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HIRING AND MANAGING LABOR FOR FARMS IN CALIFORNIA

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California Agricultural Experiment Station
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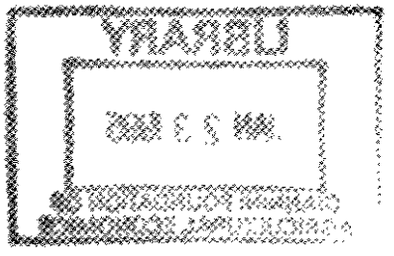
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Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics
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This report discusses findings from a broad survey of farm businesses in California. We are most grateful to nearly one-thousand farm operators who graciously met our request to participate. Despite the array of other demands on their time, they voluntarily provided extensive information about their businesses, management practices, and outlooks. We hope that they will find the report faithful to their responses, sensitive to their concerns, and worthy of their trust.

We thank the California Employment Development Department (EDD), Labor Market Information Division, for funding the survey. While EDD sought mainly to better understand farm businesses in relation to its departmental functions, particularly as they may have been affected by the 1986 immigration reform law, this study holds information useful for other public agencies, for private organizations providing service in the labor market, for researchers, and for farm operators themselves.

Communication with survey respondents would not have been as fruitful if not for important contributions from the Survey Research Center, University of California at Berkeley. We are indebted to Selma Monsky, who brought her estimable craft, wisdom, and humor to the critical process of developing the questionnaire and cover letters. Lisa Kermish coordinated the survey mailings, fielded all manner of inquiries from puzzled or reluctant farmers who received questionnaires, tracked returns, and conducted an interim phone survey of nonrespondents. Tahi Staniford organized the survey data file. Karen Pladsen and Bob McCarthy transformed written responses on questionnaires into a clean, superbly documented database for analysis. Hank Fesler provided clerical support. Karen Garrett collaborated in key survey design decisions, remained as chief troubleshooter throughout data collection, and oversaw the entire effort at SRC. Thank you all.

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Any errors in interpretation or discussion of the survey results are the responsibility of the authors, and they remain despite the best efforts and fine work of the above named individuals.

Summary

This report describes how California farmers engage and manage the labor they need to operate their businesses. Based on a statewide survey, it discusses recruitment, hiring, supervision, communication, pay, legal compliance and reporting practices on a broad cross-section of farms. Labor management in agriculture is complicated and highly regulated, and farmers adjust their approaches to it over time.

A total of 924 responses received before a May 7, 1993, cut-off date were included in the present analysis. Most survey results in the report are aggregated by farm size, region, and main commodity produced. Crops are classified as animal products, nuts, grapes, tree fruit and other fruit, vegetables, non-edibles (chiefly cotton), and other (mostly grains, other edible field crops, ornamentals and nursery products). Major findings are summarized below.

Basic Farm Characteristics

- As in their products, respondent farms exhibit much variety in their organizational and management arrangements. Though large majorities prepare land, cultivate, plant, and harvest, only a third of the businesses market commodities. The Central Coast and Desert regions tend to have the largest operations with respect to sales value, total labor expense, and payroll.

- California farms are most commonly organized as sole proprietorships, followed by corporations, family partnerships, and nonfamily partnerships. While all four of these types are in every farm size group, farms with more labor expense are much more likely to be corporations and those with less to be sole proprietorships.

- The average respondent had a total of 89 people working on the farm at peak activity, 27 year-round, in 1992. Vegetable farms have by far the largest numbers of workers, and grape and other fruit operations are also larger than those in other crop groups. The difference between seasonal peak and year-round workforce sizes is proportionately greatest in grapes (seven workers at peak for every one year-round) and smallest in animal commodities.

Means of Engaging Labor

- Labor is one of the essential production inputs that farmers may procure from external suppliers. Engaging people through both direct employment and outside contract is the norm. A large amount of non-employee labor comes to farms through labor contractors (FLCs), custom harvesters (CHs), and pest control operators (PCOs). The trend to rely more on non-employees, noted in our 1987 survey, has continued.

- Almost two-thirds of all workers are employees on the farm payroll. Farmer family members are only 6 percent of the total year-round workforce, 2 percent at peak.

- Farm labor contractors bring a large segment of the peak workforce in all crop groups except animal products. FLC employees are nearly one-fourth of all workers on farms at peak and one-seventh year-round. Custom harvester and management service company employees are a smaller but substantial portion. Very few workers are engaged as individual independent contractors.

- Whereas an average 72 percent of workers at peak were farm employees in 1986, only 65 percent were in 1992. Both the share of farmers getting labor from FLCs and CHs, and the average number of these service providers doing business with each farm increased from 1986 to 1992. Nearly three-fifths of all farms were customers of at least one FLC or CH in 1992. Producers of vegetables were most likely to use labor contractors, and producers of non-edibles to use custom harvesters. Reliance on such contract labor is greatest in the South Coast and San Joaquin Valley regions.

- Farmers' use of licensed pest control operators similarly grew during this period. A majority of farms overall, and notably larger shares of non-edible and vegetable crops producers, purchase services from one or more PCOs.

Finding and Screening Workers

- Farmers check legitimacy of FLCs most commonly by inspecting the license but also through other means, including accepting the contractor's word. The largest operators are most inclined to verify "by the book," actually viewing the license or calling the Department of Industrial Relations, and least to have relied on assumption or contractor assertion. Some two-thirds of farmers say they would use an accessible source of third-party referrals to and information about FLCs in their area.

- Farm operators recruit their own production employees through multiple means, most commonly in 1992 by asking current employees for referrals, accepting walk-ins, and delegating the responsibility to foremen and supervisors.

- Only 11 percent of survey respondents placed any job orders with the EDD employment service (ES) in 1992, farms with million-dollar payrolls by far most likely to do so. Seven of ten who used the ES were satisfied with it. But written comments from more respondents than those who used the service at all in 1992 report that past experiences strongly deter farmers from recruiting through ES. Recurrent themes are that EDD sends applicants who want to work the welfare and benefits systems rather than the field tool, and that it furnishes no useful assessment of workers' abilities.

- Criteria on which nearly all farmers report considering prospective production employees are reliability, specific skills, previous experience in similar work, compatibility with other employees, and eligibility for employment in the U.S. The most commonly used sources of information about applicants are the interview and comments from foremen or other employees. Large majorities of respondents also use references from previous employers and practical tests. Half or fewer use application forms, written tests, and medical exams. A majority say they would take advantage of an objective assessment of workers' skills and knowledge.

- Retention of employees from year to year is substantial in all crop classes. Half or more of a farm's 1992 employees had previously worked for the same business in 80 percent of cases. Year-to-year stability is greatest in animal products, vegetables, and non-edibles, and in the larger payroll ranges. Larger operators tend to provide the longest periods of employment during a year.

- Respondents estimate that 40 percent of their 1986 employees were legalized through the SAW program, and that more than half of these workers are still employed at the same farm. Larger firms report higher proportions of both workers legalized and SAWs retained through 1992.

Managing Employees

- Employees on the vast majority of farms get to know about the operator's policies and their own jobs through verbal instructions from supervisors and "tailgate" meetings. Also widely used, especially in larger farm businesses, are written rules (by 68% of all), group orientations (64%), staff meetings indoors (49%), employee handbooks (43%), written job descriptions (38%), periodic performance reviews (32%), and video tapes (27%).

- Spanish is normally spoken by most production workers on more than three-quarters of California farms. English is the only other language mainly used in more than a handful of farm businesses. Many farmers are able to function to some degree in Spanish. In nearly two-thirds of all farms, and in a majority of even those where most workers speak Spanish, the operator is able to communicate instructions in the workers' main language.

- Pay for farm production employees is usually based on time. Sixty percent of farms pay primarily by the hour and 15 percent by the week or month. But another 15 percent pay by a combination of time and production, and the use of both piece rates and hourly rates for different jobs on a farm is very common. Time-based pay is most dominant in animal products, nuts, and non-edibles (chiefly cotton).

- Almost three of five farmers pay different hourly rates to employees in the same type of job. Differences are most often based on length of employment, secondarily on evaluated performance.

- Output incentive pay, as either total earnings or a supplement to hourly wages, is most common in grapes and other fruit. Nearly two of five farms pay incentive bonuses based on a result other than output quantity.

- Optional fringe benefits are much more frequently offered to year-round than to seasonal workers. Most common for year-round employees are vacation pay (on 65% of farms), health insurance (53%), and housing (52%). Farms with larger payrolls and those organized as corporations tend more to provide each benefit except housing and transportation.

- Few farm operators go it alone in the personnel function. Professionals that most depend on are payroll accountants or bookkeepers and attorneys. Services of trainers, personnel specialists and consultants, employee relations assistants, and recruiters are less frequently used. Nearly all the attorneys and most of the personnel specialists are contracted as outside providers, while the other types are mainly hired as farm staff.

Coping with the Business Environment

- Labor management is not only about dealing with workers. During a typical month, farmers in the survey devote a median seven person-hours to completing employment-related reports required by the government. The larger the farm payroll, the more time spent, as many as 29 hours median for farms with $1 million payrolls. Almost two in five of these largest employers, and even some of the smallest, spend 40 or more hours per month on reporting.

- Farmers cite simply understanding what is required second only to filling out the forms as a reporting burden. For more than one-fifth of respondents, comprehending instructions is the most time consuming task.

- Only one in ten respondents, mostly smaller ones, report having had no communication during 1991 and 1992 with any of eight listed agencies. UC Cooperative Extension and county Agricultural Commissioners' offices were most commonly contacted by farmers, the U.S. Department of Labor and the state Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal-OSHA) least. Larger businesses were significantly more in touch with each of the agencies that have regulatory functions.

- From the farm operator's perspective, the 1986 immigration reform has wrought, above all, much more paperwork. Most respondents say that it also seems to have curtailed hiring of undocumented workers, increased labor costs, and reduced questioning of workers by the Border Patrol to some extent. Smaller but substantial portions of the survey sample report having more difficulty finding qualified workers and having had to adjust their recruiting efforts.

- Tasks for which respondents had most difficulty finding capable workers in 1992 cover a broad range, from manual labor drawing mainly on physical skills and stamina to, more commonly, jobs requiring higher technical and cognitive abilities. Farmers register concern about recruitment five years from now, nearly half expecting recruitment to be more difficult in 1997. Many comments refer to jobs that require mechanical, mathematical, language, and managerial skills.

- The personnel function tends to be most structured in the largest farm businesses. A bigger scale of operation may make more economical as well as necessary the employment of personnel staff to facilitate hiring, developing, and keeping capable employees. Structured personnel management and employment stability appear to reinforce one another particularly in larger farm businesses.

- Practical business considerations behind the use of labor contractors and other outside services include but do not hinge on the 1986 immigration reform. Many farms preserve job stability for a core of employees by keeping their organizations lean and contracting for FLC or CH crews to meet peak needs. This stabilization strategy may be defining or perpetuating a division between two tiers in the farm workforce.

Regulatory as well as competitive pressures can be expected to stimulate technological innovations that will affect farm jobs, patterns of demand for labor, and management practices. Regardless of how many workers are looking for employment, farmers may need new services or recruitment and selection methods to engage people for more highly skilled jobs. Labor procurement is more than merely a matter of numbers, and neither farm jobs nor farm workers are an undifferentiated mass.

Although most farm operators do not have faith in the public employment service as a worthy broker between them and workers, the EDD can play a larger role in the agricultural labor market. More effective service depends on the ES going beyond the practice of simply sending available workers to employers with job openings. Contractor referral and worker assessment would likely be welcome additions to the line of service.

A. Introduction

Amid competition from domestic and offshore producers, the assistance available from various vendors, the scrutiny of cautious lenders, the tastes and preferences of discriminating consumers, and the requirements of voluminous laws--there are farmers running businesses in California. Virtually all farm business operators need to procure and manage labor. From where and whom do they get it? How do farmers manage their employees? How do they deal with labor laws and regulations? What is their outlook on the future? Could they use more or different services? This study answers these questions. It is based on a large survey of farmers operating in all areas and commodity sectors of California.

Without people applying their abilities and efforts, farms do not yield food and fiber. Human work is critical to all agricultural production, and upwards of one-fourth of total operating expenses on California farms each year goes to pay for it. This kind of aggregate measure and the use of cost-per-acre averages in farm budgeting obscure the significance of countless decisions that farmers make in managing the labor that brings forth marketable products through the use of other agricultural resources--land, plants, animals, water, machinery, tools, and chemicals.

Labor management affects both how people perform on the farm and what they get from it, which together translate into business results as well as quality of life. Neither costs for labor nor returns from them are fixed by formula. Differently managed farms with the same total wage bill can have great differences in production and personal outcomes. The choices made by farm operators in dealing with workers and setting terms of employment are themselves influenced by factors on and off the farm, including tradition, managerial philosophy and values, product and labor market conditions, bargained agreements, production technologies, and public policies.

The importance of agricultural labor issues to California society and its economy is reflected in the laws and regulations that form a most imposing set of boundaries for farmers when they are making labor management decisions. Designed primarily to protect workers by controlling employers, labor laws are also intended to serve the public interests in curbing unfair producer competition and reducing social costs that flow from practices of unscrupulous actors in the labor market. While laws enacted and amended over many years have added to the complexity of farm management, they have clearly not fulfilled all their promises. Nearly a decade ago, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986

(IRCA) particularly raised interest and expectations of change on the farm labor scene. New mandates and constraints are proposed every year, based on presumptions about how farm operators coping with a mix of business forces will respond to them.

Have formulation, implementation, and assessment of public policies on agricultural employment been supported by adequate understanding of the very businesses they regulate? Although popular media reports have continued to manifest and contribute to public awareness of farm labor issues, most of their focus has been on workers beset with poverty, insecurity, and ill health. Perspectives and management policies of farm operators have not been given the same kind of attention. While information about the farm workforce and the business environment is essential to evaluating policy options, so is knowledge about employment and management at the level of the production firm. Yet careful description and analysis of farm personnel practices have been scarce. Findings in this report help fill the lacuna.

Scope, Background, and Limits

What labor management choices do farmers face? How to formally engage labor--through direct employment, farm labor contractors and other service providers, or independent contractor agreements--is a basic one. Others are which tasks and duties to combine into jobs, how to group jobs within crews or other organizational units, what rates of pay and fringe benefits to offer, where to recruit for workers, and how to select employees for specific positions and assignments. Once employees are hired, managers make many decisions in orienting them to work conditions and expectations, helping them to develop skills, eliciting their effort in farm operations, keeping them informed, acting on their ideas and complaints, and correcting performance problems. Such decisions can be made rather casually or through variously structured methods.

It was quite reasonable to suppose that the 1986 immigration reform would affect these management decisions. Enactment of IRCA had sent shock waves through the agricultural community. It included some measures that required specific change in employers' management practices and others that were expected to induce adjustments. The law imposed new hiring and record-keeping obligations, and it carried an exceptional opportunity for hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers in California to acquire legal U.S. resident status. The Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) program, one of the two new mechanisms that IRCA created to legalize people who had lived or worked here illegally, was open only to farm workers.

IRCA also treated agriculture specially through a few other provisions, the very existence of which revealed expectations that farmers would be making managerial adjustments to a changed labor market. The law deferred until December 1988 the full application of sanctions for hiring ineligible workers and for failing to document the eligibility of new hires. It provided that not only the SAW

program but also the Replenishment Agricultural Worker (RAW) and the H-2A programs further expand the farm labor supply with legal immigrants or guest workers, if necessitated by shortage. It placed new restrictions on Border Patrol access to farm fields, and it created a national Commission on Agricultural Workers to report to Congress on the impact of immigration reform in agriculture.

The explicit goal of IRCA had been to control unauthorized immigration to the United States, but diverse interest groups had a variety of other aims, dubiously compatible with one another, in supporting this law. One was to reduce the relative isolation of the farm labor market, tighten labor supply, and thereby improve conditions of employment in agriculture. IRCA held promise for both new and old kinds of alternatives to widespread employment of farm workers who were here illegally. The new direction pointed to a legal resident workforce and a stabilized labor market operating more like the rest of our economy, the old to an institutionalized reliance on guest workers employed under more tightly regulated conditions. From the outset, however, forecasts about how IRCA would actually impact the farm labor market were tenuous, due to uncertainty about (1) the vigor and ingenuity of enforcement by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the U.S. Department of Labor, and (2) general economic conditions, both here and in Mexico.

Surely IRCA has influenced the innumerable personal and business decisions leading to 1992 conditions in agriculture. But so have other laws and regulations affected labor supply and demand, labor-management relations, specific terms of employment, and business opportunities. And so have such numerous additional factors as our nationwide recession, the economics and politics of Mexico, the drought and freeze in California, changes in agricultural production abroad, public concern about environmental toxins and food safety, the state of public education, costs of health care, elections of representatives to Sacramento and Washington, the Persian Gulf war, and arguably the dismantling of the Berlin Wall. The unfolding consequences of immigration reform are mixed with the results of other influences.

It is not that the 1986 law has had no impact, but little payoff is to be expected from trying to isolate it. The present study was designed to develop information that may support inferences about effects of the 1986 immigration reform law, but it makes no conclusive assertions in this regard. Although some survey items do refer to employment and management in 1986, we have less faith in current recollections about 1986 than about 1992 conditions, and even less in attributions to IRCA of particular changes that have appeared to occur between 1986 and 1992.

More fundamentally than laws, the means by which agricultural commodities are produced drive farm employment decisions. Mechanical and biological advances in production technology lead to changes in the content, conditions, staffing, and management of farm work. Broad adoption of the mechanical

cotton harvester a generation ago nearly halved the labor bill and cut total costs of operation by 15 percent in that commodity between 1950 and 1970. Concurrent with a sharp reduction in total labor needed, the average wage for remaining jobs in cotton production increased along with the levels of skill and reliability they required. No such transformation in the means of crop production has dramatically affected demand for farm labor since 1986, but technologies have continued to evolve and bring about gradual adjustments in the organization of work.

Probably the most common innovation on farms in recent years is the use of computers for creating and processing both operational and administrative information, including some that goes into reports required by government agencies. Computers give managers and other farm decision makers efficient access to copious data on such things as inventory, chemical applications, acreage yields, herd health, personnel skills and task preferences, crew performance, costs of operation, and customer accounts. This information can additionally enable technical and production workers to better perform their duties on plants, animals, or machines, and in many cases to take on responsibilities traditionally assigned to supervisors.

Microelectronics are also being applied by engineers to a new generation of tools and equipment that increasingly alter agricultural jobs. Some devices help workers to monitor machine functions on which they need to make timely adjustments. Seed drop sensors on planting machines, for example, can transmit information on seeding rate, acreage sown, and planter malfunctions; sensors on combine harvesters can track the speeds of fans and threshing cylinder shafts. Other devices sense environmental attributes and use the acquired information to automatically adjust machines on a continuous basis (e.g., the "laser plane" that precisely controls the cutting blade position on a soil scraper; tractor speed and load monitors that directly set gear and throttle for optimal fuel efficiency). Still others, such as fruit sorters and cullers used in postharvest operations, act directly on a flow of product from what they sense. In the future, even industrial robotics may come to the farm. Finer sensors, more versatile armatures, and smarter control systems might make possible the mechanization of tasks -- the harvesting oranges; the gathering, inspecting, and packing of eggs -- that have heretofore required human observation, analysis, decision-making, and dexterity.

