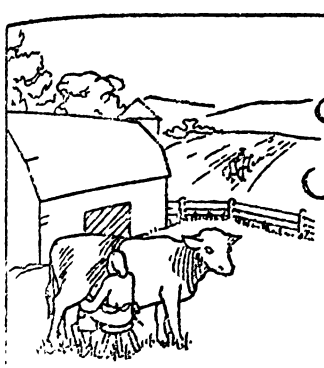

Farm Labor

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Washington, D. C. BAE September 12, 1947

FARM EMPLOYMENT UNCHANGED

About 11 million persons were working on farms on September 1, the same as a year ago, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. There were slightly fewer family workers engaged in farm work but a few more hired farm workers. There was no seasonal change in farm employment during August for the country as a whole. Usually August shows a moderate increase.

The trend toward a shorter farm work-day continued. There has been a slight decline in the length of the average work-day for September 1 every year since 1943, the first year of the continuous series. From 1943 to 1947 the work-day of farm operators has decreased one hour while that of hired workers has dropped a little more than half an hour.

Farm work during the last week of August was proceeding satisfactorily with interference from rain in only a few areas. Most crops were later than usual east of the Rocky Mountains, but in the Pacific Coast States they were from one to three weeks early. Small grain harvest was nearly complete except in the Central Mountain States and the Northern Border States. Preparations for fall plantings were making good progress in many areas but in some sections were delayed because of dry soil. Cotton was being picked in California, Arizona, and the far South. Vegetables and fruits were being harvested in most parts of the country. Tobacco harvest was underway in North Carolina and starting in the Burley area.

Supplies of seasonal labor were generally adequate to handle all work on time during the current season. Occasionally, unusual weather or other exceptional conditions have placed a strain on labor supplies in small areas.

Total employment remained about the same on September 1 as a year ago for the entire country and also in the Middle Atlantic and East North Central regions. In the West North Central, the South Atlantic, and the Mountain States there were 3 to 5 percent more persons working than a year ago. Most of the increase was due to the difference in crop progress during the season. Small grain harvest in the West North Central and Mountain States and tobacco harvest in North Carolina were later than last year. Smaller numbers of farm workers in the South Central and Pacific States were also due to crop progress.

New England, on September 1, had about equal increases from last year in family and hired workers. The number of family workers decreased about the usual slight seasonal amount from August 1 compared with an increase during August

last year. The number of hired workers dropped about a fifth during August which was almost twice as much as usual but about the same as in the two previous years. Summer harvest operations were about completed with only a small amount of hay to make. Silo filling was starting in the southern part of the region.

The number of family workers and the number of hired workers in the Middle Atlantic States were less on September 1 than a month earlier with about usual seasonal decreases. There were about the same number of family workers and of hired hands as a year ago. Small grains were practically all harvested but there was still some hay to make. Preparations for seeding of winter grains were underway in all States of the region. In New York, vegetable harvest was approaching a peak and harvest of early peaches and apples was getting underway. The Long Island potato harvest was making usual progress. Potatoes, apples and peaches were also being harvested in central New Jersey. In South Jersey harvest of tomatoes and lima beans were major jobs as well as the cultivation of fall truck crops.

The number of hired farm workers in the East North Central States on September 1 was slightly larger than a year ago, after a usual seasonal decrease during August. The number of family workers declined the usual amount from August 1 but totaled about the same as last year. Harvest of small grains was completed except in northern Wisconsin and northern Michigan. Plowing and preparations for seeding fall grains were proceeding in most of the region except in some areas where the soil was too dry. Harvest of peaches and early apples was starting in northern Ohio and in the Michigan fruit areas. In Illinois, harvests of tomatoes and sweet corn for canning were of some importance in the central and north sections of the State.

There were 14 percent more hired workers in the West North Central States on September 1 than last year, largely because small grain harvest is later this year. Hired employment increased slightly from August 1 compared with a usual decrease. There were a few more family workers than a year ago after a seasonal decrease a bit larger than usual. Harvest of small grains was still underway in Minnesota and North and South Dakota. Combining was generally completed but threshing from shock was just getting underway in northern South Dakota and central North Dakota. Harvest of the commercial potato crop in North Dakota was also starting. In Kansas, a heavy crop of prairie hay was being put up in the south and southeastern sections of the State. Plowing for fall planting of small grains was in progress in most of the region where it was not too dry. In western Kansas some wheat was being sown.

