Midwest farmers do a considerable amount of non-farm work, probably during the off-season (Table 2).

But as the Midwest farms become larger farms, I wonder, what kind of labor are they going to hire? I think it is probably a question that one would want to address. Are Midwest farms going to be drawing on Hispanic workers as out West? Are they going to be drawing on some Black workers, as down South? Or, are they going to be relying increasingly on immigrant workers provided by IRCA?

Hispanic Workers

Hispanics in the United States continue to have relatively high proportions of their population employed sea-



have a labor pool to draw from—whether it be immigrant, or drawn from other parts of the United States—will still be using hired workers.

To narrow my list, I have two general topics for research on Hispanics in agriculture: one is problem oriented and the other focuses on policy research.

Problem Oriented Research

I believe it is necessary to devote attention to understanding the nature of the problems that we want to research. We should do better problem identification and problem analysis of Hispanic issues. We need problem oriented research before we can have effective, applied types of policies and measures.

Under the problem oriented type of research, there are many types of problems we might consider that would require more number crunching, some modeling, some surveys, etc.

One of the things I keep putting at the top of my list is that we should continue to do research on the problems related to hired labor and technological changes. I think issues of labor displacement are going to be around for a while. It is not that - we have a lot of technology out there that is being adopted and throwing labor out of agriculture, left and right. My concern with technological change is that we continue to support research in agricultural engineering, biology and chemistry which has labor displacement effects and other negative consequences for labor. Much of this research appears to have little concern for the workers. We need to look more at technological change from the standpoint of the direct and indirect affects on Hispanic workers and those who will be affected in agricultural employment.

There are perhaps no studies currently underway on the labor adjustment costs of re-training, re-locating and employing Hispanics in alternate jobs. This neglect is seemingly due to the fact that we have few social scientists willing to engage in this research, maybe because of few or no incentives.

Instead of seeing more support for studies that examine the problems facing displaced farm workers, we see more social scientists arguing on behalf of the benefits of farm technology which is labor-displacing. For example, not long ago, in the February 1985 issue of the prestigious *Science*, two of my Davis colleagues wrote:

sonally in agriculture. Agriculture is an important source of income, employment, and training for Hispanic-Americans. If domestic Hispanic workers (and those who are being legalized as SAWs) are going to continue to be employed in agriculture, then we would certainly want to know more about their coverage and treatment under all of the regulations we examined above. We would also want to make sure they have an opportunity to work before more immigrants are added to our hired workforce. If, on the other hand, farms are going to rely more on the H-2A immigrant alien workers, then we might want to study the conditions they will create on farms and the result of their competition with domestic Hispanics. That competition may create problems for Hispanic-Americans, including all those SAWs who-qualify for citizenship under IRCA. I suspect that in the South they will still be hiring domestic Black workers because they still constitute a large pool of unskilled labor. I suspect in the West, agriculture will still be hiring Hispanic workers because of the labor supply (especially from Mexico) and their experience in agriculture. I am not sure what is going to happen in the Midwest with regard to Hispanic workers. Who will be hired seasonally as Midwest farms grow and demand more skilled farm labor? Who is going to be working on the-Midwest farms, especially if the average farm size continues to grow and there is an exodus of midsized owner-operators of farms?

Research Issues

Well, that is the general pattern. Now I want to get down to addressing research issues. I have several suggestions. For example, I think the Midwest is a big question mark, especially as mid-sized farms go down in number. Who knows, farmers of mid-sized farms may be the ones more interested in mechanization, technological change, and so forth. But I think many of them, if they

Instead of preserving a labor-intensive industry dependent on alien workers in the United States, a rational strategy might be to phase out dependence on foreign workers by mechanizing whenever possible and importing more of the commodities that cannot be mechanized (Martin and Olmstead, 1985, p. 606).

My concern with this position is that it strongly infers that our agriculture can be more efficient with either technological change or by imported goods. Yet there is no information given as to displacement costs that would affect our current domestic and alien workers in our agriculture. I believe that Martin and Olmstead presume that most Hispanic workers in our agriculture are undocumented aliens. As such, infer the authors, domestic farmworkers do not need any protection from displacement and unemployment. Their article, also fails to prove that the current laborers in our agriculture are undocumented. Who knows, many farm workers may be perfectly legal aliens, or United States citizens with dependents here and long established local residence. At a time when agriculture may provide for better work conditions and long term jobs for Hispanics, the Martin and Olmstead paper calls for mechanization and says little about the social costs of labor displacement, or anything about the need for more social and demographic research on the characteristics and composition of those workers most likely to be displaced in the United States by new farm technology.

I would like to see some research looking at whether or not farm labor contracting is a problem for Hispanic farm workers. There has been growth in the number of farm labor contractors on the market, recently. They are becoming increasingly important as labor unions, especially in California, weaken. I'd like to know more about the contractors, whether they're fulfilling their contracts with the employees as well as with the employers, and under what conditions they have their workers work.

Juxtaposed to the contractor issue is the problem of farm labor relations; i.e., collective bargaining and unionization. What has happened to Hispanic labor leaders like Cesar Chavez? Is there a decline in the Hispanic support for unionization or a situation where Hispanic labor leaders are being defeated by organizations of growers? Who is studying these changes?