Our central goal in this study has been to construct a valid cross-section of employment, management, and labor-related reporting practices of farm business operators. Although the survey did not inquire about technologies used, the interpretation of findings is enhanced by an awareness that farm production methods, and the cognitive and physical abilities needed to operate them, range very broadly. Technologies vary not only among commodity sectors and the farms within them, but also, like regulatory guidelines and other contextual forces, over time. As a "snapshot" at a given time, this report emphasizes objective description of conditions prevailing in 1992. It examines not the processes

but rather the results of managerial adjustments to technological, legal, and other influences, encountered as well as anticipated, in the business environment.

Methods we used to collect data from the population of farm owners and operators are reviewed in the following section (B). Survey findings are then presented in sections that discuss respondent farm business characteristics (section C), the workers who provide labor for farm operations (D), the means of recruiting and selecting those workers (E), the supervision and compensation of farm employees (F), and dealings with the government and the labor market (G). The concluding section (H) offers summary observations on patterns of labor procurement and management.

B. Study Design and Methods

This study was ambitious. Its subject matter has many facets that may be characterized in various ways, and the population of farm businesses in California is large and diverse. To meet the need for an extensive amount of information from many respondents, we collected primary data through a self-administered written survey transmitted by mail.

Keys to the validity of the survey results were: (1) to obtain a high rate of returns from farmers sampled, both overall and across the various sectors of the population; (2) to have responses carry unambiguous meaning; and (3) to minimize or control for response bias by understanding how farmers who respond might be unrepresentative of those who do not. We attempted to meet these challenges by randomly sampling from within size strata of the population, taking great care in construction of the instrument and cover letter, making up to three mail contacts with each business in the sample, conducting an interim phone survey of non-respondents (after the first two mailings), and analyzing response rates across size and location classes.

Professional staff of the Survey Research Center, University of California at Berkeley, collaborated with the authors in all phases of data collection, from design of instruments to creation of response files.

Survey Content and Instrument

Much consultation went into developing the survey instrument, including several preliminary discussions with farmers. Cognizant of how besieged many feel by requests for information, we wanted to make ours as welcome or at least as tolerable as possible. Most farmers advised that, although their time was limited, they were not strongly predisposed to either participate in or refuse any survey that might come along. Rather, their decisions to respond would depend on how a given survey was presented, how relevant its content appeared, and how easily it could be completed. A notable guideline that was offered by one Fresno area farmer and confirmed by others was, "Don't make me go to my file cabinet."

The survey requested information from farm operators about labor procurement, compensation, other personnel management practices, administration, legal compliance, and future outlook. Within these broad areas the questionnaire contained specific items on employee recruitment channels, engagement of

farm labor contractors and custom harvesters, use of the public Employment Service, pre-employment screening and hiring procedures, pay basis and wage structure, fringe benefits, supervision and communications with workers, use of personnel management professionals, record keeping, compliance reporting, and contact with government agencies.

The questionnaire is in Appendix 1. Content, wording, organization, and format were refined over a two-month period. The draft instrument was reviewed in detail by two University of California Cooperative Extension farm advisors and pretested with three farmers who operate businesses quite different in size and other basic respects. The main objective of the pre-tests was to identify problems with meanings of terms, clarity of questions and appropriateness of multiple choices. This phase yielded valuable guidance for refinements incorporated in the final version of the questionnaire. A shortened version, sent in the third mailing to two-thirds of nonrespondents (see the following section), is in Appendix 2.

The Population

The California Employment Development Department (EDD) provided identification and employment data on a specified study population[1] from its file of employer unemployment insurance (UI) reports. The data record on each farm employer who paid wages during any quarter in 1991 included: (1) name, mailing address, county code, and SIC code; (2) wages paid in each quarter of 1991; and (3) number of employees in each month of 1991.

The population consisted of approximately 22,537 farm businesses. It excluded a total of 13,691 agricultural employers in the following categories during 1991: farm labor contractors; nurseries; veterinary services; other animal services; landscape and horticultural services; and grape growers in Fresno, Tulare, and Kern Counties. Each business in the UI file is typed by a 4-digit standard industrial classification (SIC) code in the 01, 02, and 07 series (e.g., 0131 for cotton, 0241 for dairy farms). Of the 1991 monthly average number of job-holders in all agriculture (422,621), about 54 percent (229,109) were employed by the target population of farm operators.

Use of the UI data base to identify California farm owners and operators suffers from two broad problems: (1) incomplete coverage or entries (i.e., some employers report only part of what is required–such as quarterly earnings but not monthly employment, and others may simply not report at all), and (2) the imprecise basis for employer grouping. The imprecision problem stems from both (a) the requirement that employers declare a single SIC when setting up accounts with EDD and (b) the ambiguity built into the very structure of the SIC classification system. Because the SIC structure mixes

[1] "Questions and Answers for RFP 10783, Study of California Farm Owner/Operators," EDD Labor Market Information Division, March 18, 1991.

classes defined by commodity (e.g., 0172 grapes, 0213 hogs) and by function (e.g., 0721 crop preharvest services, 0741 livestock veterinary service), the full complement of employers cannot be sorted on either basis. The crops actually produced by even those farm businesses properly classified by a commodity code may be difficult to identify, if the farms are diversified operations or if the classes they fall into are broadly defined (e.g., 0161 vegetables and melons, 0191 general crop farms).

Moreover, reliance on SIC codes to define bounds of the population could have caused errors of false inclusion or exclusion, most likely of businesses with both farm and nonfarm operations. Reports from farmers who also run retail outlets or catalogue sales, for example, may or may not be under a crop code. Some farmers who had been initially classified under nonfarm SICs (e.g., trucking, construction, labor contracting) were excluded from the population tape provided. On the other hand, some businesses that no longer operate farms but have UI records that are still tagged with commodity SICs, were included in the population. The latter type of case (false inclusion) is less problematic than the former, as questionnaire recipients who should not have been in the population could easily exclude themselves from consideration. But misclassified non-recipients who should have been but were not included in the population had no chance of getting selected to the sample.

Even after screening businesses in the UI file by SIC code, we faced many questions about who should or should not be included. The questions arose during instrument design as well as when responses were arriving. A first step toward minimizing invalid selections to the sample was to remove from the population file all entities which reported not a single employee or dollar of payroll in 1991, and to which, if still in business, questions on labor management were not likely to be relevant. Family-run farms that procure all their paid labor through service contracts might have thus, however, been eliminated in error. A second step was to give an explicit option on the instrument for recipients who do not own or operate farms to select themselves out. Nevertheless, establishing a clear definition of "farm owner and operator" proved more important and difficult than anticipated.

Sample Selection

The survey was designed to include farm operators from all size groups, geographic regions, and commodities represented in the population. A less extensive survey that we conducted in 1987 had a 25 percent rate of response. The initial plan for this study was to obtain 1,000 responses by sampling approximately 5,000 farmers, conservatively assuming 20 percent participation. Ultimately we altered the strategy to pursue a like number of responses by eliciting higher participation from a smaller sample.

Because the proportion of larger employers in the farmer population is much smaller than the shares of production and labor they manage in California, we stratified the population by size and oversampled

from the larger-size strata. Sampling was random within each of the seven size strata, thus selecting farm businesses for the survey from all regions and commodity groups. The size measure used in stratifying the population was total wages paid in 1991, computed for each business in the UI file as the sum of its four quarterly wage figures. Businesses with both zero wages in every quarter and zero employment in every month were eliminated from consideration.

The smallest 25 percent of the remaining population consisted of business with reported annual wages up to $9,617, the next 25 percent (those below the 50th percentile) had wages up to $32,135, the next 25 percent (those below the 75th percentile) up to $104,728, the next 15 percent (those below the 90th percentile) up to $294,806, the next 5 percent (those below the 95th percentile) up to $571,435, the next 4 percent (those below the 99th percentile) up to $1,837,310, and the top 1 percent had wages exceeding $1,837,310. The total survey sample of 2,500 was drawn such that 1,375 (55 percent) were from the smallest three size groups combined (up to the 75th percentile of population), 375 (15 percent) from the next group (75th to 90th percentiles), 625 (25 percent) from the next two groups combined (90th to 99th percentiles), and 125 (5 percent) from the top-size group (99th percentile). Businesses selected to the sample that had incomplete addresses on file were replaced through random drawings from their respective size strata.

Using employment or payroll data from the UI file as indicators of farm business size may have led to misclassification by size, because the amount and cost of labor procured through contract is not represented in these UI records. An extremely large business with large acreage and production value, for example, may have been classed in the small or medium groups if it made extensive use of FLCs. We acknowledge this problem in stratifying the population for sampling, and we avoid it in the presentation of findings by using other measures of size--total labor expense, production value, acres--as appropriate.

Mailings and Response

The first mailing to businesses in our survey sample was made during late October 1992. An envelope containing a cover letter, final version of the questionnaire, administrative control sheet, summary request postcard, and return envelope was sent to each of the 2,500 selected farm owners or operators. The Postal Service promptly returned more than one-hundred of the envelopes with invalid or nonexistent addresses, thus reducing the effective sample size. Usable returns from farmers began to arrive within a few days and continued to accumulate at a substantial rate for one month.

The second mailing, a simple reminder postcard, went out to all non-respondents during the first week of December. By the end of January 1993, a total of 586 completed and usable questionnaires (25 percent of the number delivered) had been returned.

Many people who had been selected to the sample called or wrote to question whether their businesses should really be included in the survey population (e.g., equipment providers, land preparers, packing houses, labor contractors who used to be growers). We established two criteria for inclusion:

1. Activity of the business is part of either growing any commodity or preparing for market a fresh commodity (e.g., include an asparagus packing shed; exclude a cannery); and

2. Business revenue depends at least partly on price or quantity of the commodity produced (e.g., businesses like labor contractors and pest control operators, that sell service to farm operators on a flat fee, per acre, or per hour basis, are excluded).

For every questionnaire recipient who went to the trouble of telling us that he or she was not or might not be part of the population, there were likely others in the same situation who did not bother to communicate. The response rate after the first two mailings did not measure up to expectations based on long experience of the Survey Research Center in similar studies. The sheer length of the survey instrument was considered partly but not solely responsible.

We therefore conducted an interim study (1) to assess the extent to which "non-response" was from such people who should not have been in the sample to begin with, and (2) to identify other factors discouraging response that could be modified to improve the third mailing. The most currently available (three quarters of 1992) EDD employment and payroll data on 200 randomly selected non-respondents were acquired and examined, and they indicated that 22 of these farms were not currently in business. A subsample of 20 (of the remaining 178) was then chosen for brief phone interviews, which yielded no single, clear explanation but did bear out that instrument length and personal time constraints were important factors to recipients.

For the third mailing, in March 1993, we devised a short version of the questionnaire (Appendix 2 herein) one-half the size of the original and excluding items most burdensome to complete. The short form was thus a subset of the long; it contained no new items. The full original questionnaire was sent to one-third of nonrespondents remaining in the sample and the short form to two-thirds.

By early May the Postal Service had returned as undeliverable a total of 151 (6 percent) of the envelopes initially mailed to the 2,500 businesses selected to the sample. Another 89 (3.6 percent) of the selected businesses informed us by mail or phone call that they were no longer operating, had never been in business, or were not in a farm business. The valid population list thus numbered 2,260, and we heard formally from 955 (42.3 percent). There were 30 outright refusals (1.3 percent), one farmer regretfully and regrettably "unable to participate" due to major illness, and a total of 924 complete and usable responses (41 percent of the valid sample) before a May 7, 1993, cut-off date. An additional 19

completed questionnaires--received after May 7, and one received earlier but not representing what we construe to be a "farm business," are not included in the data file analyzed for this report.

Written or called-in comments from questionnaire recipients who did not participate in the survey were recorded verbatim. These remarks, several quite candid, are grouped by reason for non-participation and presented in Appendix 3.

The completion rate varies little across payroll size based on UI file data, from a low of 38 percent in the 50-75th percentile group to a high of 46 percent in the 95-99th percentile group. Smaller operators up to the 50th percentile, while close to the sample average in questionnaire completion rate, were markedly more likely to report that they had left farm business. Survey participation varied more strongly as a function of SIC code. Dairy operators had the lowest response rate (33 percent) among commodity-based SIC groups, and producers of nuts (53 percent), citrus fruit (53 percent), and other fruit (55 percent) the highest.

Amazingly, response rates on the third mailing were virtually the same for farmers receiving the original full-length questionnaire (19.6 percent of those who got it on third mailing) as for those who were asked to complete the shortened version (19.8 percent). It is difficult to figure.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Data from usable responses were entered and verified in a specialized database program into which logical sequences and consistency checks had been built. Response files were then imported to mainframe and desktop computers for analysis.

Findings have been aggregated and are presented in this report mostly as cross-tabulations for the sample as a whole and for farm size, regional, and commodity groupings. More sophisticated multivariate techniques were used to test for connections between respective farm characteristics and employment practices. Significant relationships are noted in the text of sections D-G.

The measure of size used in most tables, particularly those referring to management of the farm's own employees, is direct payroll as reported on the questionnaire. Total labor expense, including direct payroll plus payments to contractors and other labor service providers, is used in presentation of findings more logically related to size of the entire farm operation.

Geographical classification is based on the county in which the respondent farm reports producing its greatest revenue, not on its address of record in the UI file that defined the survey population. The addresses listed in the EDD record for many operators do not correspond to the locations of their farm business activity. Several in the survey sample, in fact, received their questionnaires in other states: Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, Nevada, and New York.

Reported counties are grouped into the following regions:

North Coast: Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Sonoma

Sacramento Valley: Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Modoc, Placer, Sacramento, Shasta, Siskiyou, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Yolo, Yuba

San Joaquin Valley: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare

Central Coast: Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Benito, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz

South Coast: Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura

Desert: Imperial, Riverside, San Bernardino

Other: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Del Norte, Humboldt, Inyo, Lassen, Marin, Mariposa, Mono, Nevada, Plumas, San Francisco, Sierra, Trinity, Tuolomne

Respondent classification by commodity is based not on the SIC code in the UI file, but rather on the type of product reported in the survey response as generating greatest revenue for the farm. Commodity categories on the questionnaire do not correspond tightly with the SIC system codes. As indicated in the listing below, some of the categories on the questionnaire are further grouped into broader classes for the presentation of cross-tabulated findings. For example, the "animals and animal products" column in many tables represents the aggregation of farmers who noted on the questionnaire that their main commodities were dairy products, poultry and eggs, or other livestock and animal products.

Category for presentation in report:	*Categories on questionnaire*
Animals and Animal Products:	Dairy products
	Poultry and eggs
	Other livestock and animal products
Nuts:	Nuts
Grapes:	Grapes

Tree and Other Fruit:	Citrus fruits
	Other tree fruit
	All other fruit
Vegetables:	Vegetables
Non-edibles:	Non-edible field crops
Other:	Grains
	Other edible field crops
	Ornamentals
	Other nursery products
	Other crop

C. Business Characteristics of the Sample

Organization and Functions

California farms are most commonly organized as sole proprietorships. Other forms of organization are, in order of frequency, corporations, family partnerships, and nonfamily partnerships. In the survey sample, corporations and family partnerships together make up more than half of all farm businesses. All four of these organizational types exist in every farm size group, but farms with larger payrolls are much more likely to be corporations and those with smaller payrolls to be sole proprietorships (figure C-1). Geographically (table C-1), the Central Coast region has a larger than average share of corporate farms (46 percent) and nonfamily partnerships (12 percent), and a smaller share of sole proprietorships (25 percent).

These farms have been operating under their present owners or family predecessors an average of nearly 30 years, one since 1855 (figure C-2). Ownership tenure is longest in the Central Valley (Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys) and shortest in the coastal regions (Central and South Coasts). Although one respondent operates in more than ten counties, more than four-fifths do all their farming in one county, and more than half of the rest in two (table C-1). They perform an average of 3.8 farming functions (table C-2), most frequently harvesting (76 percent), cultivation and plant care (74 percent), planting (67 percent), and land preparation (65 percent). Only a third of the businesses market farm commodities. Less than one-fifth limit their operations to a single function, animal products firms by far most likely to be among them.

Respondents specified quite a collection of "other" functions as part of their businesses, including manure spreading, catering, beekeeping, selling retail, equestrian training, trucking, financing, holding in cold storage, irrigating, labor contracting, aerial spraying, and almond hulling. Most of these could be -- but have not been -- interpreted as one of the functions listed on the survey questionnaire (and in table C-1).