In the South Atlantic States there were a few more workers on September 1 than a year ago. The percentage increase was the same for family workers and for hired workers. There was very little seasonal change from August 1 to September 1 in the number of either family or hired workers. The seasonal change was nearer normal this year than last but still short of the usual sizeable increase in family and hired employment during August. Cotton crops for this year and last have been late and cotton picking less advanced than usual. Cotton picking was well advanced in south Georgia and getting started in the central part of the State and in southern South Carolina. Tobacco was being harvested in North Carolina and Virginia but the crop was maturing late. In Florida, corn was being harvested and peanuts and some sweet potatoes were being dug. Peach harvest was at its peak in the Shenandoah Valley section of

Virginia and West Virginia. Tomato harvest on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia was using a considerable amount of migrant seasonal labor.

In the East South Central States the number of family workers increased less than usual during August and on September 1 was 5 percent less than a year ago. The number of hired workers increased much more than usual during August but hired employment on September 1 was the same as a year ago. Cotton was being picked in southern Alabama and Mississippi. The burley tobacco crop in Tennessee and Kentucky, which is largely harvested by family labor, was late and harvest only beginning. Late hay was being cut in most of the region and preparations were underway for fall seeding of grains and cover crops.

Hired farm workers in the West South Central States on September 1 totaled 9 percent more than a year ago, an increase exceeded in only the West North Central States. However, hired employment declined a little seasonally. The number of family workers was considerably lower than a year ago after a greater than usual decrease from August 1. Cotton harvest was in full swing in southern Texas with gins reported operating 24 hours per day. Harvest of corn and grain sorghums was also in progress in all parts of Texas except in the north. Peanut harvest was extending to the north-central counties. In southern Texas, fall vegetables were being planted and preparations for winter vegetables were underway. Rice was being harvested in Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas. Cotton picking was making slow progress in Louisiana. In Oklahoma major jobs were harvest of hay, broomcorn, grain sorghums, corn and crops for silage and preparations for planting fall grains.

In the Mountain States the number of hired workers increased sharply from August 1. The increase was considerably larger than the average for recent years. The number of hired workers on September 1 was 5 percent larger than a year ago. The number of family workers increased by the same amount over last year, but with little change from August 1. Grain harvest was moving toward completion in the northern States of the region. In the same States preparations were also being made for sowing fall grains. In southwestern Idaho peaches were about half harvested and prune harvest started. Dry onions and canning corn were also being harvested. Peaches and pears were being picked in Utah. Cotton picking was started in Arizona and seed beds were being prepared for winter vegetables.

In the Pacific States hired employment and family employment on September 1 were down from a year ago, largely because of an earlier than usual season. Seasonally, the number of family workers increased about the usual amount but the August increase in the number of hired workers was less than a third the average for recent years. In California the usual harvest of vegetables in season was underway. Planting, irrigation and cultivation of later truck crops was also in progress. Fruit being harvested included citrus, peaches for market and canning, apples, figs and grapes. In addition hops, sugar beets, potatoes and hay were also being harvested. In Oregon harvests of grain, peaches, Bartlett pears and prunes were about over. Fall and winter pear harvest was starting. Grain and dry pea harvest was practically over in eastern Washington and apple harvest was getting underway. In western Washington some of the principal jobs were grain and hay harvest and harvest of blackberries, green beans, sweet corn, tomatoes and other fall truck crops.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm labor: Persons employed, wage rates, indexes and related data, September 1, 1947 with comparisons