I would like also to see more problem oriented research on labor immigration, and the effects of IRCA. More problem oriented research is needed on the SAW,

RAW, and H-2A provisions and their effects on farm labor. More work is needed on labor relations activities, laws and unions. Furthermore, as the structure of farms evolves, we should continue to ask where can our Hispanic farm workers go, and what other skills and training do they have to readily adapt to other labor markets? What can be done to foster their human capital development to improve their future income and employment?

Policy Research

The second perspective that I think should guide some of our research has to do with research that helps us develop better social policies and programs for Hispanic workers, directly. While we might understand “problems” through other types of research, we need to do more to understand what can be done, directly, for Hispanics in agriculture and rural communities. I would like to see more research on rural communities, as well as research looking at the health, the housing, and a number of other conditions that affect the quality of life of Hispanic farm workers.

I would like to see more research on the issue of bilingual education and the returns to Hispanic workers from learning English and Spanish. I am not an English only advocate. But I see that under IRCA, there are strict requirements for English fluency (U.S. GAO, 1988). Under emerging labor market conditions, if English fluency isn't improved, many Hispanic workers by the year 2000 will not be able to get good jobs—especially the more skilled jobs in agriculture. They might need some added educational provisions to acquire fluency in English. On the other hand, the only reason I see why Hispanic workers, today, don't have English fluency, as compared to other groups in our society, is the fact that their opportunity costs for education and training in English is very high—the opportunity costs in terms of having to go to classes when you could be working. You know, if you have a family to support, you are going to go to work. You probably won't be going to language classes. I think if the opportunity costs for English training were lower, or if Hispanic workers were able to have subsidies or some support to get their English and some education, that would be an attractive opportunity that they would pursue. We need research to test this hypothesis.

I would like to see more research on the Hispanic's ability to use the labor market, job-search activities, and so forth. And, I'd like to see more policy research on ways to address the poverty problems facing Hispanic workers, especially those in agriculture and rural communities

(Kawamura, et al., 1989). In California, we see an emerging set of rural communities with increasing numbers of Hispanics. Other groups of wealthier people are leaving these communities, leaving the tax base (and services) to decline. In other words, they are turning into Mexican towns or colonias. The concern I have is that the people in these towns are poor and living under poor conditions.

Other Issues

Those are my main research issues. I have another set of research topics which cannot be categorized so easily. I'd like to see more historical research done on Hispanic workers, for example. I don't think we have logged our history very well. I don't think we keep-up with the Hispanic leaders that have meant something and contributed something to our work in society, especially to our work in agriculture. A few books have come out on Cesar Chavez, but that is about it. We don't have many Hispanic role models written-up. We don't have many lessons to derive from our leaders and, we don't have many ideas of what Hispanics have contributed to rural communities and to rural life.

I would like to see more historians involved in some kind of research like this, not just for the sake of creating role models, but because of the lessons that can be learned. Look in our history books today. We have very little mention of Hispanics as leaders in agriculture, even though there are several. We know little about our scholars. We had academic leaders like Julian Samora, who pioneered research on rural Chicanos. We had labor leader and writer Ernesto Galarza, and still others, who left us with valuable written works. But, we don't know very much about them today. In short, we have several social scientists who have enriched our literature about rural workers, but we have little to tell us about their own backgrounds, academic preparations, and theoretical perspectives. They are truly accomplished role models who should be studied and written about.

And finally, the last point. I would like to see more case studies on Hispanics and their experience in rural America. I would like to see life histories of Hispanic workers and their experiences as farm workers. I'd like to see case studies of how they coped in our rural communities and how they adjusted to American life. Likewise, I've often wondered why it is that we are always looked at as laborers only (Rochin, 1985)? Why don't we own the resources and take control of the capital and employ ourselves in rural jobs? If we are such darn good laborers in agriculture, why don't we become good farm-

ers as well? Look around! We don't have representation as farmers in the United States. Yet we have thousands of relatives in Latin America who are modern farmers. I would hope that somebody would start developing more empirical research on these questions. Thank you.

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Appendix. Definitions and Explanations

Farm Population. In the Current Population Survey, the farm population as currently defined consists of all persons living in rural territory on places from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold, or normally would have been sold, in the reporting year (for the CPS the preceding 12 months). Persons in summer camps, motels, and tourist camps, and those living on rented places where land is not used for farming, are classified as

nonfarm. The current definition was introduced into the P-27 series beginning with the 1978 farm population report.

Under the previous farm definition, the farm population consisted of all persons living in rural territory on places of 10 or more acres if at least \$50 worth of agricultural products from the place in the reporting year. It also included those living on places of under 10 acres if at least \$250 worth of agricultural products were sold from the place in the reporting year.

Persons living on farms located within the boundaries of urban territory are not included in the farm population. Urban territory includes all places with a population of 2,500 or more and the densely settled urbanized areas defined around large cities.

Nonfarm Population. The nonfarm population includes rural persons not living on farms plus the urban population.

Geographic Regions. The four major regions of the United States for which data are presented represent groups of States as follows:

Northeast: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

Midwest: (formerly North Central): Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.

South: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

Race: The population is divided into three groups on the basis of race: White, Black, and "other races." The last category includes Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and any other race except White and Black.

Spanish Origin. Spanish origin in federal reports is determined on the basis of a question that asked for self-identifications of the person's origin or descent. Respondents were asked to select their origin (or the origin of some other household member) from a "flash card" listing ethnic origins. Persons of Spanish origin, in particular, were those who indicate that their origin was Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or other Spanish origin.