Location and Products

All major crop types are well represented among respondents (table C-3). Farms that primarily produce tree fruits or other fruits constitute a quarter of those participating. Making up about an eighth each are producers of animals, nuts, grapes (even without those grape growers in the three large southern San

Figure C-1. Type of Farm Organization, by Total Labor Expense

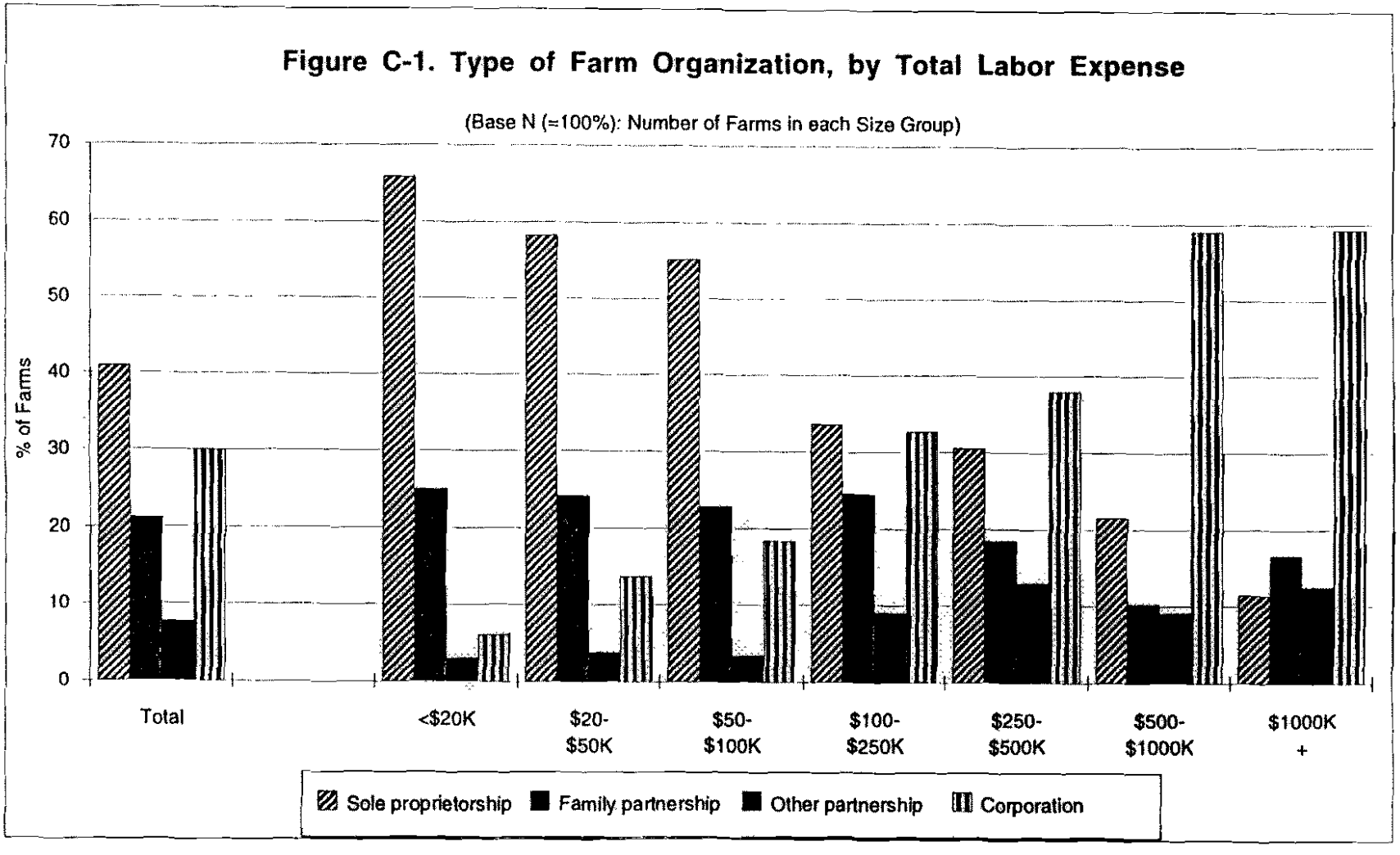
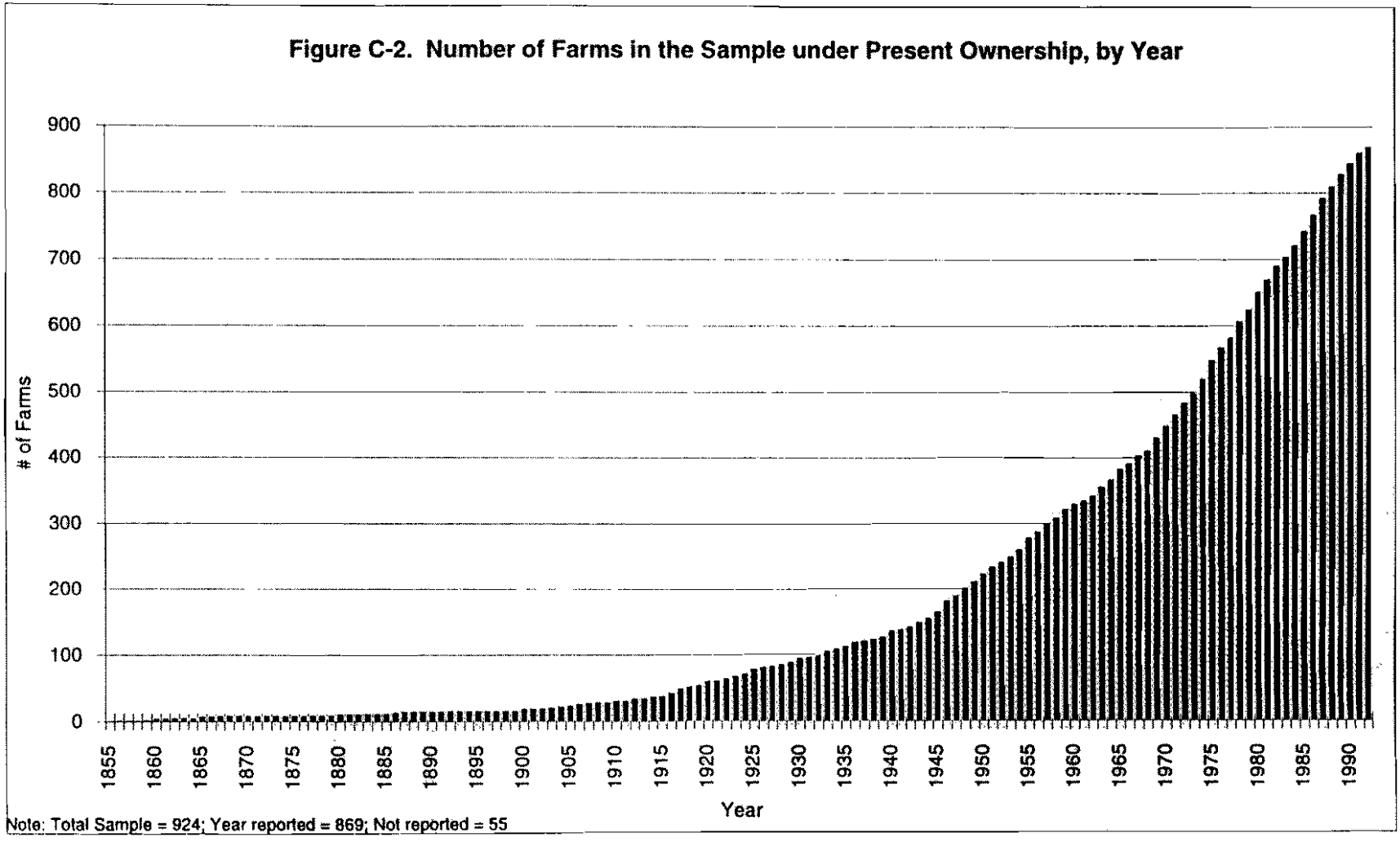


Table C-1. Basic Characteristics of Farms in Survey, by Main Region of Operation

	Total %	North Coast %	Sac Valley %	SJ Valley %	Central Coast %	South Coast %	Desert %	Other %
Form of Organization								
Sole proprietor	41.0	46.2	41.6	44.0	24.7	36.1	36.4	53.8
Family partnership	21.3	24.6	21.5	23.5	18.2	16.7	20.0	30.8
Other partnership	7.7	9.2	7.4	5.2	11.7	10.2	10.9	7.7
Corporation	30.0	20.0	29.5	27.3	45.5	37.0	32.7	7.7
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	883	65	149	366	77	108	55	13
No data	41	2	9	13	2	4	3	0
Years in Operation								
Average	29.33	25.92	33.26	31.49	26.38	25.87	23.35	26.25
Median	22.00	20.00	25.50	27.00	17.50	16.00	20.00	21.00
Began in:								
1987-92	11.7	14.8	7.2	9.8	15.8	16.5	15.7	8.3
1976-86	25.2	26.2	22.4	22.1	32.9	34.0	23.5	25.0
1965-75	20.9	24.6	21.7	20.7	14.5	17.5	23.5	41.7
1951-64	16.6	18.0	14.5	18.8	13.2	7.8	25.5	8.3
1931-50	14.6	8.2	19.1	17.4	13.2	13.6	7.8	0.0
1901-30	8.7	4.9	12.5	9.5	9.2	7.8	3.9	16.7
1850-1900	2.2	3.3	2.6	1.7	1.3	2.9	0.0	0.0
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	869	61	152	357	76	103	51	12
No data	55	6	6	22	3	9	7	1
Number of Counties of Operation								
Average #	1.37	1.15	1.40	1.41	1.35	1.28	1.27	1.08
Share of farms in:								
1 county	81.3	90.9	78.8	80.4	77.0	86.5	83.9	91.7
2 counties	12.2	3.0	13.9	12.4	14.9	9.9	12.5	8.3
3 - 5 counties	5.1	6.1	5.3	5.2	8.1	1.8	3.6	0.0
6 - 10 counties	1.4	0.0	2.0	1.7	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0
10 + counties	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	864	66	151	363	74	111	56	12
No data	60	1	7	16	5	1	2	1

Figure C-2. Number of Farms in the Sample under Present Ownership, by Year



Note: Total Sample = 924; Year reported = 869; Not reported = 55

Table C-2. Business Functions of Farms in Survey, by Main Region of Operation

	Total %	North Coast %	Sac Valley %	SJ Valley %	Central Coast %	South Coast %	Desert %	Other %
Farming Functions								
Land preparation	64.8	68.7	69.9	64.9	61.0	70.4	62.1	30.8
Land prep. only	***0.2***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.3***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***
Harvesting	76.0	92.5	85.9	75.3	66.2	75.0	65.5	38.5
Harvesting only	***3.5***	***9.0***	***3.2***	***3.5***	***5.2***	***0.0***	***3.4***	***0.0***
Planting	67.3	77.6	75.6	63.8	67.5	75.9	62.1	38.5
Planting only	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***
Packing, etc.	31.4	20.9	23.1	31.4	46.8	38.9	41.4	7.7
Packing only	***1.7***	***0.0***	***0.6***	***2.1***	***3.9***	***1.9***	***1.7***	***0.0***
Cultivation, etc.	74.4	82.1	80.8	76.7	68.8	81.5	58.6	23.1
Cultivation only	***2.4***	***1.5***	***1.9***	***3.8***	***0.0***	***1.9***	***1.7***	***0.0***
Animal husbandry	21.4	10.4	19.9	22.0	14.3	19.4	25.9	76.9
Animal husb. only	***7.0***	***1.5***	***5.8***	***7.0***	***7.8***	***4.6***	***13.8***	***23.1***
Marketing	32.7	38.8	42.3	28.7	27.3	27.8	36.2	38.5
Marketing only	***0.2***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***	***0.0***
Other function	9.9	6.0	12.8	8.6	6.5	8.3	13.8	23.1
Other only	***3.1***	***0.0***	***2.6***	***3.2***	***2.6***	***1.9***	***3.4***	***15.4***
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	908	67	156	373	77	108	58	13
No data	16	0	2	6	2	4	0	0

Table C-3. Type of Main Crop Produced, by Region

	Total %	North Coast %	Sac Valley %	SJ Valley %	Central Coast %	South Coast %	Desert %	Other %
Animals and animal products	15.8	4.8	10.6	17.3	9.7	13.5	28.0	81.8
Nuts	12.7	3.2	19.9	19.4	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grapes	12.7	71.4	5.0	12.7	2.8	1.0	6.0	0.0
Tree and other fruits	25.6	17.5	22.7	24.5	25.0	44.8	22.0	0.0
Vegetables	13.5	0.0	7.8	5.8	55.6	22.9	20.0	0.0
Non-edibles	7.9	0.0	5.0	13.6	0.0	1.0	10.0	9.1
Others	11.9	3.2	29.1	6.7	2.8	16.7	14.0	9.1
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	806	63	141	330	72	96	50	11
No data	118	4	17	49	7	16	8	2

Joaquin Valley counties excluded from the survey population), vegetables, and "other crops." Most in the "non-edibles" group indicated that they grow cotton; producers of hay, flowers, silage, and seeds are also in this class. Because their numbers are quite small, we lumped into the "other crops" group farms that report mainly producing grains, other edible field crops, ornamentals, and other nursery products. Other crops in this group that were specifically indicated by one or more respondents include bees, oysters, herbs, sugar beets, flowers, olives, avocados, horseradish, storks, trout, and meal worms. As with "other" specified business functions, farms have not been reassigned in the data base from the respondent-indicated crop category to other plausibly appropriate crop types listed on the questionnaire.

Relationships between crop type and region are evident. Although most crop types are found in most or all regions, some are concentrated in one or two. Most nut production is in the central valley regions, grapes in the North Coast and San Joaquin Valley regions (despite the exclusion from this survey of grape growers in Fresno, Tulare, and Kern Counties), vegetables in the Central and South Coasts, and non-edibles in the San Joaquin Valley and Desert. Agriculture in counties designated as "other" is heavily based on animals, and "other crops" are an unusually large share of Sacramento Valley farm products.

Farm Business Size

Farms with greatest acreage are in the Sacramento Valley and counties designated "other", but the Central Coast and Desert (in that order) tend to have the largest operations with respect to sales value, total labor expense, annual payroll, and peak employment level (Tables C-4 and C-5). Revenues, labor costs, and employment levels are smallest, on average, in the "other", North Coast, and Sacramento Valley regions.

The ratios of (1) median labor expense to sales value, and (2) median payroll to sales value (the two bottom rows in table C-4) are rough measures of aggregate labor-intensity of farm production. The ratio of payroll to total labor expense (the next row up in C-4) is an inverse indicator of the extent to which labor is obtained from non-employees. On this basis, the findings presented in the table suggest that reliance on labor contractors and custom harvesters is greatest in the South Coast and San Joaquin Valley regions.

Table C-4. Comparative Measures of Farm Size, by Region

	Total	North Coast	Sac Valley	SJ Valley	Central Coast	South Coast	Desert	Other
Acreage (median acres)	263	150	433	258	413	115	364	450
Employees at Peak (median)	12	25	8	11	32	9	23	2.5
Value of Sales (median $)	439,286	203,846	262,500	500,000	1,866,667	306,818	1,095,238	125,000
Total Labor Expense (median $)*	130,372	82,500	61,364	125,472	471,154	180,357	261,364	15,000
Annual Payroll (median $)*	82,713	69,444	51,316	75,581	383,929	104,412	244,231	11,000
Ratio of Median Payroll to Median Total Labor Expense*	0.63	0.84	0.84	0.60	0.81	0.58	0.93	0.73
Median Labor Expense per Sales Value	0.30	0.40	0.23	0.25	0.25	0.59	0.24	0.12
Median Payroll per Sales Value	0.19	0.34	0.20	0.15	0.21	0.34	0.22	0.09

* Note: Includes only those farmers reporting both labor expense and payroll (any value, including '0').

Table C-5. Indicators of Farm Size, by Region

	Total %	North Coast %	Sac Valley %	SJ Valley %	Central Coast %	South Coast %	Desert %	Other %
Acreage								
Median (Acres)	263	150	433	258	413	115	364	450
Less than 50 acres	24.0	28.8	19.6	19.6	22.1	41.4	21.4	7.7
50 - 199	22.5	31.8	15.7	27.2	16.9	19.8	17.9	23.1
200 - 999	29.2	30.3	32.7	28.9	31.2	27.0	23.2	30.8
1,000 - 4,999	18.9	7.6	28.1	18.0	18.2	9.9	33.9	23.1
5,000 + acres	5.5	1.5	3.9	6.3	11.7	1.8	3.6	15.4
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	885	66	153	367	77	111	56	13
No data	39	1	5	12	2	1	2	0
Value of Sales								
Median (Dollars)	439,286	203,846	262,500	500,000	1,866,667	306,818	1,095,238	125,000
Less than $40K	12.9	22.6	17.5	8.7	6.8	16.2	9.1	30.8
$40 - $100K	12.5	12.9	11.0	10.9	13.7	17.1	7.3	15.4
$100 - $250K	15.4	21.0	20.8	15.9	8.2	14.3	3.6	23.1
$250 - $500K	12.1	9.7	13.0	14.5	5.5	10.5	9.1	23.1
$500 - $1,000K	12.7	14.5	13.6	14.2	6.8	9.5	20.0	7.7
$1,000-$5,000K	25.4	14.5	23.4	25.1	41.1	21.0	38.2	0.0
$5,000K +	8.9	4.8	0.6	10.6	17.8	11.4	12.7	0.0
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	865	62	154	358	73	105	55	13
No data	59	5	4	21	6	7	3	0
Total Labor Expenses								
Average (Dollars)	583,376	274,362	205,341	519,842	1,593,082	763,962	857,274	32,778
Median (Dollars)	123,031	82,500	58,333	119,444	471,154	170,313	261,364	15,000
Less than $20K	19.5	23.7	24.6	20.1	9.2	16.8	5.7	58.3
$20-$50K	17.0	15.3	23.9	13.9	9.2	19.8	13.2	33.3
$50-$250K	26.6	28.8	27.5	29.9	13.8	21.8	30.2	8.3
$250-$1,000K	24.3	25.4	19.0	25.1	32.3	24.8	32.1	0.0
$1,000K +	12.6	6.8	4.9	10.9	35.4	16.8	18.9	0.0
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	819	59	142	338	65	101	53	12
No data	105	8	16	41	14	11	5	1

continued

Table C-5. Indicators of Farm Size, by Region

(cont'd.)

	Total %	North Coast %	Sac Valley %	SJ Valley %	Central Coast %	South Coast %	Desert %	Other %
Annual Payroll								
Median (Dollars)	88,000	60,000	57,500	78,261	367,188	125,000	244,643	18,200
Less than $20K	25.4	29.7	32.6	26.0	14.9	23.6	10.9	55.6
$20-$50K	15.7	17.2	15.3	16.6	9.5	16.0	10.9	22.2
$50-$250K	26.5	31.3	29.9	27.4	16.2	24.5	29.1	22.2
$250-$1,000K	23.7	17.2	20.1	22.3	32.4	23.6	40.0	0.0
$1,000K +	8.7	4.7	2.1	7.7	27.0	12.3	9.1	0.0
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	848	64	144	350	74	106	55	9
No data	76	3	14	29	5	6	3	4
Peak Employees								
Average	57	37	29	55	109	66	96	3
Median	12	25	8	11	32	9	23	2.5
0	5.6	6.0	7.7	5.9	2.6	1.8	3.6	16.7
1 to 4	23.9	7.5	29.0	21.9	13.0	34.9	19.6	66.7
5 to 10	18.6	19.4	21.3	21.1	11.7	14.7	12.5	16.7
11 to 30	20.8	23.9	18.7	23.3	22.1	18.3	21.4	0.0
31 to 100	18.3	35.8	14.8	16.3	20.8	12.8	30.4	0.0
101 to 500	11.0	7.5	8.4	9.1	27.3	15.6	7.1	0.0
501 and over	1.9	0.0	0.0	2.4	2.6	1.8	5.4	0.0
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	900	67	155	374	77	109	56	12
No data	24	0	3	5	2	3	2	1

D. People Working on Farms

The work of farm businesses in the survey is performed by an average of 89 workers at peak, 27 year-round (table D-1, bottom rows). Vegetable farms have by far the largest numbers of workers (232 per business at peak), and grape and other fruit operations also have much larger workforces (107 and 110 at peak) than other crop groups. The size difference between seasonal peak and year-round workforces is proportionately greatest in grapes (seven workers at peak for every one year-round) and smallest in animal commodities production.

There are many roads to farm work, and several types of relationship between farm operator and labor provider. Two-thirds of all workers in farm businesses, at peak activity as well as year around, are employees on the farm payroll. Farmer family members are only six percent of the overall year-round workforce, two percent at peak. They are somewhat more likely than not to be on the books as employees, rather than as "unpaid family members."

Larger operators provide the longest periods of employment during a year, over the total survey sample as well as within crop classifications. Significant regression results show that the greater the payroll, the higher the ratio of year-round employees to peak employees, indicating that larger farms tend less to hire and layoff workers around their seasonal variations in need for labor.

