C. Puerto Rican Contract Workers

No Puerto Rican workers were employed in Arkansas during 1954.

D. Foreign Workers

The use of foreign labor was required to meet labor demands of only one crop, cotton. A peak of 4,825 was needed for cotton chopping and 21,525 for cotton picking, representing 8 per cent and approximately 20 per cent, respectively, of total seasonal requirements for these activities. In 1953, 7,659 foreign workers were employed at peak of cotton chopping and 23,125 in the cotton picking activities, representing 14 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively, of total seasonal requirements.

British West Indians, employed in the Upper Mississippi River Delta Cotton Area only, numbered 476. All other foreign workers utilized were Mexican Nationals.

Employers orders for foreign workers were certified only after a thorough publicity penetration had been completed in the areas supplying domestic seasonal labor, including Arkansas, other states and regions. All seasonal farm workers seeking jobs were given an opportunity to work prior to contracting foreign labor.

Orders for foreign workers were received by the Agency from 154 individual employers during the cotton chopping season and some 597 such employers during the cotton harvest. Farm associations, numbering 25, also placed orders during both seasons. These associations were scattered throughout the crop reporting areas and were comprised of from 3 to 60 operator members. By forming an association, member growers were enabled to have their labor moved from one farm to another as weather conditions and other factors dictated, thus enabling full utilization of this source of supply.

The use of foreign workers was generally satisfactory. These workers are all males, who, as a rule, are energetic and dependable. No serious problems due to their employment arose during 1954 and their use prevented any crop loss which might have occurred because of a domestic labor shortage.

The establishment and operation of area employment ceilings moved more smoothly as evaluation of the experience of the previous year helped to diminish operational problems. The established ceiling for cotton chopping totaled 9,116 but due to the greater availability of local labor during this period and weather conditions, only 4,825 workers were required. The state ceiling for cotton harvest activities numbered 23,149 but actual employment of foreign workers was 1,624 less than the ceiling allowed.

No serious administrative or operational difficulties were encountered in the operation of the certification and wage finding programs.

E. Community Programs

There were no special community activities, public relation programs or educational programs developed during 1954 other than those previously discussed.

F. Recruitment Problems

In general, few problems were encountered which interfered with effective recruitment and placement. Housing, although not completely adequate in some areas, is steadily being improved. However, lack of housing did not affect recruitment in 1954. Transportation was furnished where needed. Many farm operators transported local workers daily during active seasons from points as far as 75 miles distant. Wages generally were adequate. Health and medical facilities for foreign workers were assured through insurance carried by employers while the worker was on the job. There was no change shown in selectivity of workers from previous years.

G. Shortages and Surpluses

The only significant shortages occurred in cotton chopping and picking activities. Because of an early season, the peak shortage of 18,050 occurred during the first half of September with all cotton crop areas affected. The heaviest portion of the shortage at that point occurred in the St. Francis-Cache River Cotton Area (8,550) and in the Upper Mississippi River Delta Cotton Area (6,900). However, no crop loss occurred due to labor shortages for two reasons: (1) Supplementation of domestic labor with foreign workers; and (2) continued dry weather during the harvest season which permitted full utilization of the available labor supply. In one area, temporary shortages were caused at the height of the harvest season by workers moving from one farm to another in an effort to find jobs in productive fields and only accepting jobs in less productive cotton after the better jobs had been exhausted.

During the first half of July, a surplus of 21,550 seasonal hired workers was reported with the largest number (9,650) located in St. Francis-Cache River Cotton Area. This was due to the completion of cotton chopping activities. As the harvest season was completed, a surplus of workers again accumulated, totaling 7,100 at the end of November and 10,700 by the first half of December.

When cold weather cut the strawberry crop short, radio announcements, newspaper articles and other media were used to halt the

movement of seasonal pickers into the White County Strawberry Area and thus avoid the creation of a labor surplus by the direction of these workers to demand areas. Many such workers moved on to enter crop activities in the Searcy County Strawberry Area and in Illinois and Michigan. The failure of the peach crop created a surplus of local seasonal hired workers in peach crop areas.

No shortage was experienced in vegetable and fruit areas because of curtailed activities due to adverse weather conditions. Instead the trend was toward the creation of labor surpluses.

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall operations of the State Farm Placement Program for the year just completed developed without major problems along lines established by past experience. Minor problems which arose were corrected and the conditions causing them noted in order to avoid recurrence in the future. No crop loss was reported due to a shortage of seasonal hired labor as the result of favorable progress shown in recruitment methods, in the technique of clearance of workers, and as the over-all results of placement operations.

The obvious benefits obtained by serving seasonal hired workers and employers through day-haul points favor the continued expansion of their use in the day-haul program.

Field training in the techniques of ascertaining labor requirements and of the wage finding program was given to personnel participating in the farm reporting program by Central Office technicians. Increased training is recommended piror to the beginning of 1955 crop activities.

The successful results of the use of sound equipment in Texarkana during 1953 was the basis of two more units in 1954. These had excellent results and a wider use of this type of recruitment should be promoted in the local offices.

Each local office manager has made specific plans for the operation of the farm program in his area for 1955. Goals have been established in that projections for each agricultural activity have been set out.

Prior to 1955, the timing of the intensive recruitment period two weeks prior to an activity has been set by the Central Office and conducted at the same time on a statewide basis. Experience has proved that recruitment on this basis does not always coincide with the progress of crops in all areas. Therefore, in 1955, this program will be decentralized in that each manager will determine the time when the two weeks period of recruitment will best fit his particular needs. It is anticipated that this plan will be more fruitful than in previous years.

Table 2 Arkansas

State Summary - Employment of Seasonal Hired Workers in Agriculture and Food Processing, and Agricultural Placements, 1954

Period 1/	Agricultural Employment				Agricultural Placements 2/	Food Processing Employment		
	Total	Domestic		Foreign		Total	Local	Non-Local
		Local	Non-Local					
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
January	250	250	0	0	2,134	0	0	0
February	0	0	0	0	1,764	100	100	0
March	600	600	0	0	10,980	800	800	0
April	1,200	1,075	125	0	10,465	1,100	1,100	0
May	35,550	28,275	4,725	2,550	40,028	1,950	1,925	25
June	61,700	52,300	4,575	4,825	133,218	1,400	1,350	50
July	21,925	20,525	525	875	46,446	950	900	50
August	2,875	2,725	150	0	15,557	850	800	50
September	87,975	67,125	11,150	9,700	181,971	1,125	875	250
October	109,800	77,425	10,850	21,525	193,710	975	925	50
November	58,400	53,075	1,950	3,375	110,351	675	675	0
December	4,325	4,225	0	100	38,760	725	725	0

1/ Employment figures shown for each month represent the number of seasonal hired workers employed on the last normal workday during the first half of the month. Placement data represent the total for each month.

2/ Includes placements made by Volunteer Farm Placement Representatives.