	Annual average 1910-14	September average 1935-39	September 1, 1946	August 1, 1947	September 1, 1947
FARM EMPLOYMENT (thousands of persons)					
Total	12,052	11,973	11,111	11,140	11,132
Family labor	9,160	8,860	8,334	8,301	8,259
Hired labor	2,892	3,113	2,777	2,839	2,873
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES (Adjusted for seasonal variation)					
Total	100	91	83	87	83
Family labor	100	91	85	89	84
Hired labor	100	89	77	80	79
	Annual average 1910-14	July average 1935-39	July 1, 1946	April 1, 1947	July 1, 1947
FARM WAGE RATES					
Per month, with board	$22.09	27.08	92.00	91.50	98.70
Per month, without board	29.18	34.92	106.00	107.00	114.00
Per day, with board	1.16	1.29	4.25	4.17	4.54
Per day, without board	1.42	1.53	4.84	4.77	5.17
Composite rate per month 1/	24.76	30.01	96.40	96.20	103.00
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES					
Unadjusted	100	121	389	389	416
Adjusted for seasonal variation	100	118	378	397	404
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES BY REGION					
New England	100	146	367	383	389
Middle Atlantic	100	132	374	389	400
East North Central	100	120	342	362	369
West North Central	100	104	346	349	373
South Atlantic	100	112	336	363	357
East South Central	100	101	292	303	315
West South Central	100	105	348	355	367
Mountain	100	110	339	342	374
Pacific	100	131	426	418	428
RELATED INDEXES					
Prices received by farmers 2/	100	106	231	278	274
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	100	88	59	71	66
Average weekly factory earnings 3/	100	198	386	423	--

1/ Weighted average of monthly rates with and without board, and daily rates with and without board converted to a monthly basis.
2/ Average of the 15th of the given and the 15th of the previous month.
3/ Factory payroll per employed worker; average of all weeks during the designated month.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Farm employment: Persons employed, United States and geographic divisions, September 1, 1947, with comparisons

TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT

Geographic divisions	September 1: average 1935-39	August 1, 1946	September 1, 1946	August 1, 1947	September 1, 1947
	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's
United States	11,973	11,044	11,111	11,140	11,132
New England	283	289	266	299	272
Middle Atlantic	687	765	730	766	732
East North Central	1,575	1,531	1,481	1,555	1,498
West North Central	1,792	1,790	1,735	1,872	1,802
South Atlantic	2,346	2,134	2,074	2,132	2,127
East South Central	2,011	1,496	1,744	1,501	1,671
West South Central	2,044	1,796	1,749	1,759	1,694
Mountain	525	509	510	515	535
Pacific	710	734	822	741	801
Family Workers 1/					
United States	8,860	8,258	8,334	8,301	8,259
New England	173	169	171	179	175
Middle Atlantic	436	451	442	458	448
East North Central	1,202	1,224	1,214	1,245	1,222
West North Central	1,386	1,445	1,388	1,485	1,407
South Atlantic	1,762	1,647	1,602	1,641	1,643
East South Central	1,694	1,312	1,495	1,329	1,422
West South Central	1,528	1,367	1,357	1,324	1,267
Mountain	309	331	311	331	327
Pacific	370	312	354	309	348
Hired Workers					
United States	3,113	2,786	2,777	2,839	2,873
New England	110	120	95	120	97
Middle Atlantic	251	314	288	308	284
East North Central	373	307	267	310	276
West North Central	406	345	347	387	395
South Atlantic	584	487	472	491	484
East South Central	317	184	249	172	249
West South Central	516	429	392	435	427
Mountain	216	178	199	184	208
Pacific	340	422	468	432	453

1/ Including farm operators and members of their families working without wages.

Based on reports from 16,926 farmers who reported for their own farms the number of family and hired workers doing 2 or more days of work during the week of inquiry.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Farm employment: Total, family and hired workers, United States, specified annual averages, and by months, Jan. 1, 1946-September 1, 1947 1/

Year and Month	Total farm employment	Family workers 2/	Hired workers
	1,000's	1,000's	1,000's
1910-14 av.	12,052	9,160	2,892
1935-39 av.	10,920	8,352	2,568
1939 av.	10,740	8,145	2,595
1940 av.	10,585	8,019	2,566
1941 av.	10,361	7,829	2,532
1942 av.	10,397	7,855	2,542
1943 av.	10,263	7,857	2,406
1944 av.	10,037	7,810	2,227
1945 av.	9,844	7,726	2,118
1946 av.	10,012	7,864	2,148
January 1	7,732	6,412	1,320
February 1	7,799	6,375	1,424
March 1	8,263	6,774	1,489
April 1	9,121	7,469	1,652
May 1	10,366	8,391	1,975
June 1	11,422	8,969	2,453
July 1	11,586	8,875	2,711
August 1	11,044	8,258	2,786
September 1	11,111	8,334	2,777
October 1	11,486	8,862	2,624
November 1	10,809	8,306	2,503
December 1	9,405	7,345	2,060
1947 av.			
January 1	8,272	6,747	1,525
February 1	8,280	6,693	1,587
March 1	8,591	7,046	1,545
April 1	9,242	7,571	1,671
May 1	10,280	8,281	1,999
June 1	11,394	8,913	2,481
July 1	11,518	8,833	2,685
August 1	11,140	8,301	2,839
September 1	11,132	8,259	2,873