Employees of farm labor contractors (FLCs) are nearly a quarter of all workers at peak, on average, and one-seventh of workers year-round (table D-1). FLC employees thus make up almost twice as much of the peak as of the year-round workforce. Although the activity of FLCs is popularly associated with fruit and vegetable production, their employees constitute large segments of the peak workforce in all crop groups except animals. Custom harvester (CH) and management service company employees are a smaller but still substantial portion of the farm workforce, more so on a year-round than peak seasonal basis, in contrast to workers brought by FLCs. Very few workers are engaged as independent contractors by farm operators, undoubtedly due in part to the California Supreme Court's precedent-setting 1989 decision in *Borello*.[2]

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2 *S.G. Borello and Sons v. Department of Industrial Relations*, 48 Cal. 3d 341 (1989). The Court held that "sharefarmers," although working under a signed written agreement that clearly described them as independent contractors of the farmer, Borello, were to be considered employees of the farmer and thus were entitled to the mandatory benefits of employee status.

Table D-1. Type of Workers on Farms in Survey, 1992, by Crop Type

	Total		Animals		Nuts		Grapes		Tree & Other Fruit		Vegetables		Non-Edibles		Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Non-family employees of farm																
Year-round	15,109	63.2	1,155	76.8	1,185	80.1	1,145	78.3	3,510	71.5	5,267	51.1	859	67.5	614	61.2
At Peak	50,109	63.2	1,484	73.2	2,926	64.5	7,203	68.1	14,848	66.3	14,851	58.6	1,542	50.2	1,760	62.8
Family employees of farm																
Year-round	832	3.5	130	8.6	46	3.1	62	4.2	199	4.1	162	1.6	57	4.5	75	7.5
At Peak	1,024	1.3	138	6.8	77	1.7	82	0.8	264	1.2	193	0.8	63	2.1	86	3.1
Family, not paid employees																
Year-round	627	2.6	92	6.1	46	3.1	64	4.4	121	2.5	108	1.0	62	4.9	79	7.9
At Peak	838	1.1	93	4.6	65	1.4	225	2.1	140	0.6	109	0.4	65	2.1	84	3.0
FLC employees																
Year-round	3,284	13.7	35	2.3	184	12.4	151	10.3	914	18.6	1,700	16.5	25	2.0	46	4.6
At Peak	18,499	23.3	90	4.4	1,280	28.2	2,279	21.6	5,838	26.1	5,507	21.7	831	27.1	581	20.7
Custom or mgt. service co. employees																
Year-round	3,794	15.9	34	2.3	6	0.4	21	1.4	134	2.7	3,043	29.5	235	18.5	163	16.2
At Peak	8,012	10.1	121	6.0	147	3.2	752	7.1	1,043	4.7	4,520	17.8	483	15.7	248	8.9
Independent contractors																
Year-round	250	1.0	58	3.9	12	0.8	19	1.3	34	0.7	27	0.3	34	2.7	27	2.7
At Peak	780	1.0	101	5.0	43	0.9	30	0.3	269	1.2	144	0.6	88	2.9	43	1.5
Total workers																
Year-round	23,896	100.0	1,504	100.0	1,479	100.0	1,462	100.0	4,912	100.0	10,307	100.0	1,272	100.0	1,004	100.0
At Peak	79,262	100.0	2,027	100.0	4,538	100.0	10,571	100.0	22,402	100.0	25,324	100.0	3,072	100.0	2,802	100.0
Farms reporting # workers (Total)																
# of Farms	908		125		100		101		204		109		63		94	
Total Workers per farm																
Year-round																
Average	26.79		12.23		14.79		14.77		24.20		94.56		20.52		10.80	
Max	1,562		145		500		173		604		1,562		502		225	
At Peak																
Average	88.86		16.48		45.38		106.78		110.35		232.33		49.55		30.13	
Max	1,905		364		1,353		1,840		1,602		1,666		502		525	

Direct Employment and Other Means of Engagement

Like other business operators, farmers purchase from outside providers a variety of services that may have once been performed by directly-hired workers. While the 1986 immigration reform law has been one factor considered by growers in deciding how to engage people to work during recent years, risks and costs attributable to other sources have also stimulated adjustments in labor procurement. A host of legal liabilities and constraints are attached to the institution of employment. Laws that limit management flexibility in hiring, supervising, and terminating employees can be seen as converting part of the variable unit cost for labor into fixed overhead.

A survey of farm employers one year after enactment of IRCA showed that farmers had made few management changes as of 1987 to avert disruptions generated by the new law. One adjustment that was suggested in the responses was increasing procurement of labor through farm labor contractors. While only 37 percent of respondents to that survey had used FLCs to supply workers in either 1986 or 1987, 13 percent relied on them more in the latter year and two percent less.[3]

Indications from the present survey are that the trend toward greater reliance on labor of non-employees has continued. Whereas an average 72 percent of workers at peak were farm employees in 1986, only 65 percent were in 1992, according to respondents (table D-2, first row). Only in the tree and other fruit group, where the ratio of employees to all workers on farms was lowest among major commodity classes in 1986, has there been even a slight relative increase in direct farm employment since then. Both the share of farmers in the survey getting labor from FLCs and CHs, and the average number of these service providers doing business with each farm reportedly increased from 1986 to 1992. Three in five farm businesses purchased services from at least one FLC or CH in 1992. Producers of vegetables were most inclined (64 percent) to use labor contractors, and producers of non-edibles to use custom harvesters (67 percent). Farmers' use of licensed pest control operators similarly grew over this period, with two-thirds of vegetable firms and three-quarters of non-edibles firms obtaining service from one or more PCOs.

Workforce Retention and Stability

Unwanted turnover raises various administrative and supervisory costs, and workforce stability is generally valued. Turnover is both expensive in itself and often a symptom of other problems. Farms experience employee turnover both during and between production years. An obvious reason for purchasing FLC and CH services is to improve stability of direct farm employment by reducing seasonal personnel transactions with people moving through task assignments that are by nature temporary.

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[3] Rosenberg, Howard R., and Perloff, Jeffrey M. "Initial Effects of the New Immigration Reform Law on California Agriculture." *California Agriculture*. Vol. 42, No. 3 (May-June 1988): pp. 28-32.

Table D-2. Direct Employment and Other Labor Procurement, 1986 vs. 1992, by Crop Type

	Total		Animals		Nuts		Grapes		Tree & Other Fruit		Vegetables		Non-Edibles		Other	
	1986	1992	1986	1992	1986	1992	1986	1992	1986	1992	1986	1992	1986	1992	1986	1992
Ratio:																
Employees to																
Total workers	0.72	0.65	0.88	0.80	0.79	0.66	0.78	0.69	0.66	0.67	0.71	0.59	0.65	0.52	0.65	0.66
Use of FLCs																
% with any	35.8	41.2	13.2	14.1	25.0	36.2	35.4	41.2	43.4	49.7	52.5	64.4	56.8	50.8	22.2	23.3
Average #	1.65	1.78	1.22	1.57	1.29	1.65	1.93	2.05	1.63	1.58	1.83	2.24	1.76	1.57	1.14	1.35
Base for %	625	833	68	99	68	94	79	97	145	193	80	104	44	59	63	86
No data	86	91	22	28	9	8	7	5	14	13	7	5	5	5	9	10
Base for average	224	343	9	14	17	34	28	40	63	96	42	67	25	30	14	20
Use of Custom Harvesters																
% with any	37.8	44.4	47.9	47.6	44.8	54.3	37.7	45.7	23.9	29.0	39.2	50.5	59.5	67.2	25.8	33.0
Average #	1.88	2.24	1.49	1.96	2.20	2.42	1.66	1.63	1.39	1.68	2.03	2.56	2.56	2.21	1.94	1.93
Base for %	617	826	73	105	67	92	77	94	138	183	79	103	42	58	62	88
No data	94	98	17	22	10	10	9	8	21	23	8	6	7	6	10	8
Base for average	233	367	35	50	30	50	29	43	33	53	31	52	25	39	16	29
Use of FLCs or CHs																
% with any	51.3	58.8	53.4	50.5	49.3	64.9	49.4	59.8	47.7	57.1	61.3	69.2	68.2	74.6	36.5	38.6
Average #	2.46	2.87	1.62	2.26	2.59	2.90	2.62	2.62	2.10	2.15	2.86	3.93	3.60	3.02	2.04	2.44
Base for %	639	848	73	105	69	94	79	97	149	196	80	104	44	59	63	88
No data	72	76	17	22	8	8	7	5	10	10	7	5	5	5	9	8
Base for average	328	499	39	53	34	61	39	58	71	112	49	72	30	44	23	34
Use of Pest Control Operators																
% with any	47.1	52.9	40.8	48.1	46.3	47.8	34.2	40.0	43.4	49.7	65.4	66.7	65.9	75.0	49.2	53.0
Average #	1.53	1.61	1.31	1.30	1.39	1.44	1.67	1.56	1.35	1.45	1.86	2.17	1.69	1.82	1.59	1.74
Base for %	628	643	71	77	67	67	79	80	145	149	78	81	44	44	65	66
No data	83	68	19	13	10	10	7	6	14	10	9	6	5	5	7	6
Base for average	296	340	29	37	31	32	27	32	63	74	51	54	29	33	32	35

Entirely eliminating turnover in a business, however, is rarely either desirable or achievable. The farmer's decision to extend a job offer and the worker's to accept it mark the formal beginning of an employment relationship. Employers and employees make many more decisions, often less explicit, about whether to continue their exchange. Either party can opt to terminate the relationship, the farmer by laying off or firing, the worker by quitting. When both farmer and worker want to continue the employment, neither is deprived by the other of getting his or her way. Likewise, there is a harmony of interests when both want to end the employment, and turnover serves them mutually in such cases.

In two other types of circumstance that lead to turnover, however, employers or employees--sometimes both--end up having to accept what they do not want. The farmer who would rather end the employment despite a worker's desire to stay faces two uncomfortable alternatives: (1) to fire the worker, thus risking personal as well as legal costs (i.e., workers have several bases in statutory and case law from which to challenge dismissal), or (2) to retain the worker in order to avoid such liability. The worker who leaves despite a farmer's desire to continue employment is subject to nowhere near the same legal jeopardy, but this turnover often has some inconveniences for the departing employee as well as the managers and coworkers who remain.

How stable is the direct employment by farm businesses in the survey? An indicator of within-year turnover is shown in the first row of tables D-3 and D-4. The number of different people employed at any time in 1992 exceeded the maximum number of people on a given payroll, on average, by more than one-third. The ratio of total employees to peak employment was largest in grapes firms and smallest in nuts. Fairly consistent across businesses' payroll ranges, this ratio was somewhat below average in the very largest operations and slightly below in the very smallest.

Retention of employees from year to year was substantial in all crop classifications. Half or more of a farm's 1992 employees had previously worked for the same business in 80 percent of cases, three-quarters or more in 63 percent of cases. Among farms that were in business before 1987, an impressive 56 percent had 1992 workforces comprised in majority by workers who had stayed for five years or more. By these measures, stability from 1991 to 1992 was greatest in the animal products, vegetables, and non-edible crops (largely cotton) sectors, and in the larger payroll ranges. Stability was significantly lower in farms organized as family partnerships than as sole proprietorships, nonfamily partnerships, or corporations. The longer term (pre 1987 to 1992) stability was somewhat higher than average in "other" crops and in smaller payroll ranges.

Table D-3. Farm Employee Stability, by Crop Type

	Total	Animals	Nuts	Grapes	Tree & other fruits	Vegetables	Non-edibles	Other
Ratio of Total people employed to People employed at peak, 1992	1.37	1.25	1.13	1.54	1.28	1.36	1.25	1.40
Farms with 1992 employees returning from any previous year								
3/4 or more employees (%)	63.3	72.0	66.7	55.0	58.5	66.3	72.1	54.8
1/2 or more employees (%)	80.5	82.7	81.8	76.3	79.6	87.5	81.4	74.2
Base N (=100%)	630	75	66	80	147	80	43	62
Farms with 1992 employees employed pre-1987								
3/4 or more employees (%)	30.9	29.6	30.6	23.1	24.1	27.3	41.2	39.1
1/2 or more employees (%)	55.9	61.1	51.0	49.2	50.9	60.6	44.1	65.2
Base N (=100%)	488	54	49	65	116	66	34	46
Portion of 1986 employees legalized as SAWs (average %)	40.45	21.11	39.17	51.59	50.21	43.07	28.62	35.69
Portion of SAWs at same farm, 1986 & 1992 (average %)	53.92	68.88	50.67	38.04	54.11	53.25	58.39	60.38
Portion of 1992 employees with home within 75 miles (average %)	72.35	90.73	77.58	54.45	70.22	62.31	84.82	70.71

Table D-4. Farm Employee Stability, by Payroll Size

	Total	Less than $20K	$20K-$50K	$50K - $250K	$250K - $1,000K	$1,000K +
Ratio of Total people employed to People employed at peak, 1992	1.37	1.36	1.45	1.40	1.46	1.30
Farms with 1992 employees returning from any previous year						
3/4 or more employees (%)	63.3	56.6	65.2	68.1	66.2	61.4
1/2 or more employees (%)	80.5	71.7	78.7	85.3	83.4	91.2
Base N (=100%)	630	145	89	163	151	57
Farms with 1992 employees employed pre-1987						
3/4 or more employees (%)	30.9	36.2	34.4	30.1	26.9	20.8
1/2 or more employees (%)	55.9	54.3	59.4	53.7	56.9	52.1
Base N (=100%)	488	94	64	136	130	48
Portion of 1986 employees legalized as SAWs (average %)	40.45	37.04	31.88	42.87	43.51	50.91
Portion of SAWs at same farm, 1986 & 1992 (average %)	53.92	43.58	54.99	58.09	57.38	53.69
Portion of 1992 employees with home within 75 miles (average %)	72.35	76.79	66.57	72.54	72.01	68.97

Workers Legalized as SAWs

In 1987-88, farmers helped farm workers to apply for legalization under the SAW program for a few reasons: (1) simply caring about the welfare of those people who had worked for, and in many cases alongside them over time; (2) understanding that the more legal workers there were, the better able all employers would be in the long run to comply with the new law; and (3) expecting that their assistance might improve relations on the farm and be reciprocated by greater loyalty and workforce stability.

Our 1987 survey found a high level of employer involvement in legalizing alien workers. Letters or documents to verify past employment qualifying workers for the program were the type of assistance by far most commonly provided, by 78 percent of farm employers overall. Other help that farmers had given included information about the IRCA legalization programs, copies of INS application forms, personal assistance in completing forms, money to pay application fees, transportation to legalization offices, and referrals to qualified designated entities (QDEs, community organizations officially authorized by INS to aid in legalization). One said he gave workers "whatever they need." Some commented, however, that they felt betrayed by workers moving on soon after their applications for legal status were filed.

Respondents in the present survey who had any employees in 1986 estimate that 40 percent of them participated in the SAW program, and that more than half of these legalized workers are still employed at the same farm. Though grape producers had the highest proportion of their workers legalized through this program, they report the lowest retention rate of SAWs (table D-3). Larger firms, many of which had assigned or hired extra clerical staff to assist workers applying for legalization, tend to have higher proportions of both workers legalized and SAWs retained through 1992 (table D-4).

For many farm workers, the legal U.S. resident status they acquired as SAWs has made settling near where they work less harrowing if not also more likely. While a sizable minority of workers do migrate from permanent homes in Mexico or other parts of the United States for employment in California agriculture, farm employers report that almost three-quarters of the people they hire live within 75 miles. The local resident portion of 1992 employees is greatest in animal and non-edibles production, and smallest in grapes and vegetables. It varies little by farm size.

E. Finding and Hiring Farm Workers

Except perhaps for owners and operators, people do not turn up working on farms by virtue of their own unilateral decisions. Farmers make choices about where to look for people to work in their operations, and about which of those available to hire. The selection of employees is a most critical aspect of personnel management in any business, as it determines limits of organizational capacity.

Performance-related knowledge and skills are not evenly distributed in the workforce. People vary in backgrounds and characteristics that translate into different levels of ability in different types of job. On any given task some workers can outperform others, and all workers have ranges in which their performance levels vary over time. The central challenge of personnel management is to employ capable people in tasks for which they are qualified and under conditions that elicit their best work.

Farmers serve themselves and workers when they successfully bring to jobs persons with the human qualities particularly needed to do them well, or at least to learn to do them. Employee recruitment and selection are closely related parts of a matching process that requires information both about jobs and about workers. Obtaining such information from various sources and using it judiciously can be very time consuming. In this respect alone, farmers relieve themselves of no small burden when they opt to purchase services from farm labor contractors, custom harvesters, and pest control operators rather than directly hire employees to perform production tasks.

Screening Labor Contractors

Although engagement of labor through contractors removes many hiring decisions from the farm operator's hands, it by no means eliminates all choice. Selection of the contractor, sort of a wholesale hiring decision, has magnified consequences for production and important legal implications. Just as direct employment is subject to regulatory constraints, so is the decision to do business with a contractor. Farmers are required to take reasonable steps to verify that every FLC they retain is registered with the U.S. Department of Labor and licensed by the California Department of Industrial Relations.

How do they check to see if a labor contractor is licensed in California? Although the survey provided for indicating multiple means, most survey respondents reported using but one. The most common method, used by three-quarters of farmers who contracted with FLCs in 1992, is to inspect the license (table E-1). Nearly one-third of respondents say that they assumed a contractor was licensed unless

Table E-1. Means to Obtain Information on FLCs, by Region

	Total %	North Coast %	Sac Valley %	SJ Valley %	Central Coast %	South Coast %	Desert %	Other %
Total Sample	711	55	123	282	62	92	46	8
Base N (=100%)	269	8	36	139	30	29	15	1
**Use this method to verify FLC license (%)*								
See license	73.6	75.0	69.4	74.8	83.3	65.5	66.7	100.0
Call DIR	8.6	0.0	8.3	9.4	3.3	6.9	6.7	0.0
Call DOL	3.0	0.0	5.6	3.6	0.0	3.4	0.0	0.0
Accept word	30.1	25.0	27.8	30.9	23.3	37.9	26.7	0.0
Assume yes	30.9	37.5	27.8	31.7	20.0	31.0	40.0	0.0
Other	18.6	12.5	16.7	21.6	13.3	10.3	26.7	0.0
Would call info service to find FLC (%)								
Definitely yes	26.0	12.5	33.3	29.5	16.7	17.2	33.3	0.0
Probably yes	35.3	50.0	33.3	34.5	23.3	34.5	60.0	0.0
Definitely no	10.4	0.0	8.3	7.9	26.7	17.2	0.0	0.0
Would call to check license (%)								
Definitely yes	34.9	37.5	30.6	38.8	26.7	20.7	53.3	0.0
Probably yes	33.8	37.5	41.7	32.4	26.7	37.9	33.3	0.0
Definitely no	5.9	0.0	2.8	5.0	13.3	10.3	0.0	0.0

* Note: Respondents could indicate using multiple methods.

told otherwise, and a similar share accepted a contractor's word to that effect. Fewer than one in ten report using the phone number established by DIR for checking FLC legitimacy. Three percent called DOL, which maintains records on federal registration but not state licensing.

Nearly 26 percent of respondents overall say that they did not verify contractor legitimacy by either of the two most reliable methods, seeing the license and calling DIR. Larger farm operations are generally more inclined to so verify "by the book" (table E-2). The farms with greatest labor expense are considerably more likely than those in all other size groups to have inspected the license or called DIR and least likely to have relied on assumption or contractor assertion. About one-fifth of respondents specify other means, most commonly checking with the contractor's insurance carrier, for having gained assurance that FLCs were licensed. Many mention having required contractors to give them copies of insurance certificates and licenses, some having asked other growers for whom the contractor had worked, and a few having depended on FLCs' reputations in the community or information from grower associations and packing houses.

Is there need for an accessible source of reliable third-party referrals to and information about FLCs in the market? Such a service could be heavily used. More than three-fifths of farm operators say that, if they were looking to hire a labor contractor, they would definitely or probably call a toll-free number to find names of local contractors with experience in specific crops. More than two-thirds say they would call to check the current legitimacy of an FLC that they were about to hire. Anticipated use of this kind of source is extremely high in the Desert (93 percent, table E-1) and lowest in the Central and South Coasts (40 percent and 52 percent), possibly indicative of regional differences in creation and dissolution of FLC businesses, common knowledge about them, and stability of grower-FLC relations.

Recruiting Workers

Even if they contract for non-employee labor and take pains to retain employees once hired, nearly all farm operators need to find new workers periodically. They recruit through multiple channels, often capitalizing on the flow of information through friendship and kinship networks of current employees. Word-of-mouth is the primary form of advertising. Job seekers who become aware of possible openings may first approach crew foremen or field supervisors about employment, sometimes accompanied by a relative or friend working for the company. Those without a personal introduction can become "walk-in" recruits by showing up at the work site, company office, or known pick-up points in the morning.

The methods that farmers most commonly used in 1992 to find new production employees were (1) asking current employees for referrals, (2) accepting walk-ins, and (3) delegating the responsibility to foremen or supervisors (roughly two-thirds using each, table E-3). Referral from other growers and

Table E-2. Means to Obtain Information on FLCs, by Total Labor Expense

	Total %	Less than $20K %	$20K-$50K %	$50K-$250K %	$250K-$1,000K %	$1,000K + %
Total Sample	711	119	102	171	155	83
Base N (=100%)	269	26	29	69	63	53
**Use this method to verify FLC license (%)*						
See license	73.6	53.8	58.6	73.9	71.4	90.6
Call DIR	8.6	7.7	6.9	7.2	6.3	15.1
Call DOL	3.0	3.8	3.4	1.4	1.6	3.8
Accept word	30.1	38.5	41.4	33.3	36.5	17.0
Assume yes	30.9	26.9	44.8	37.7	34.9	17.0
Other	18.6	23.1	24.1	20.3	19.0	13.2
Would call info service to find FLC (%)						
Definitely yes	26.0	26.9	24.1	27.5	20.6	24.5
Probably yes	35.3	46.2	24.1	34.8	38.1	41.5
Definitely no	10.4	11.5	20.7	10.1	9.5	7.5
Would call to check license (%)						
Definitely yes	34.9	42.3	27.6	27.5	30.2	43.4
Probably yes	33.8	30.8	27.6	39.1	39.7	34.0
Definitely no	5.9	11.5	3.4	8.7	4.8	3.8

* Note: Respondents could indicate using multiple methods.

Table E-3. Methods of Recruiting Employees in 1992, by Payroll Size

Method	Total		Less than $20K		$20K - $50K		$50K - $250K		$250K - $1,000K		$1,000K +	
	*Used** %	*Main* %	*Used** %	*Main* %	*Used** %	*Main* %	*Used** %	*Main* %	*Used** %	*Main* %	*Used** %	*Main* %
Walk-in	70.8	27.5	53.5	21.1	50.0	19.4	72.0	20.8	84.9	32.8	94.8	52.3
Foreman refer.	61.1	30.1	24.8	14.7	57.5	26.9	72.0	34.0	77.6	40.2	79.3	36.4
Worker refer.	72.5	28.9	57.4	36.7	71.3	38.8	75.8	34.7	84.2	20.5	70.7	6.8
Acquaintance refer.	34.8	5.3	37.2	14.7	41.3	7.5	37.3	2.8	33.6	1.6	24.1	0.0
Association refer.	7.8	1.8	7.8	3.7	7.5	1.5	5.0	1.4	8.6	0.0	3.4	0.0
Post sign	2.9	0.2	0.8	0.0	2.5	0.0	3.1	0.0	2.6	0.0	6.9	0.0
Ad in media	7.0	2.2	1.6	0.9	7.5	0.0	6.8	4.2	9.9	3.3	12.1	0.0
EDD Service	12.6	0.6	4.7	0.9	7.5	0.0	9.3	0.0	15.1	0.0	39.7	4.5
Visit homes	4.6	0.4	6.2	0.9	8.8	1.5	1.9	0.0	5.3	0.0	1.7	0.0
Other	3.4	3.1	5.4	6.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	2.1	2.0	1.6	1.7	0.0
All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	612	509	129	109	80	67	161	144	152	122	58	44

* Note: Respondents could indicate using multiple methods.

acquaintances was used by about half as many respondents, and no other method came close in popularity. The single channel through which most of a farm's employees came was foreman or supervisor recruitment, followed closely by worker referral and walk-in, with grower referral a distant fourth in the order. A few respondents specify having gotten referrals to workers from FLCs with whom they had previously done business. Some of the job applicants appearing as unsolicited walk-ins may have actually been responding to media advertisements.

There are differences in recruitment pattern as a function of payroll size. Larger farms relied much more on the walk-in route and less on worker referral. More than half of those with million dollar payrolls (twice the share of the overall survey sample) cited walk-in, and merely seven percent (one-quarter the share of the overall sample) worker referral as their main method. A greater proportion of smaller businesses, conversely, found most new hires through worker referral. This mode of recruitment, while used by roughly comparable shares in all size groups, was much more commonly regarded as the main method in the group of farms with smallest payrolls. Use of the EDD employment service and advertisements on radio or in newspapers vary directly with payroll size. Million-dollar payroll farms made by far the greatest use of EDD.

The present findings about recruitment are quite consistent with our 1987 grower survey results. Large majorities of the sample had reported using walk-in and referrals from supervisors, other employees, and grower acquaintances in either 1986 or 1987. Written advertisement, visit to worker homes, and EDD referral were each used in either year by less than one-fifth of employers. Reliance on walk-in, though the leading source of workers in 1986 and 1987 (used in either year by 71 percent), declined somewhat in the latter year. Current survey respondents show the same trend, twice as many reducing as expanding their use of walk-ins from 1986 to 1992 (table E-4). To lesser extents they indicate net increases in use of foreman and worker referral over this period. The larger numbers in the two columns furthest right in table E-4 are not nearly as profound as they may appear, because the shares of respondents reporting more and less usage of a recruitment method are calculated relative to only those who both used that method in 1992 and had been in business in 1986.

Use of the EDD Employment Service

Under a system created by the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, the U.S. Department of Labor funds EDD to operate a public employment service (ES) that helps employers and workers find one another. The number of agricultural placements through this service increased somewhat after fiscal year 1986, but EDD has remained a minor player in matching farm employers and workers. Of more than one million employment engagements per year in California agriculture, an average of but 32,137 went through the ES during fiscal 1979-91.

Table E-4. Methods of Recruiting Employees, 1992 vs. 1986

Method	Used in 1992 %	Main '92 Method %	More in '92 than '86* %	Less in '92 than '86* %
Walk-in	70.8	27.5	8.4	18.2
Foreman reference	61.1	30.1	14.8	8.7
Worker reference	72.5	28.9	14.5	11.6
Acquaintance reference	34.8	5.3	17.7	22.0
Association reference	7.8	1.8	31.6	21.1
Post sign	2.9	0.2	50.0	25.0
Ad in media	7.0	2.2	30.4	23.2
EDD Service	12.6	0.6	35.5	38.0
Visit homes	4.6	0.4	45.7	20.0
Other	3.4	3.1	47.6	4.8
Base N (=100%)	612	509		

* Note: Shares are % of those who used the method at all in 1992.

Only 11 percent of survey respondents report placing one or more job orders with EDD in 1992 (table E-5).[4] They were trying to fill some 24 job openings per farm and ended up hiring, on average, almost that many people referred by EDD. Some businesses actually hired more workers than they had initially sought; average hires exceeded job openings in the Central and South Coast regions. Farmers in the North Coast and Desert regions had extremely low rates of ES use (table E-5), and those with large payrolls much higher than average use (table E-6). Satisfaction with EDD staff tends to be highest in the South Coast among regions with more than two users, and in the lowest-payroll group. Nearly nine of ten farm operators overall, however, report having placed no job orders whatever.

Seven in ten of those who used the employment service are very or basically satisfied with how EDD staff responded to their job orders. The number of respondents who wrote in comments about the employment service, however, exceeded by half the number of those who used the service in 1992. Listed verbatim in Appendix 4 are the comments that 146 respondents took the time to write on their questionnaires. Most of them express strong disinclination to recruit through ES, based on past frustration. A recurring theme is that applicants referred by EDD are better able to work the welfare and mandatory benefits systems than to use field tools. Many say that department staff do not assess applicant abilities well enough either to screen them from jobs for which they are grossly unqualified or to provide employers with good information about what the applicant can do. Some respondents mention logistical problems with the ES system--paperwork, referral delays, and lack of staff follow-up. One is most positive about help from EDD in recalling workers from seasonal layoff. But the predominant theme is that the department does little to facilitate good matching of workers and farm jobs.

Selecting Employees

Federal and state laws prohibit employment discrimination based on several personal attributes that have no bearing on performance in most jobs. "Selection validity," the relationship of hiring criteria to on-the-job performance, is what gets called into question when illegal discrimination is charged. A farmer may not, for example, select for the highest level of education or the largest biceps available, regardless of what the duties are in a job to be filled. Doing so can be just as illegally discriminatory as hiring only people born in Canada, or with black hair, or related to left-handed irrigators from Chowchilla. But employers have good reason and rights to discriminate among applicants and screen them with respect to job-related knowledge, ability, and skill, in order to fill jobs with persons most likely to perform them well.

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[4] Share of farms reported here is based on answers to questionnaire item #19, which was included on both long and short versions. It differs from the 12.6 percent EDD users shown in table E-3, based on item #17, which was included only on the long version.

Table E-5. Use of and Satisfaction with EDD Job Service, by Region

	Total	North Coast	Sac Valley	SJ Valley	Central Coast	South Coast	Desert	Other
Farms placing one or more orders with EDD Job Service:								
Number	94	1	19	45	6	12	2	0
%	10.8	1.6	13.1	12.5	7.9	11.2	3.5	0.0
Base N (= 100%)	869	64	145	361	76	107	57	9
Job openings to fill (average per user)	24.12	6.00	3.42	14.97	3.80	93.50	50.00	N.A.
Hires from EDD referral (average per user)	23.36	3.00	2.73	14.40	7.20	96.40	10.00	N.A.
Satisfaction with EDD response								
Very satisfied (%)	18.9	100.0	22.2	16.3	0.0	33.3	0.0	N.A.
Basically satisfied (%)	51.1	0.0	44.4	53.5	66.7	58.3	100.0	N.A.
Somewhat dissatisfied (%)	15.6	0.0	11.1	14.0	33.3	8.3	0.0	N.A.
Very dissatisfied (%)	14.4	0.0	22.2	16.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	N.A.

Table E-6. Use of and Satisfaction with EDD Job Service, by Payroll Size

	Total	Less than $20K	$20K-$50K	$50K-$250K	$250K-$1,000K	$1,000K +
Farms placing one or more orders with EDD Job Service:						
Number	94	8	10	16	27	28
%	10.8	3.9	7.6	7.2	13.8	38.4
Base N (= 100%)	869	206	131	221	195	73
Job openings to fill (average per user)	24.12	3.50	2.50	4.00	13.42	54.35
Hires from EDD referral (average per user)	23.36	2.60	0.67	2.18	12.79	52.52
Satisfaction with EDD response						
Very satisfied (%)	18.9	37.5	25.0	6.7	15.4	25.0
Basically satisfied (%)	51.1	50.0	25.0	60.0	57.7	50.0
Somewhat dissatisfied (%)	15.6	12.5	25.0	6.7	11.5	17.9
Very dissatisfied (%)	14.4	0.0	25.0	26.7	15.4	7.1

A criterion on which all managers are legally required to discriminate when hiring is eligibility for employment in the United States. Few survey respondents, most of whom are in the small payroll groups, say that they give no consideration to documented eligibility in filling production jobs (table E-7). Nation of birth, prohibited as a basis for screening and as a topic of pre-employment inquiry, is nevertheless considered in 12 percent of farm businesses, least of all by the largest employers.

What else do farmers look for in prospective production employees? Respondents overwhelmingly confirm the importance of criteria listed in the questionnaire, 95 percent or more citing as major or minor factors: (1) reliability in coming to and staying at work on schedule, (2) skills of the kind needed to carry out job tasks, (3) previous experience in similar work, and (4) compatibility with other employees. Most common of the considerations written in by farm operators is personal honesty. Others they specify range from such general characteristics as attitude, physical appearance, health, and willingness to learn, to factors that are more clearly job-specific, such as ability to understand instructions in English, possession of a driver's license, and tolerance of bee stings. The classical basic standard is also on the list: ". . . is a walking body."

It is one thing to value a characteristic and another to determine whether applicants possess it. Systematic approaches to employee selection depend on information with which to rate applicants on criteria directly related to requirements of the job. Casual approaches are not designed to sort workers carefully according to qualifications, so the information requirements--and the costs of meeting them--for such methods are less. How much information to obtain about job applicants, through which sources to get it, and in what order to tap the sources are cost-benefit issues faced in every selection process.

A combination of sources is needed to develop full information on criteria relevant to most jobs. The ability to follow written instructions, for example, may be established through completion of an application form, the knowledge and physical skill to correctly prune vines through a practical test or demonstration, the mathematical skill to calibrate chemical dilution through a written test, a willingness to work long and irregular hours through an interview, and abstinence from use of drugs through a medical exam.

How accurate is the adage that farmers are more careful choosing spark plugs to put in their tractors than drivers to put on them? To what extent is information from various sources used in deciding whether workers have the qualifications that farm employers want? The most heavily used sources, utilized by about 90 percent of respondents, are the direct interview and comments from foremen or other employees (table E-7; response that source is used "a lot" is classified in the table as "major"; responses that source is used "some" or "a little" are classified "minor"). Despite its widespread use, the traditional interview is notoriously fertile ground for interviewer biases to reduce the validity of

Table E-7. Factors Considered and Information Sources Used in Hiring, by Payroll Size

	Total		Less than $20K		$20K - $50K		$50K - $250K		$250K - $1,000K		$1,000K +	
	Major %	*Minor* %	*Major* %	*Minor* %	*Major* %	*Minor* %	*Major* %	*Minor* %	*Major* %	*Minor* %	*Major* %	*Minor* %
Selection Criteria												
Documented eligibility	93.2	4.3	86.7	8.4	88.9	6.7	96.5	2.9	95.5	2.6	100.0	0.0
Nation of birth	2.5	9.7	2.9	11.0	1.1	11.2	4.2	9.7	1.9	9.7	0.0	5.2
Exper. similar work	76.0	19.4	72.7	20.7	71.1	25.6	76.9	17.2	77.6	20.5	84.5	12.1
Skills demonstrated	78.3	17.7	75.9	17.0	74.7	20.9	80.2	16.2	82.1	16.7	74.1	20.7
Reliable presence	90.7	7.9	85.1	12.1	95.6	4.4	95.9	2.4	89.7	9.6	81.0	17.2
Get along	67.5	27.3	54.0	34.3	76.4	22.5	70.8	25.0	71.8	25.6	67.2	27.6
Other	6.3	2.1	5.9	2.6	6.5	1.1	8.1	1.7	6.4	1.9	5.2	3.4
Total Sample	711	711	161	161	99	99	176	176	157	157	58	58
Information Sources												
Written application	17.4	31.3	6.6	20.9	9.7	24.8	13.1	34.5	26.6	37.5	41.1	39.7
Interview	57.5	33.0	50.0	31.9	52.8	36.6	63.7	29.7	61.4	34.0	54.8	35.6
Written test/demonstration	7.4	25.4	8.7	13.6	7.1	21.4	9.4	26.2	6.3	33.7	4.1	35.6
Practical trial	21.4	41.1	16.9	43.8	28.1	29.8	29.2	40.1	16.6	42.8	11.1	47.2
Probation period	35.3	36.3	21.7	34.4	30.9	33.6	36.9	38.8	43.9	38.6	47.9	32.9
Foreman comments	55.1	35.0	38.5	33.7	61.7	30.8	65.7	30.0	59.0	37.9	44.6	50.0
Employer reference	26.5	52.2	25.4	44.9	29.3	44.0	29.7	53.6	22.1	62.1	24.3	55.4
Medical examination	3.5	17.5	1.7	11.7	1.8	14.4	4.4	18.4	2.6	18.4	9.6	30.1
Total Sample	924	924	215	215	133	133	225	225	201	201	74	74

results for forecasting future job performance, but interviews that are carefully structured can yield quite objective evaluations. The present survey provides no basis for knowing how respondents design this or any of the other selection information tools.

Written applications can deliver large amounts of information about workers cheaply and in reasonably comparable form, and statements on applications are often useful to discuss in subsequent interviews. The use of this tool in agriculture appears to be limited, however, by the non-cognitive nature of much production work, substantial illiteracy in the farm workforce, traditions of casual in-field hiring, and delegation of considerable screening authority to foremen. Only half of the farm operators overall use written applications. Rates of use are significantly higher in larger firms.

Although nearly all farmers say that they consider skills in hiring for production jobs, less than two-thirds report using short-term trials or practical tests to assess applicants and one-third use written tests. Farmers fluent in the language spoken by most of their workers (most commonly Spanish; see table F-3 in the next major section of this report) are significantly more likely to use practical trials. A probation period can serve as a kind of extended test, during which the supervisor as well as coworkers size up a new hire. More than 70 percent of farm operators consider probationary performance in deciding whether to offer regular employment, which in some firms is associated with greater job security and eligibility for benefits.

As employers become sensitive to the potential for getting charged with libel and slander, reference evaluations of former employees seem to be getting more bland and restricted in content. Most employers do not hesitate, however, to give objective information that can be used to check applicant assertions about dates and types of past employment, and the additional opinions that some are willing to provide may weigh heavily in hiring decisions. More than three-quarters of farmers in the survey used references from previous employers of workers they were considering for production jobs.