1/ Annual averages are straight averages of first of month employment estimates.
2/ Includes farm operators and members of their families working without wages.

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Farm employment: Length of Farm Work Day for Operators and Hired Workers, September 1, 1945-47

State	Operator			Hired workers		
	Sept. 1, 1945	Sept. 1, 1946	Sept. 1, 1947	Sept. 1, 1945	Sept. 1, 1946	Sept. 1 1947
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours
Maine	12.5	12.4	12.3	9.0	8.9	9.2
N. H.	11.9	11.9	12.2	9.4	9.4	9.1
Vt.	12.5	12.1	12.6	11.1	10.7	10.3
Mass.	11.7	11.2	11.2	9.1	9.1	8.8
R. I.	12.2	12.0	11.9	9.1	9.0	9.0
Conn.	11.4	10.9	11.1	9.7	9.7	9.2
N. Eng.	12.0	11.7	11.8	9.6	9.5	9.3
N. Y.	12.2	12.1	11.9	10.4	10.4	10.1
N. J.	12.0	12.0	11.5	10.0	10.0	9.5
Pa.	12.7	12.4	12.4	10.2	10.2	9.8
M. Atl.	12.4	12.2	12.1	10.3	10.3	9.9
Ohio	12.2	11.8	11.7	9.8	9.7	9.7
Ind.	12.1	11.5	11.4	9.9	9.9	9.6
Ill.	12.0	11.6	11.2	10.6	10.3	10.2
Mich.	12.4	12.1	12.1	10.2	9.9	9.8
Wis.	13.0	12.6	12.6	11.6	11.3	11.2
E. N. Cent.	12.3	11.9	11.8	10.5	10.3	10.2
Minn.	13.1	12.5	12.4	11.2	10.8	10.8
Iowa	12.5	12.1	11.8	10.7	10.4	10.2
Mo.	12.2	11.6	11.4	10.2	9.6	9.5
N. Dak.	13.6	13.1	13.4	11.5	11.2	11.3
S. Dak.	13.5	12.4	12.5	10.9	10.9	10.4
Nebr.	13.0	12.2	11.9	10.7	10.2	10.2
Kans.	12.5	11.8	11.8	10.3	10.2	9.9
W. N. Cent.	12.7	12.1	12.0	10.9	10.6	10.3
Del.	12.4	12.8	12.0	9.2	9.6	9.6
Md.	12.1	12.3	12.1	10.0	10.1	10.4
Va.	12.0	12.0	11.6	9.5	9.5	9.5
W. Va.	11.9	11.6	11.2	9.1	9.0	8.8
N. C.	11.5	11.2	11.2	9.4	9.1	9.3
S. C.	11.0	11.0	11.0	9.2	9.5	9.4
Ga.	11.2	11.0	10.9	9.8	9.5	9.2
Fla.	10.7	10.2	10.0	8.9	8.9	8.8
S. Atl.	11.5	11.3	11.1	9.4	9.4	9.3
Ky.	12.1	11.5	11.3	9.9	9.5	9.4
Tenn.	11.6	11.5	11.3	10.1	9.7	9.6
Ala.	11.0	10.8	10.6	9.7	9.5	9.3
Miss.	10.7	10.7	10.6	9.3	9.4	9.4
E. S. Cent.	11.3	11.1	10.9	9.7	9.5	9.4
Ark.	10.9	10.7	10.7	9.4	9.3	9.4
La.	11.2	10.6	10.6	9.5	9.3	9.0
Okla.	12.0	11.2	11.2	9.7	9.9	9.5
Tex.	11.7	11.2	10.8	9.7	9.6	9.8
W. S. Cent.	11.5	11.0	10.8	9.6	9.5	9.6
Mont.	12.9	12.4	12.3	10.3	10.2	10.4
Idaho	12.9	12.4	12.0	9.5	9.6	9.6
Wyo.	12.7	12.3	12.1	10.0	10.0	10.0
Colo.	12.7	12.2	12.1	9.9	9.8	9.8
N. Mex.	12.4	11.7	11.3	9.7	10.0	9.8
Ariz.	11.3	10.8	10.5	9.5	9.4	9.2
Utah	11.9	11.9	11.8	8.6	9.0	9.0
Nev.	12.3	12.0	11.8	9.0	9.0	9.0
Mount.	12.5	12.1	11.9	9.7	9.8	9.7
Wash.	12.3	11.6	11.1	9.9	9.7	9.4
Oreg.	11.8	11.1	11.0	9.1	9.0	8.9
Calif.	10.7	10.6	10.4	9.1	9.2	9.0
Pacific	11.4	11.0	10.7	9.3	9.3	9.0
U. S.	11.9	11.5	11.4	9.9	9.8	9.6