Despite widespread concern about workers' compensation costs and effects of a single claim on future insurance premiums, only 21 percent of farmers report putting employees through an examination that could reveal pre-existing medical conditions. Larger businesses use medical exams significantly more, but far less than half of even the largest payroll group invests in getting information from this source.

Many of the comments about the EDD employment service (Appendix 4) imply or directly suggest that staff of the service should more carefully assess workers before referring them to prospective employers. Although objective information about applicant skills and knowledge would be used by a broad range of survey respondents, more than a third say that they would never call for such assessment, even if provided free of user fees (tables E-8 and E-9). A like proportion (35 percent), however, would be inclined to use this kind of service in more than half of their hires into production

Table E-8. Inclination to Use Worker Assessment Service, by Payroll Size

	Total %	Less than $20K %	$20K - $50K %	$50K - $250K %	$250K - $1,000K %	$1,000K + %
Almost every time	13.6	12.1	11.3	14.2	15.3	15.1
More than half the time	21.7	19.7	15.3	21.5	24.2	34.2
Less than half the time	29.1	23.7	29.0	29.7	33.7	31.5
Never	35.6	44.4	44.4	34.7	26.8	19.2
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	870	198	124	219	190	73
No data	54	17	9	6	11	1

Table E-9. Inclination to Use Worker Assessment Service, by Crop Type

	Total %	Animals %	Nuts %	Grapes %	Tree & other fruits %	Vegetables %	Non-edibles %	Other %
Almost every time	13.6	12.6	20.6	8.3	11.1	15.9	16.4	15.9
More than half the time	21.7	14.3	19.6	19.8	26.3	26.2	18.0	23.9
Less than half the time	29.1	31.9	24.7	38.5	28.3	29.9	29.5	26.1
Never	35.6	41.2	35.1	33.3	34.3	28.0	36.1	34.1
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	870	119	97	96	198	107	61	88
No data	54	8	5	6	8	2	3	8

jobs. Anticipated utilization is generally greater among farms with larger payrolls and in vegetable and nut businesses. Firms producing animal products and grapes anticipate the least use.

F. Managing Farm Employees

Staffing the Personnel Function

In today's agricultural workplace, at least as much as in other types, personnel management is fraught with interpersonal, technical, and legal complexities. Few farm operators go it alone. Most either hire or contract with professionals to assist in parts of the personnel function.

The professionals that most farmers depend on are payroll accountants or bookkeepers (70 percent overall) and attorneys (55 percent, table F-1). Services of employee and supervisory trainers, personnel specialists and consultants, employee relations assistants, and recruiters are also used by substantial shares of survey respondents (from one-third to one-fifth of the sample, respectively). Nearly all of the attorneys and most of the personnel specialists are contracted as outside providers, while professionals of other types are mainly hired as farm staff. The propensity to retain each type is significantly greater among farms with larger payrolls and among those in which production employees are or ever have ever been represented by a union.

Job Information and Supervisory Communication

Good job performance by workers depends on their (1) knowing what they are expected to do, (2) having the ability to do it, and (3) making efforts to apply that ability. None of these elements is sufficient by itself to get anything done. Farm managers communicate their expectations to workers before and during the period of employment. By providing information, explicit training, and on-the-job learning situations, they may also help develop workers' abilities.

Traditionally orientation to farm jobs has been handled in casual style, often by crew supervisors who merely introduce a new hire to crew members and the work flow. Workers entering farm businesses through kinship and friendship networks arrive somewhat oriented to their jobs and working conditions. For these newcomers especially, continuing orientation and integration into the workforce tends to center on social and familial relationships.

Frequently overlooked as a vehicle for worker orientation are the recruitment and selection processes, which are mostly geared to providing information for the farm employer to use in hiring decisions. Through procedural steps they undergo on the way to getting hired, applicants too acquire information

Table F-1. Use of Labor Management Staff or Services, by Payroll Size and by Union Experience

(% of farms having)

	Total Sample		<$20K		$20K-$50K		$50K-$250K		$250K-$1,000K		$1,000K+		Only Farms with Union Experience	
	Staff	*Outside*	*Staff*	*Outside*	*Staff*	*Outside*	*Staff*	*Outside*	*Staff*	*Outside*	*Staff*	*Outside*	*Staff*	*Outside*
Personnel specialist	5.4	20.7	0.7	13.4	1.1	13.7	2.4	21.2	7.2	26.3	29.6	35.2	20.7	24.1
Attorney	1.5	53.6	0.0	25.7	2.1	43.6	2.4	53.3	0.7	74.0	3.6	87.3	3.5	72.4
Recruiter (non-FLC)	16.2	2.6	3.4	5.4	6.3	5.3	14.9	0.6	27.5	1.3	40.0	0.0	21.4	0.0
Worker trainer	30.6	2.0	6.2	0.7	10.5	3.2	28.4	1.9	54.3	3.3	73.6	0.0	55.6	0.0
Foreman trainer	21.2	5.8	3.4	0.7	4.3	2.1	20.5	3.1	38.0	10.7	54.7	20.8	32.1	17.9
Other employee relations	15.5	5.2	3.4	1.4	11.6	4.2	11.7	4.3	21.7	7.2	50.0	14.8	34.5	13.8
Payroll recorder	41.7	27.9	11.5	29.1	21.5	37.6	37.6	35.2	71.0	20.0	92.6	7.4	70.4	22.2

and form impressions that affect their decisions about how to perform on the job and whether to accept an employment offer in the first place. Indeed, people may select themselves out of the running for lack of interest or qualification, based on what they comprehend in advance about the job content and performance expectations.

No matter how thorough the selection and orientation of workers, there is always more to get across about what to do, why to do it, and how to do it, as well as about the terms of employment under which the work is to be done. Some employee training, such as in injury and illness prevention, is specifically required by law, but most comes about simply as a matter of operational necessity. Even where workers are selected for their previously demonstrated proficiency in certain tasks, managers have to put some time into describing and encouraging adherence to their farms' performance standards. Where hiring is based more on such "character attributes" as honesty, loyalty, integrity, responsibility, and learning potential, the employer takes on the more basic chore of helping workers to develop specific skills on the job. Some managers find further that they have to ease workers out of objectionable techniques or work habits that were learned elsewhere.

How do farm employees get to know about their jobs, the farm operation, personnel policies, and others' perceptions of their work? Workers in the vast majority of respondent businesses obtain their information through verbal instructions from supervisors (94 percent) and tailgate meetings at the work site (86 percent, table F-2). Other means by which farm operators inform workers are: written rules that are either posted or distributed (used with "most" or "some" workers in 68 percent of farm businesses), group orientations (64 percent), staff meetings held indoors (49 percent), employee handbooks (43 percent), written job descriptions (38 percent), structured performance evaluations (32 percent), video tapes (27 percent), and audio tapes (8 percent).

These latter eight vehicles, requiring advance preparation and characteristic of structured personnel management, are all significantly more common in the larger farm businesses. Sole proprietorships, even within the large-size groups, are much less likely than farms organized in other forms to use written job descriptions, and nonfamily partnerships are more likely to have written work rules.

Direct communications are integral to hiring and training employees, assigning and coordinating work, and handling all other aspects of employee relations. Hardly any farmers turn biological material and processes into marketable product by themselves, and many do not even themselves supervise all the hired employees who perform production work. A language difference between employer and production worker, if not sheer organizational size, may necessitate an intermediate level of supervisory employees.

Table F-2. Means Used to Communicate Job Information, by Payroll Size

(% of farms using with most or some workers)

	Total Sample		less than $20K		$20K-$50K		$50K-$250K		$250K-$1,000K		$1,000K+	
	Most	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*
Verbal Instructions	89.7	4.1	73.0	6.6	91.0	4.5	92.0	4.9	96.7	2.0	98.2	1.8
Tailgate Meetings	69.5	16.3	63.6	11.0	77.9	9.1	71.3	14.0	66.4	26.9	73.7	15.8
Indoor Meetings	24.8	24.0	14.7	6.3	25.4	11.9	21.8	20.3	30.3	33.8	33.9	50.0
Audio tapes	3.6	3.9	0.0	0.0	3.6	0.0	3.3	2.5	7.2	5.6	2.0	14.0
Video tapes	16.0	10.9	3.3	2.2	5.3	0.0	15.4	6.2	27.0	19.7	22.6	26.4
Group Orientations	46.2	17.7	29.6	9.2	47.8	8.7	39.2	23.8	56.8	20.3	63.2	21.1
Employee Handbook	37.3	5.9	9.4	2.1	21.0	0.0	31.1	8.2	58.2	7.5	63.2	8.8
Written Rules	57.9	9.9	34.7	5.9	47.8	13.4	52.4	14.5	73.7	7.4	84.2	7.0
Written Job Descriptions	22.2	15.6	11.3	4.1	18.2	15.2	17.9	17.9	28.6	17.9	41.1	25.0
Performance Evaluations	9.2	22.9	9.0	13.0	8.8	7.0	7.5	21.8	8.1	33.8	16.4	32.7

Spanish is normally spoken by most production workers on more than three-quarters of California farms (table F-3). English is the only other language mainly used in more than a handful of farm businesses, most commonly in the Sacramento Valley and "other" counties regions. Very few respondents report that workers speak either Mixtec, Portuguese, or Punjabi (less than one percent combined), and not one specifies Hmong or Tagalog.

Predictably, farmers are most fluent in their employees' main language in regions where English is more commonly spoken by workers, but many are also able to function to some degree in Spanish. In nearly two-thirds of all farm businesses, and in a majority of even those where most workers speak Spanish, the operator is able to communicate instructions in the workers' main language. Farmers unable to speak adequately with workers usually communicate through hired foremen or crew leaders (on 34 percent of farms with mainly Spanish-speaking workers). Some are aided by non-supervisory workers, farmer family members, friends, and neighbors.

Pay and Fringe Benefits

Understanding the work assigned and having the ability to perform it do not get tasks done unless accompanied by an exertion of effort. And when other things are equal, people put effort into what brings them more pay. Just because money is a valued incentive, however, does not mean that it always stimulates effort in the directions that employers want. The ways in which farmers structure and administer compensation have great influence on what employees expect to gain from different kinds of effort and hence how they apply themselves. Workers respond to not only the wage rate but also the pay basis, generally units of production or units of time for which a compensation system pays.

"Incentive pay" directly links current compensation to desired performance. Piecework, compensated at a fixed cash multiple of units produced, is the most common but by no means the only incentive plan in agriculture. Several problems limit its use. Before the work begins in earnest, rate-setting games may interfere with farmer-worker relations. Once regular work does begin, the rush to produce in quantity, which pays, can lead to the neglect of quality, which does not. In cohesive work groups, fear of rates slipping or slower performers losing their jobs may defeat the system, as workers informally establish and work toward a "safe" level of individual production that is well below their average capacity. Where there is no such brake on the incentive effect of piece rates, there is sometimes concern about the effects of overexertion on health and safety as well as on longer term performance.

The technology of many farm operations precludes the use of such incentive pay. It might have been appropriate, for instance, to pay milkers by the gallon in an era of smaller dairies and no machines. The volume of milk production today, though, is less directly attributable to the efforts of designated milkers. Mechanized and even machine-aided harvest systems in field crops and vegetables give

Table F-3. Worker Language and Management Communication, by Region

	Total	North Coast	Sacto Valley	San J Valley	Cent Coast	South Coast	Desert	All Other	No Region Info
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Main language of Workers									
Spanish	77.1	90.5	62.1	77.1	90.8	84.7	80.0	37.5	70.0
English	21.9	9.5	35.7	21.8	9.2	14.3	20.0	62.5	30.0
Mixtec	0.4	0.0	0.7	0.3	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	0.6	0.0	1.4	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
* All Responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N(=100%)	839	63	140	349	76	98	55	8	50
No Data	85	4	18	30	3	14	3	5	8
Means of farmer communication with Spanish speaking workers									
Farmer fluent	13.4	7.0	9.3	8.3	24.6	22.2	18.6	0.0	25.8
Farmer speaks enough	42.4	42.1	41.9	37.8	49.2	48.1	46.5	66.7	45.2
Via farmer family member	1.8	1.8	1.2	2.0	0.0	2.5	2.3	0.0	3.2
Via hired supervisor	33.9	35.1	36.0	40.9	23.1	24.7	27.9	33.3	22.6
Via non-supervisory worker	6.3	7.0	9.3	8.3	3.1	1.2	4.7	0.0	3.2
Via other person	2.3	7.0	2.3	2.8	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
* All Responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	620	57	86	254	65	81	43	3	31
No Data	27	0	1	15	4	2	1	0	4

workers much less control of work pace and hence output quantity than they had under former methods. In general, output-based incentive plans are better suited where: (1) output is easily measurable, (2) employees have a high degree of control over output, (3) delays in work process are largely caused by humans, (4) the technology is stable, and (5) workers on individual plans or crews on group plans work independently of others.

On what basis do farmers calculate pay for most of their production employees? Time-based pay is now the norm (table F-4), but use of both piece rates and hourly rates for different jobs on the same farm is very common. As one survey respondent writes, "It all depends on what we're doing [at the time]." Three of four respondents overall pay mostly by time, typically by the hour but a sizable minority by the week or month. Time-based pay is particularly dominant in the animal products, nuts, and non-edibles (chiefly cotton) sectors, where businesses tend to be more capital-intensive and have smaller payrolls. Weekly or monthly salaries are paid by a substantial majority of animal producers.

Output incentive pay that either constitutes workers' total earnings or supplements their hourly wages is most common in production of grapes and other fruit. Many farm businesses (nearly 40 percent overall), in all crop and size classifications, offer supplementary incentive pay based on valued results other than output quantity.

Time-based pay can be designed to encourage continued employment, high level performance, or both. An explicit structure of wages on a farm reveals to workers the opportunities that exist to increase income by moving up in a pay range for a given job or advancing to a higher-paying position. Hourly wage differences among employees on a farm may reflect both "job factors" (e.g., difficulty of tasks, degree of responsibility, knowledge or license needed to do the job) and "individual factors" (e.g., quality of performance during a period, length of service, age). The fairness of paying more for work in jobs that entail more skill, responsibility, or unpleasantness, and for better or longer service within a business, is generally accepted. Problems in applying this concept usually stem from difficulty in measuring all except the last of these factors.

Do farmers pay different hourly rates to production employees in the same type of job? Almost three in five do. They base differences most commonly on length of employment (table F-5), which can be measured objectively, and secondarily on evaluation of worker performance. Far fewer vary wages as a function of time of workshift (though nearly one-third of the largest firms do), season of year, current financial status of the farm, and such worker characteristics as versatility, previous experience, judgment, and reliability.

A majority of farmers who use hourly rates adjust them yearly, nearly one-quarter do so at irregular intervals, and a fifth seasonally (table F-6). Piece rates are as commonly set each season as each year

Table F-4. Basis for Production Worker Pay, by Crop Type and by Payroll Size

	Total	Crop Type							Payroll				
		Animals & Prods	Nuts	Grapes	Tree & Oth Fruit	Vegeta-bles	Non-edibles	Other	< $20K	$20K-$50K	$50K-$250K	$250K-$1,000K	$1M +
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Hourly only	59.1	32.5	80.9	48.7	50.7	64.6	75.6	75.0	63.5	61.7	60.6	53.4	57.9
Salary	14.7	59.7	8.8	2.6	8.1	3.7	15.6	16.2	19.9	21.3	17.6	7.5	1.8
Output only	9.6	0.0	4.4	14.1	17.6	9.8	2.2	5.9	9.6	9.6	7.6	7.5	14.0
Combination hours/output	15.0	2.6	2.9	33.3	23.0	20.7	6.7	2.9	6.4	6.4	11.8	28.8	26.3
Other	1.6	5.2	2.9	1.3	0.7	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.1	2.4	2.7	0.0
* All Responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	645	77	68	78	148	82	45	68	156	94	170	146	57
No Data	66	13	9	8	11	5	4	4	5	5	6	11	1
Any non-piece incentive pay	39.1	46.4	29.3	34.8	33.8	41.0	55.7	45.6	22.7	28.2	53.0	44.9	41.9
Base N (=100%)	854	110	92	92	195	105	61	90	203	131	219	196	74
No Data	70	17	10	10	11	4	3	6	12	2	6	5	0

Table F-5. Hourly Pay Rate Variation in Same Job, by Crop Type and by Payroll Size

	Total	Crop Type							Payroll				
		Animals & Prods	Nuts	Grapes	Tree & Oth Fruit	Vegeta-bles	Non-edibles	Other	< $20K	$20K-$50K	$50K-$250K	$250K-$1,000K	>$1M
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Single rate for all	41.5	40.4	47.7	40.0	47.4	42.6	32.8	29.9	59.2	45.1	31.0	30.5	49.3
Different rates for some	58.5	59.6	52.3	60.0	52.6	57.4	67.2	70.1	40.8	54.9	69.0	69.5	50.7
* All Responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	808	94	88	90	190	101	58	87	184	122	210	187	71
No Data	116	33	14	12	16	8	6	9	31	11	15	14	3
Differences based on:													
Length of employment	84.4	92.5	80.4	81.5	86.9	89.7	87.2	83.6	71.6	81.5	91.0	87.6	72.2
Evaluated performance	69.0	79.2	58.7	68.5	68.7	58.6	74.4	75.4	66.2	61.5	75.0	72.1	52.8
Workshift	12.8	15.1	13.0	11.1	8.1	15.5	15.4	19.7	5.4	12.3	9.7	16.3	30.6
Season of Year	7.5	5.7	15.2	9.3	8.1	3.4	5.1	9.8	9.5	10.8	6.3	8.5	2.8
Work conditions	9.0	5.7	13.0	7.4	10.1	8.6	12.8	6.6	4.1	12.3	9.0	9.3	13.9
Other	12.8	13.2	19.6	11.1	8.1	19.0	15.4	14.8	12.2	6.2	15.3	10.9	22.2
* All Responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N(=100%)	468	53	46	54	99	58	39	61	74	65	144	129	36
No Data	5	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	0

Table F-6. Consideration of Pay Rate Adjustments, by Payroll Size

	Total		less than $20K		$20K-$50K		$50K-$250K		$250K-$1,000K		$1,000K +	
	Hourly %	*Piece* %	*Hourly* %	*Piece* %	*Hourly* %	*Piece* %	*Hourly* %	*Piece* %	*Hourly* %	*Piece* %	*Hourly* %	*Piece* %
Adjustment Frequency												
Yearly	55.7	34.9	47.7	33.3	56.2	27.8	58.2	38.5	57.5	36.1	60.7	34.9
Seasonally	20.0	36.3	28.8	40.4	19.1	47.2	14.5	35.4	18.5	27.7	17.9	32.6
Monthly	1.8	0.3	2.3	1.8	2.2	0.0	2.4	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Weekly	0.3	2.7	0.8	0.0	0.0	2.8	0.0	3.1	0.0	3.6	1.8	4.7
Daily	0.2	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	0.0	1.2	1.8	0.0
Irregular	22.0	15.6	20.5	15.8	22.5	8.3	24.8	12.3	22.6	20.5	17.9	20.9
New Field		9.2		8.8		13.9		7.7		10.8		7.0
* All Response	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N(=100%)	609	295	132	57	89	36	165	65	146	83	56	43
No Data	102	416	29	104	10	63	11	111	11	74	2	15
	Much	*Some*	*Much*	*Some*	*Much*	*Some*	*Much*	*Some*	*Much*	*Some*	*Much*	*Some*
Attention to:												
Published Surveys	11.0	50.7	12.9	40.2	12.8	46.5	8.8	52.8	9.5	59.9	16.4	52.7
Own Survey	40.1	46.8	39.7	42.1	47.7	35.2	41.1	46.8	34.9	54.4	41.1	51.8
Informal Conversation	32.0	57.4	37.8	49.0	36.1	48.2	32.3	60.8	30.6	63.3	21.8	61.8
Employees	7.0	64.5	12.5	53.9	9.4	61.2	5.2	64.5	4.8	70.7	3.8	75.5
Union Pay	3.2	18.1	0.9	12.8	3.8	3.8	2.6	12.6	3.5	24.5	9.3	44.4
Other	9.2	4.0	9.1	3.9	5.3	5.3	11.2	2.4	9.0	4.5	10.7	5.4

(each by more than one-third of respondents), and some farmers (9 percent) change them with every entry of a crew into a new field. In determining pay rates, farmers give most attention to comparative information obtained through their own systematic surveys and informal conversations with other local operators. A large majority indicates giving some consideration to what their employees say and a bare majority to published survey results.