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm labor: Farm wage rates, rural living costs and real farm wage rates, United States, 1910-1946

Index numbers, 1910-1914 = 100

Year	Farm wage rates	Rural living costs 1/	Real farm wage rates 2/
1910	97	98	99
1911	98	100	98
1912	101	101	100
1913	103	100	103
1914	101	101	100
1915	103	106	97
1916	113	124	91
1917	141	147	96
1918	177	177	100
1919	207	210	99
1920	242	222	109
1921	155	161	96
1922	151	156	97
1923	169	160	106
1924	173	159	109
1925	176	163	108
1926	179	162	110
1927	179	160	112
1928	179	160	112
1929	180	159	113
1930	167	150	111
1931	130	128	102
1932	96	108	89
1933	85	108	79
1934	95	122	78
1935	103	124	83
1936	111	123	90
1937	126	128	98
1938	125	122	102
1939	123	120	102
1940	126	121	104
1941	154	131	118
1942	201	154	131
1943	264	170	155
1944	315	178	177
1945	350	185	189
1946	378	211	179

1/ Prices paid by farmers for commodities used in living.

2/ Wage rates divided by rural living costs.

Farm labor program: Foreign workers employed in agriculture, August 29, 1947 1/

State	Mexicans	Jamaicans	Bahamians	British Hondurans	Barbadians	Newfoundlanders	Total
Maine		3	23			20	46
N. H.	2/ 7	11				22	40
Vt.	2/ 16					42	58
Mass.		37	111				148
R. I.						3	3
Conn.		1,944	18		9	30	2,001
N. Y.	179	346	1,034		2	44	1,605
N. J.		222	646			2	870
Pa.		198				8	206
Ohio		140	264				404
Ind.	131		86				217
Ill.	1,014	104	39	1			1,158
Mich.	28	136	66				230
Wis.	2,170	56	9	1			2,236
Minn.	1,649						1,649
Iowa	300						300
Mo.		11					11
N. Dak.	1						1
S. Dak.	123						123
Nebr.	412						412
Kans.	96						96
Del.		59	171			3	233
Md.		178	467			2	647
Va.			422				422
W. Va.							
N. C.	277		322				599
S. C.							
Ga.							
Fla.		731	533		351		1,615
Ky.							
Tenn.							
Ala.							
Miss.							
Ark.							
La.							
Okla.							
Tex.							
Mont.	1,076						1,076
Idaho	1,824						1,824
Wyo.	244						244
Colo.	227						227
N. Mex.							
Ariz.	608						608
Utah	878						878
Nev.	144						144
Wash.	187						187
Oreg.	614						614
Calif.	13,297						13,297
U. S. 3/	25,502	4,176	4,211	2	362	176	34,429

1/ Data provided by Requirements and Certifications Section, Program Division, Labor Branch, P. M. A. 2/ Canadians. 3/ Including Canadians.

Farm labor program: Farm labor placements, July 1947 1/

State	July 1946	July 1947	January 1 to July 31 1946	January 1 to July 31 1947
Maine	4,142	2,037	6,451	3,240
N. H.	2,536	617	4,073	1,468
Vt.	171	233	1,093	1,138
Mass.	532	201	2,110	562
R. I.	43	18	125	66
Conn.	9,485	5,507	15,636	10,367
N. Y.	37,881	27,826	88,217	42,519
N. J.	9,278	3,463	19,235	7,441
Pa.	3,487	2,661	6,947	5,883
Ohio	11,526	6,321	21,974	16,945
Ind.	7,963	2,127	11,409	4,778
Ill.	17,511	8,125	31,235	17,937
Mich.	33,532	14,000 2/	53,622	24,093
Wis.	11,020	8,148	17,333	12,166
Minn.	5,636	6,420	11,714	14,404
Iowa	18,531	9,270	22,192	11,318
Mo.	1,269	1,065	5,701	4,340
N. Dak.	13,218	11,819	21,939	18,192
S. Dak.	9,144	6,768	16,693	12,896
Nebr.	9,515	6,256	12,365	9,531
Kans.	924	3,345	3,544	4,430
Del.	3,571	1,031	5,929	1,818
Md.	12,190	14,375	42,347	27,597
Va.	4,588	5,276	26,420	11,438
W. Va.	141	100	582	312
N. C.	21,041	27,272	74,160	108,242
S. C.	7,740	5,843	14,526	15,767
Ga.	18,708	10,100	53,255	52,279
Fla.	139	15	18,258	26,683
Ky.	1,099	202	11,245	23,113
Tenn.	10,935	4,635	38,961	30,369
Ala.	1,134	857	12,209	5,419
Miss.	10,357	4,776	76,644	35,694
Ark.	19,131	19,125	123,329	214,023
La.	5,983	5,627	32,655	22,555
Okla.	10,120	3,105	59,185	25,404
Tex.	44,273	57,921	120,062	132,826
Mont.	14,686	2,901	37,282	12,089
Idaho	22,519	26,791	144,265	119,221
Wyo.	3,796	2,285	11,658	8,564
Colo.	13,343	15,160	57,899	35,761
N. Mex.	9,874	2,267	17,924	6,604
Ariz.	250	310	25,932	2,872
Utah	13,569	5,680	49,229	10,512
Nev.	820	1,017	2,750	2,869
Wash.	63,489	50,305	135,734	134,991
Oreg.	33,273	27,796	80,940	83,718
Calif.	67,862	60,320	306,259	301,543
Total	621,975	481,319	1,953,247	1,675,987

1/ Data from monthly reports of Extension Farm Labor Program, Extension Service, U.S.D.A., Washington, D. C.

2/ Estimated.

Farm labor program: Placements of World War II veterans on farms, United States, by months, January 1946- July 1947 1/

Month	As hired hands	As tenants or sharecroppers	All placements
1946			
January	3,186	1,750	4,936
February	3,544	1,844	5,388
March	4,538	1,527	6,065
April	5,707	1,627	7,334
May	8,048	990	9,038
June	12,569	974	13,543
July	16,062	824	16,886
August	21,097	874	21,971
September	12,199	883	13,082
October	12,635	789	13,424
November	6,921	927	7,848
December	4,802	1,507	6,309
Total	111,308	14,516	125,324
1947			
January	4,060	1,453	5,513
February	4,763	1,982	6,745
March	5,143	1,676	6,819
April	7,325	1,024	8,349
May	11,622	591	12,213
June	16,369	1,300	17,669
July	18,645	593	19,258

1/ Data from monthly reports of Extension Farm Labor Program, Extension Service, U.S.D.A., Washington, D. C.

Farm labor program: Placements of World War II veterans on farms, by geographic divisions, July 1947 1/

Area	As hired hands	As tenants or sharecroppers	All placements
New England	83	0	83
Middle Atlantic	555	8	563
East North Central	384	77	461 2/
West North Central	5,092	4	5,096
South Atlantic	437	34	471
East South Central	389	226	615
West South Central	3,007	234	3,241
Mountain	2,114	8	2,122
Pacific	6,584	2	6,586

1/ Data from monthly reports of Extension Farm Labor Program, Extension Service, U.S.D.A., Washington, D. C.
2/ Michigan veteran placements are estimated.

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