Farm operators offer various fringe benefits in addition to monetary wages. While employers are generally required by law to provide a few "mandatory" benefits, most farmers give one or more additional fringe benefits at their own option. Survey respondents provide all optional benefits much more frequently to year-round than to seasonal workers (table F-7). They most commonly report offering to "some" or "most" year-round employees vacation pay (65 percent of farms), health insurance (53 percent), and housing (52 percent). Farms with larger payrolls and those organized as corporations tend significantly more to provide all benefits except housing and transportation. Farmers fluent in their workers' language are more likely to include farm products in the total compensation package.

Other benefits that respondents mention providing for employees include pension plans, holiday pay, paid utilities, free lunches, gasoline and car repairs, interest-free loans, term life insurance, and use of a farmer's own vacation home in the mountains. About three times as many farmers say that they offer such benefits to year-round employees as to seasonal employees.

Table F-7. Non-Mandatory Fringe Benefits Offered, by Payroll Size

(% of farms offering to most or some production workers)

	Total		< $20K		$20K-$50K		$50K-$250K		$250K-$1,000K		$1,000K +	
	Most	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*	*Most*	*Some*
Health Insurance												
Year Round	35.1	17.8	12.7	4.8	17.4	9.2	33.3	18.1	51.0	27.6	62.5	26.4
Seasonal	6.9	5.8	1.4	0.7	3.3	3.3	2.5	2.5	8.2	10.8	31.8	16.7
Vacation Pay												
Year Round	45.9	18.8	25.8	10.2	36.4	14.4	52.2	16.8	55.6	25.9	54.3	28.6
Seasonal	3.8	5.6	1.4	0.7	0.0	0.0	3.8	3.2	5.8	11.6	9.2	15.4
Sick Leave												
Year Round	18.8	14.5	17.5	4.2	22.2	10.2	21.4	13.0	17.1	21.0	13.2	26.5
Seasonal	0.7	2.1	0.7	1.4	0.0	2.2	0.0	3.1	1.3	2.0	1.5	1.5
Housing												
Year Round	23.4	28.6	26.0	12.2	34.2	17.1	28.1	31.5	17.6	41.8	2.9	34.8
Seasonal	6.5	14.3	5.6	7.7	5.6	11.2	6.8	17.8	10.5	17.0	0.0	18.2
Transportation												
Year Round	12.2	34.5	15.5	18.7	14.2	38.7	15.5	36.3	7.7	39.8	5.8	37.7
Seasonal	4.3	17.8	4.2	20.4	1.1	23.3	5.6	15.6	4.6	13.2	4.7	20.3
Farm Products												
Year Round	22.3	15.4	19.4	13.2	25.2	15.0	23.4	17.8	25.4	14.7	11.9	14.9
Seasonal	11.8	12.3	13.2	9.7	9.9	12.1	8.7	12.4	17.3	14.7	6.5	12.9
Other												
Year Round	10.5	5.4	5.7	5.7	3.4	5.9	13.2	5.2	12.1	4.0	19.7	8.5
Seasonal	2.2	3.6	2.6	1.3	0.0	4.4	2.4	6.0	2.5	3.8	3.1	1.5

G. Coping with and Anticipating the Business Environment

Labor management is no longer only about dealing with workers, if it ever was. It is no secret that farmers have felt their operations increasingly constrained by government requirements as well as by market competition. Relations between farmers and the people they hire are subject to a large set of public policies that apply to the many but are comprehended by the few. Agricultural employers and workers are challenged yearly to keep up with new developments that alter an already bewildering array of legal obligations and constraints.[7]

The laws affecting farm labor management are formidable in their variety, fluidity, and sheer volume. One kind sets standards for specific terms of employment (e.g., minimum wages, rest periods, safety standards), a second regulates interaction between employer and employee (e.g., pre-employment screening, dismissal, collective bargaining), and a third affects overall supply of labor and workforce development outside the employment relationship (e.g., immigration and work visas, public training, health services).

Dealing with the Government

Several laws require farmers to report to the government about their operations. Agricultural employers, like all others, are obliged to regularly submit information on their payrolls and employees, and to respond to various agency requests for other information.

During a typical month of active production, farmers and their office staffs spend a median seven person-hours completing the employment-related reports that are required by federal, state, and local agencies (table G-1). The larger the farm payroll, the more administrative time is devoted to these reports, as many as 29 hours median for farms with $1 million payrolls. Almost two in five of these largest employers, and some of even the smallest employers, spend 40 or more hours per month on reporting. While a plurality of firms in the smallest-payroll group devotes less time than 2 hours per month to employment reports, 15 percent in this class and 39 percent of respondents overall spend ten hours or more.

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7 For a relatively brief guide to labor laws that apply to California farmers, see H. Rosenberg and D. Egan, *Labor Management Laws in California Agriculture*, ANR Publications, University of California, 1990. A 1994 edition is pending.

Table G-1. Burden of Employment Reports, by Payroll Size

	Total	Less than $20K	$20K - $50K	$50K - $250K	$250K - $1,000K	$1,000K +
Hours spent per month						
Median hours	6.91	3.02	4.54	6.59	13.06	28.75
Farms (%) that spend						
< 2 hours	19.4	38.5	27.1	14.4	6.4	0.0
2 - 4.9 hours	23.6	34.0	27.1	29.3	12.2	5.3
5.0 - 9.9 hours	18.3	12.8	21.9	19.8	24.4	8.8
10.0 - 19.99 hours	17.0	8.3	11.5	21.6	23.1	17.5
20.0 - 39.9 hours	11.9	1.9	11.5	10.8	18.6	29.8
40 or more hours	9.8	4.5	1.0	4.2	15.4	38.6
* All Responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	665	156	96	167	156	57
No data	46	5	3	9	1	1
Most Consuming Task (% of farms)						
Understand requirements	21.8	25.2	28.6	23.6	13.4	11.4
Gather records	20.4	18.7	14.3	16.7	26.1	31.8
Obtain info from employees	12.5	7.9	9.1	12.5	17.9	20.5
Write, fill out forms	45.0	46.8	48.1	47.2	42.5	36.4
Other	0.4	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
* All responses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base N (=100%)	569	139	77	144	134	44
No data	142	22	22	32	23	14

Government forms are infamous for their design and instructions. Survey respondents overall cite understanding report requirements second only to filling out the forms as the most consuming task in preparing reports to agencies. Perhaps because they have more specialized office staff, however, larger firms (with payrolls exceeding $250,000) tend to find that comprehending instructions takes less time than gathering records and obtaining information needed from workers.

Certainly not all communication with government agencies is via the dreaded paper form. Farm operators make phone or personal contact with agency staff members to obtain technical advice, clarification of rules and legal standards, and other practical information; and agencies get in touch with farmers for inspections and audits. Only one in ten respondents, disproportionately those with small payrolls, report having had no communication during 1991 and 1992 with any of eight listed agencies (table G-2). UC Cooperative Extension and the county Agricultural Commissioner's office are the two agencies with which farm operators most commonly made contact, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the state Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal-OSHA) least. The Employment Development Department and U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) were the agencies initiating contact with the greatest shares of farmers.

While farms of every size approached Cooperative Extension, an educational and research institution, at roughly the same rate, the larger businesses were significantly more in touch with each of the other agencies, which have regulatory as well as informational functions. Reported rates of contact initiated by Cal-OSHA, the Labor Commissioner, the DOL, and the INS--presumably for law enforcement--are extremely sensitive to payroll size, those by the EDD and the IRS considerably less so. It is quite possible that EDD, like most of the enforcement agencies, actually has a proclivity to inspect larger operations. If respondents took this very survey to be a contact by EDD, numerous non-inspectees from all size groups would have indicated having EDD-initiated communication, thus obscuring in our results a true relationship between regulatory contact and farm size.

Perception of IRCA Effects

Of all the laws affecting the agricultural community in California since 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act has been most pervasive in the farm labor market. Requiring all employers to conform to new hiring standards and offering generous opportunities for alien legalization, it raised issues for employers, aliens, and government agencies. Its impact in agriculture was to be shaped through individual responses to the inducements and penalties it created. Farm operators faced choices about not only the new recruitment, selection, and record-keeping obligations, but also their non-regulated management practices and labor relations more generally.

Table G-2. Farms in Contact with Government Agencies, 1991-92, by Payroll Size

Contact initiated by:	Total			Less than $20K			$20K - $50K			$50K - $250K			$250K - $1,000K			$1,000K +		
	Farm %	*Agency* %	*Neither* %	*Farm* %	*Agency* %	*Neither* %	*Farm* %	*Agency* %	*Neither* %	*Farm* %	*Agency* %	*Neither* %	*Farm* %	*Agency* %	*Neither* %	*Farm* %	*Agency* %	*Neither* %
Cooperative Extension	54.9	23.6	38.6	49.4	13.0	48.1	56.7	11.3	40.2	53.5	25.9	36.5	61.9	34.2	29.7	59.6	38.6	33.3
Ag Commissioner	53.9	29.4	38.1	44.8	14.3	51.3	47.4	21.6	43.3	49.4	26.5	42.4	67.7	45.8	21.3	70.2	54.4	21.1
Occupt. Health & Safety	7.0	13.0	82.4	2.6	1.3	96.1	4.1	6.2	89.7	6.5	11.8	83.5	9.0	20.0	74.2	22.8	38.6	50.9
Employment Dev. Dept.	37.1	41.9	37.8	31.8	29.9	46.8	27.8	30.9	51.5	31.8	41.8	38.8	42.6	58.1	25.2	78.9	59.6	8.8
Labor Commissioner/DIR	9.3	11.5	81.4	3.9	1.9	94.8	4.1	6.2	90.7	4.7	9.4	87.1	13.5	19.4	69.7	36.8	35.1	38.6
U.S. Dept. of Labor	5.7	9.5	86.3	0.6	1.9	97.4	2.1	2.1	95.9	4.1	5.3	90.6	7.7	18.1	77.4	24.6	31.6	52.6
U.S. Immigration Service	12.2	8.4	82.4	5.2	1.9	92.9	5.2	5.2	90.7	7.1	4.1	89.4	21.3	16.1	69.7	42.1	28.1	43.9
Internal Revenue Service	30.0	33.9	51.1	24.7	20.8	66.2	25.8	25.8	58.8	27.1	32.4	52.4	36.8	47.1	35.5	50.9	61.4	21.1
None of these	11.1	9.3	N.A.	17.5	16.9	N.A.	14.4	12.4	N.A.	12.9	10.0	N.A.	1.9	0.0	N.A.	0.0	0.0	N.A.
Base N (=100%)	687			154			97			170			155			57		

* Row totals exceed 100% because some respondents both contacted and were contacted by the agency.

Underlying the special treatment of agriculture by IRCA were assumptions about buyers (farmers) and sellers (workers) of agricultural labor. Responses to some provisions were rather immediate and far-reaching, but the effects of others and the law as a whole would take form gradually. Most employer and alien decisions that the law was designed to influence were in the future, and the very context of these decisions was fluid. Provisions did not all take effect at once, and many key implementing regulations and administrative policies took months, some even years, to establish. The accuracy of predictions about agriculture after immigration reform could not be assessed until well after December 1, 1988, when the SAW application period ended and employer sanctions became fully applicable in agriculture.

Nevertheless, the watch was on early for indications of what IRCA would bring. Long-term effects might be reflected as changes in: (1) the composition of the farm workforce, (2) the mobility and occupational choices of newly legalized former farm workers, (3) workers' exercise of legal protections for employees, (4) union organizing activity, (5) pay and other terms of employment in agriculture, (6) reliance on farm labor contractors, (7) use of production technologies that substitute machinery for labor, and ultimately, (8) the viability and structure of labor-intensive agriculture in the United States.

California farm employers were understandably concerned about the impact of the new law. In spring 1987, fears of widespread summer harvest disruptions were fed by general confusion about the new law, by IRCA regulations that restricted farm workers in Mexico from entering the United States to file SAW applications and obtain temporary work authorization, and by spot shortages of labor to perform early season tasks. Agriculture took a regular place on the nightly news, and government agencies prepared to cope with crisis. The INS convened a public meeting in Irvine to promote an exchange of informed views and suggestions among representative of grower, labor, and federal organizations. The Employment Development Department initiated a weekly farm labor report.

The most pessimistic scenarios were not nearly realized. Transitional rules and offices were set up to facilitate the entrance of pending SAW applicants from Mexico. The temporary relaxation of documentation standards for proving work eligibility eased the employment of SAW applicants from either side of the border. Harvests progressed through the summer and fall with little abnormality. In our 1987 survey, only thirty respondents (less than 7 percent) specified major business adjustments to IRCA that they had already made or contemplated. Most common were (1) reducing the labor intensity of operations by using more machines or changing the mix of crops produced, and (2) reducing the size of the business or leaving agriculture entirely.

Six years later, it is widely reported that more people are looking for agricultural jobs than are needed to fill them in most regions most of the time. The overall supply of labor available to farms in

California has been expanded by the IRCA legalization of more than a half-million agricultural workers, continued legal as well as illegal immigration, and the loss of employment opportunities in other parts of the state economy. Real earnings of hired farm workers have eroded, and employment by farm labor contractors has increased.

What has IRCA wrought, from the farm operator's perspective? Above all, much more employment paperwork. Fully three-quarters of respondents agree strongly that the law has had this effect, and another 21 percent agree somewhat (table G-3). More than four of five say that there seems to be less hiring of undocumented farm workers, and a similar proportion that their labor costs have increased because of the immigration reform law. The meaning of these responses, however, is uncertain. Not all "documented" workers have legitimate papers, and higher costs may be less attributable to workers raising their asking prices than to various non-wage expenses, such as for compliance reporting and workers' compensation insurance.

A large majority of respondents sees a reduction in questioning of workers by Border Patrol officers, presumably because resources have been shifted to auditing employers. Smaller but nevertheless substantial shares of the survey sample report that IRCA has made it more difficult to find high quality workers or sufficient numbers of workers, and almost half that they have had to make some adjustment in their recruiting efforts. These views on the impact of the 1986 law are quite comparable across different business size classes.

Experience and Outlook on the Labor Market

While not specifically attributing change in the labor market to immigration reform, more than a quarter of farm operators regard it generally harder now than it was in 1986 to recruit as many capable production workers as they need, far more than see it as easier (table G-4). Though this tendency to find recruitment more difficult now exists in every commodity group, it is most pronounced among producers of animal commodities, grapes, non-edibles, and "other" crops, and it is rather weak among vegetable producers.

The reported recruitment difficulties are not necessarily inconsistent with observations of oversupply in the farm labor market. These survey findings may be seen as the result of respondent gamesmanship, but they alternatively may be taken as signs of legally authorized workers leaving agriculture, of farmers more carefully screening prospective hires for job-related knowledge and abilities, or of production technologies and job requirements changing.

Tasks for which respondents had most difficulty finding capable and reliable production workers in 1991-92 cover a broad spectrum. The lesser-skilled work mentioned includes picking, packing, hoeing,

Table G-3. Perception of IRCA Effects, by Total Labor Expense

	Total Sample (% of farms)				*Labor Exp. (index 4=strg. agree, 1=strg. dis.)*				
	Agree Strong	Agree Some	Disagree Some	Disagree Strong	less than $20K	$20K-$50K	$50K-$250K	$250K-$1M	$1M+
Harder to get enough workers	7.5	28.7	43.6	20.1	2.3	2.3	2.9	2.3	2.2
Harder to get quality workers	23.9	33.8	32.6	9.6	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7
Had to change recruitment	13.9	31.0	34.8	20.3	2.3	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.4
Less hiring undocumenteds	43.8	38.7	11.2	6.2	3.1	2.9	3.3	3.3	3.2
Less Border Patrol	34.1	37.3	16.5	12.1	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.1	2.9
Increased labor costs	44.3	36.6	12.9	6.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.1
Much more paperwork	75.4	21.1	2.8	0.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8

Table G-4. Difficulty in Recruiting Workers, 1992 vs. 1986 and 1997 vs. 1992, by Crop Type
(% of farms)

	Total Sample	Animals & Products	Nuts	Grapes	Tree & Other Fruit	Vegeta-bles	Non-edibles	Other
Experience, 1992 vs. 1986								
Easier in 1992	9.2	2.9	10.6	9.6	11.0	9.1	7.7	11.7
Harder in 1992	26.6	27.1	22.7	30.1	27.7	14.3	30.8	36.7
Same both years	64.1	70.0	66.7	60.3	61.3	76.6	61.5	51.7
Base N (=100%)	522	70	66	73	137	77	39	60
Projection, 1997 vs. 1992								
Easier in 1997	3.4	2.4	2.7	2.5	2.0	4.7	0.0	9.9
Harder in 1997	46.0	43.5	40.0	53.8	49.3	38.8	47.9	46.5
No change	26.5	25.9	28.0	22.5	28.3	31.8	20.8	23.9
No idea	24.2	28.2	29.3	21.3	20.4	24.7	31.3	19.7
Base N (=100%)	596	85	75	80	152	85	48	71

and general labor. More commonly specified were tasks that require higher technical and cognitive skills, such as: girdling vines; operating and maintaining almond hullers, tree shakers, hay balers, forklifts, computers, or other equipment; managing and caring for animals; accounting for financial transactions; setting up and running irrigation systems; driving tractors with various rigs; and supervising other employees. A respondent who seems to have experienced the consequences of indiscriminate hiring writes that it was particularly hard to find "tractor drivers with some brains."

Survey respondents register strong concern about recruitment five years hence (table G-4). If there is a surplus of capable workers today, few farm operators expect it to get any larger or even to last on its current scale. Nearly half think recruitment will be more difficult in 1997, a quarter see no change, and another fourth do not even venture to guess. Some may anticipate a recovery from the economic recession in California, which would certainly alter the balance of total supply and demand in the labor market. Respondents foresee a future collection of hard-to-fill jobs even more extensive than the 1991-92 set. Many comments specifically name or refer to jobs that require mechanical, mathematical, language, and managerial skills, suggesting anticipation of a more technologically sophisticated, capital-intensive agriculture. Nevertheless, tasks that demand mainly the application of physical strength and stamina under uncomfortable conditions are also well represented on the list.

Farm operators would entertain multiple strategies for coping with labor procurement problems that may develop in the future. Their strongest inclinations are to adopt technological changes that substitute for labor input, and to step up their recruitment efforts (table G-5). Smaller majorities of respondents say that they would also consider offering better terms of employment, lowering selection standards, and contracting more with FLCs or custom harvesters. One-third would look to shift their enterprise mix toward less labor-intensive crops, and more than a quarter to leave farm business altogether.

Table G-5. Likely Ways of Coping with Future Recruitment Difficulty, by Crop Type

(% of farms)

	Total Sample				Animal Products	Nuts	Grapes	Tree & Oth Fruit	Vegeta-bles	Non-edibles	Other
	Def. Would	*Prob. Would*	*Prob. Not*	*Def. Not*	(% who definitely or probably would try)						
More effort in recruitment	39.6	41.0	13.7	5.7	72.9	73.4	86.1	80.2	86.6	92.3	70.5
Hire less qualified; train	13.5	55.1	20.5	10.9	55.7	67.7	72.6	73.0	66.3	71.8	73.0
Better wages and terms	14.8	51.9	24.7	8.6	69.4	65.2	61.1	67.2	65.9	69.1	75.8
More use of FLC's and CH's	24.4	31.9	22.3	21.5	20.6	66.7	65.8	69.9	60.2	59.5	37.3
Technology to reduce labor need	44.6	36.9	11.7	6.9	70.5	91.3	82.7	74.8	89.2	88.1	82.5
Less labor-using crops	14.7	19.1	26.1	40.0	29.9	28.4	20.3	24.8	50.6	53.7	34.4
Close business	10.8	17.3	32.9	39.0	37.3	26.2	21.3	31.2	20.0	34.2	25.0

H. Conclusion

Until the wave of studies on workers sparked by the 1986 immigration reform law, it was often lamented that too little was known about the hired farm workforce. There was then, and there has continued to be, even less known about how that workforce is managed. Influenced by legal, technological, market, and other contextual factors, farm labor management includes several types of decisions that in turn have direct consequences for agricultural businesses and workers. This study has attempted to analytically describe the different means by which people are brought to and dealt with on farms, to map management practices as they currently are, not to speculate on their adequacy from economic or public policy perspectives.

Information from our survey provides for better understanding of labor management across the range of California farms--and of the farms themselves. Though data from any self-administered questionnaire are to be interpreted with caution, these findings clearly tell of a complex industry comprised of diverse production firms and relationships among them. The structure of production agriculture embodies not only vertically integrated producer-marketers but also networks of more specialized, interdependent entities. These entities join efforts through temporary contracts, accomplishing a functional coordination that others pursue through relatively fixed roles and rules in a single organization.

Directions in Labor Procurement and Management

California farms exhibit as much variety in their organizational and management characteristics as in their products. Common to all is reliance on the work of people--more than a million different individuals who perform agricultural work some time during the year. While many farm operators intimately link their businesses with family and life style, most depend on people outside the family circle. Only six percent of all year-round workers on farms, and two percent of the yearly peak workforce, are members of an operator's family.

The labor of nonfamily workers, who are responsible for the bulk of commodity production in this state, is one of the essential inputs that farmers may procure from external suppliers and contractors. Farmers obtain a large amount of non-employee labor through farm labor contractors (FLC), custom harvesters (CH), and pest control operators. Two-thirds of all workers on farms are direct farm employees, more or less in particular crop and business size sectors. But three of five farm businesses in the survey also used

at least one FLC or CH in 1992. The shares of total labor obtained from outside providers have increased since 1986, when directly employed workers were 72 percent of all at peak.

Farm operators do not sort neatly into groups of either direct employers or labor service customers. Because engaging workers through both employment and contract is the norm, attempts to distinguish farms that hire directly from those that obtain labor in other ways are not likely to be illuminating. There are functions served in procuring labor by either means. The widespread use of contractors notwithstanding, most workers on farms are in fact employees on the payroll, and they are managed in styles that run from the very casual to the systematic.

Structure in the personnel function--the extent to which labor management policies, responsibilities, and processes are clearly rationalized--is usually greater in large farm businesses. A bigger scale of operation makes more economical as well as necessary the employment of personnel staff specialists to facilitate hiring, developing, and keeping productive workers. Larger operators in the survey more commonly utilize in-house or external professionals to assist in managing human resources. They tend more to obtain information on prospective employees through written applications and medical exams; to communicate through employee handbooks, written job descriptions and work rules, staff meetings, and regular performance evaluations; to directly employ bilingual supervisors; and to offer non-mandatory fringe benefits. They also verify more carefully the legitimacy of FLCs with whom they do business. And they get audited more by regulatory agencies.

Larger farms have assisted more of their formerly undocumented workers through IRCA legalization processes, and they have retained these employees from 1986 to 1992 at higher rates than smaller firms. More generally within a given commodity sector, employment stability and structured personnel management appear to better reinforce one other in larger farm businesses, particularly those which have geographic or crop diversity that softens net seasonal swings in the need for labor. Employees are more likely to work year-round in large operations, and, on the whole, year-round farm employees are better compensated, receive more fringe benefits, and have more job security than their seasonal counterparts.

Many farms preserve job stability for a core of employees by keeping their organizations lean and contracting for FLC or CH crews to meet additional needs during periods of high activity. This stabilization strategy, however, may effectively define or perpetuate the division between two tiers in the farm workforce. Sometimes juxtaposed in adjoining fields are crews from both tiers harvesting for the very same company label but under quite different terms of employment. Where FLCs are able to hold their operating expenses below those that farmers would incur for their own hires, they can offer customers a current cost advantage over direct employment. Even where they cannot, contractors are

appealing to farmers who want to reduce their employment transactions, communication problems, legal liabilities, and technical difficulties in managing personnel.

The total need for labor in California agriculture fluctuates over the course of a year, and in most crop sectors the work activity at a given farm swings with the seasons more sharply than in the statewide aggregate. Peak employment in an average farm business is more than three times the year-round level, and the number of different people employed some time during a year is half again the number present at peak activity. Administrative costs accompany every addition to and deletion from the farm payroll, and personnel transactions would be more numerous yet if not for outside service providers. It is not surprising that FLC employees make up almost twice as much of the peak as of the year-round workforce.

The unpredictability of staffing for tasks that depend on weather and biological phenomena magnifies the value of "just-in-time" delivery of labor. Vagaries of climate and the marketplace affect both how much and when labor is to be deployed. Even a most disciplined farmer cannot be confident about seasonal employment plans far in advance. Employing a larger workforce than needed in off-peak periods, to avoid cyclical layoffs and recalls, makes labor expense more of a fixed overhead than a variable operating cost. Arranging for contractors to mobilize people and equipment when needed, in contrast, can help tie labor expense more closely to actual task accomplishment while keeping direct employment lean and stable. Contractual arrangements for labor thus may also enhance longer run flexibility to alter future production, technology, staffing, and terms of employment within the farm business.

Cultural and language differences between farm operators and workers compound the challenges of direct recruitment, selection, supervision, instruction, and other job-related communication. More than one-third of farmers cannot communicate directly in the language understood by most of their production employees, usually Spanish, and another third have limited fluency. Both the former and many of the latter must rely on the bilingual mediation that FLCs and their hired foremen customarily provide.

Finally, it is most difficult for agricultural managers to procure labor from capable workers and stay within all legal guidelines without getting overwhelmed by mandates, prohibitions, and reports. Although growers and contractors may be deemed jointly liable for violations of some employee protections, farmers reduce or eliminate exposure to claims of wrongdoing by using contract labor. After two decades of legislation narrowing gaps between employee protections in the agricultural and nonfarm sectors, farmers are subject to pretty much the same liabilities and constraints as employers in other industries. Judicial decisions giving employees more legal rights within their jobs have also raised the costs and risks of maintaining a directly hired workforce. Increased regulatory complexity

and the paperwork associated with agricultural employment in particular have added to reasons for contracting out tasks. The eligibility verification and nondiscrimination provisions of IRCA are only two of many bases for charges that agencies or workers may level against farm employers.

Thus, there are practical business considerations behind the use of labor contractors and outside service providers that may include but do not hinge on the 1986 immigration reform. In broad terms, growers patronize contractors to get work done when needed by people who can do it without presenting undue complications. Finding and dealing with contractors, however, can involve other complications that farmers weigh against the burdens of hiring and managing their own employees.

Shape of the Future

Streams of immigrants have been boosting the supply of labor available to California farms for more than one hundred years, but labor procurement is not and will not be merely a matter of numbers. Neither farm jobs nor farm workers are an undifferentiated mass. Even as the post-IRCA labor glut was developing, farmers had trouble filling jobs, and most now are at least somewhat concerned about finding enough workers with the right qualifications to meet their operational needs in the future.

Regardless of how many people are looking for employment, farm operators may have trouble engaging workers with skills that are suited to emerging and future technologies. Patterns of demand for agricultural labor will undoubtedly be different by the end of this decade. Technological innovations that change farm jobs will have effects on who performs them and how these workers are managed. While production systems may retain their basic characters, the context if not the content of virtually every agricultural job will be altered somewhat before the 21st century.

Mechanization in the past has been designed to achieve a variety of private and social benefits, such as improved crop quality, more efficient use of fertilizers and pesticides, reduced worker exposure to hazards, preservation of environmental quality, and conservation of water and energy. Whether or not explicitly intended, an increase in labor productivity--or a decrease in the number of people needed to produce a given output--usually has accompanied the other benefits of such change. These kinds of payoffs are still very much to be pursued, of course, and increased product market competition in a new free trade era adds to pressures for cost-saving technological advances. The application of modern electronics, materials, and biological research findings to farm production continue to increase the cognitive skill requirements of many farm jobs. Gradual replacement of strenuous harvest, cultivation, and carrying jobs with machine operation, sorting, and maintenance work can be expected to both reduce total employment and increase the average duration of careers in farm work.

The legal environment of the labor supply and labor management is a persistent source of uncertainty clouding the outlook for business operators. Frustration with regulatory demands is already strong and widespread, and incentives for reducing direct payroll continue to accrue. As long as the body politic sees farm workers hurting, legislators will be moved to consider further regulation of agricultural employers. But each new law begins another experiment that touches off adjustments in labor procurement that no one can be sure of in advance. Most mandates and restrictions have encouraged farmers to shift away from employing and toward more contracting of labor. Recent initiatives that have been designed specifically to tighten control of labor contractors and to increase customers' liability for FLC acts, however, push in the opposite direction.

Despite regulatory pressures and anticipated technological changes, there is no foreseeable vision of a California agriculture without seasonal and short-term tasks that many farm operators would rather have performed by contractors. The two tiers of agricultural jobs apparent today may become increasingly divided and aligned with different types of employers, the more secure and higher paying jobs tending to cluster within farm businesses and the less desirable, "contingent" jobs in contractor firms. Farm operators are likely to regard the higher costs of direct employment much more bearable for employees who possess rare skills or who perform jobs that are individually critical to business success.

An Implication for the Public Employment Service

Although most farm operators do not have faith in the Employment Service as a worthy broker between them and farm workers, there is definitely room, if not also strong need, for the EDD to facilitate transactions in the agricultural labor market. To serve the function of matching farm work with people more effectively in the current and foreseeable environment requires that the ES go beyond the practice of simply sending available workers to employers who have job openings. Two welcome additions to its line of service would be contractor referral and worker assessment.

Farm operators would make good use of an accessible, reliable third-party source of referrals to labor contractors in their locales. In procuring labor from a contractor, farmers remove themselves from numerous recruitment and selection decisions, but they take on instead a kind of wholesale hiring decision that has greater stakes than any single employee hire. Because the consequences of the search for and choice of an outside service provider are so magnified, information relevant to these processes can be extremely valuable. If EDD were to build on its record systems to include information about the availability, special capabilities, experience, and legitimacy of FLCs and CHs, its representatives in local offices would be more uniformly equipped to help compatible growers and contractors find one another.

Potential for invigorating the public Employment Service lies not only in expanding its referral domain but also in adding value to its traditional referral of individual workers. Farmers naturally want to make good employee selection decisions, but the quality of their hires is limited by that of their recruitment pools and the information they can garner about applicants' qualifications. Managerial resources for carefully recruiting and screening workers are often insufficient, however, especially in smaller and mid-size farm businesses. If the ES could provide some objective assessment of a worker's knowledge and skills in relation to specified job requirements, it would surely earn higher regard and more activity as a recruitment channel. The garden variety referral remains tainted by its recognized connection to the unemployment insurance program.

When the Employment Service does not distinguish meaningfully among workers on the basis of their qualifications for respective jobs, it passes up the opportunity to furnish assistance that many farm operators need. Moreover, it implies a working belief that all farm jobs are "unskilled," and it may substantiates the opinions that most farmers express about the ES. In an agricultural industry that takes advantage of increasingly sophisticated technologies, pre-employment assessment of worker abilities will be all the more significant.

Tooling up to substantially support employee selection on the farm would not be easily accomplished, but it would translate into more productive and mutually satisfying employment relationships. In addition, worker assessments would improve labor procurement options for farm employers by lowering costs and risks of direct hiring and offsetting some of the impetus to contract with external providers.

Appendix 1

Survey Questionnaire

ID ____ ____ ____ ____

CONFIDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR FARM BUSINESS

WHAT WE'RE ASKING YOU TO DO:

- **Please try to answer every question (except those we ask you to skip). If you're not sure of the exact answer to a question, give us your best estimate.**
- **Most questions can be answered by checking one box or by writing in a number, word or phrase. Check only one box UNLESS THE INSTRUCTIONS SAY TO "CHECK ALL THAT APPLY."**
- **If you think that checking a box will be misleading, please check the answer that comes closest. Then add a note, explaining whatever you think we should know.**
- **Please read all directions carefully -- *ESPECIALLY THOSE IN ITALICS.***
- **If a question asks about 1992, please try to answer for all 12 months (assuming that the last months of the year will actually work out as you expect).**
- **Some questions ask about 1986 -- the year the Immigration Reform and Control Act was passed. If you can't answer precisely, again give your best estimate.**
- **When you finish filling out the questionnaire, please return it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope as soon as possible.**
- **Please do NOT write your name or the farm business name anywhere on the questionnaire. The I.D. number will tell us which questionnaires have arrived and who needs reminder letters or phone calls. Once we have completed entering the data from questionnaires into the computer, we will destroy the questionnaires, so no one will be able to tell who participated or who said what.**

THANKS VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER: Please remember that most questions ask only about one farm business -- the one identified at the top of the pink form. If you own or operate more than one farm business, please answer only about the one named on the pink form.

1. A. In what year did you or a member of your family first operate this business?

In 19_____

B. Which of the following functions does this farm business perform? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.*

[1] ☐ Land preparation	[1] ☐ Cultivation and/or plant care
[1] ☐ Harvesting	[1] ☐ Animal husbandry and/or care
[1] ☐ Planting	[1] ☐ Marketing
[1] ☐ Packing or preparing for market	[1] ☐ Another major function *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____ *)*

✱ 2. Roughly what do you expect your farm business's *total labor expenses* to be for the entire 12-month period in 1992? Round off to nearest $10,000 if expenses total *less* than $500,000, or to the nearest $50,000 if expenses total more than $500,000. *Please include wages, payroll taxes, insurance required by law, fringe benefits, and payments to labor contractors and custom harvesters.*

About $_____.00

PLEASE TRY TO ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS (UNLESS THERE'S A SPECIAL NOTE TO SKIP ONE OR MORE).

[1] ☐ No labor expenses in 1992. I did almost all the work myself (and the only people helping me were co-owners or unpaid family members).

IF YOU HAD NO LABOR EXPENSES IN 1992, MANY QUESTIONS WON'T APPLY TO YOU. PLEASE PROCEED AS FOLLOWS:

If there is a star (✱) next to a question number or letter (like Question 2), please try to answer as much of it as you can.

If there is no star (like questions 3 - 8), please skip those and look for the next one with a star (✱).

3. Opinions differ about the impact of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which was fully implemented for agriculture in December, 1988. For each of the following statements, please check one answer indicating how strongly you agree or disagree that IRCA has had the effect described.

		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A.	There's much more employment paperwork now	[1] ☐	[2] ☐	[3] ☐	[4] ☐
B.	It's now harder to get the number of workers I need	☐	☐	☐	☐
C.	It's harder to get high quality workers now	☐	☐	☐	☐
D.	There seems to be less hiring of undocumented workers on farms	☐	☐	☐	☐
E.	I have had to change the way I recruit workers	☐	☐	☐	☐
F.	My labor costs (per unit of production) have increased	☐	☐	☐	☐
G.	The Border Patrol questions workers at my farm less often now	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. How many custom harvesters did you do business with in 1992 and in 1986?

With _____ in 1992 and with _____ in 1986

5. How many farm labor contractors did you do business with in 1992 and in 1986?

With _____ in 1992 and with _____ in 1986

6. How many commercial Pest Control Operators did you do business with in 1992 and in 1986?

With _____ in 1992 and with _____ in 1986

IF YOU DID NOT DO BUSINESS WITH ANY LABOR CONTRACTORS IN 1992, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 9 ON THE NEXT PAGE.

7. Below are different ways of checking to see if a labor contractor is licensed to do business in California. For each one, please check one answer showing how often (if ever) you used that method in 1992.

		Did this for ALL FLCs hired	Did this for SOME FLCs hired	Did NOT do this
A.	Assume that they're licensed unless someone had told me otherwise	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
B.	Accept their word that they're legitimate ...	☐	☐	☐
C.	Ask to see the labor contractor's license	☐	☐	☐
D.	Call the State Department of Industrial Relations to check	☐	☐	☐
E.	Call (or write) the U.S. Department of Labor to check	☐	☐	☐
F.	Do something else *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____)	☐	☐	☐

8. A. Suppose that there was a toll-free phone number you could call for up-to-date information about labor contractors in your area. If you needed to hire a labor contractor this week, how likely would you be to call this number to find names of contractors with experience in your crop?

1 ☐ Definitely would call 2 ☐ Probably would call 3 ☐ Probably would NOT call 4 ☐ Definitely would NOT call

B. If you were considering hiring a particular labor contractor tomorrow, how likely would you be to call this number to find out if he or she is licensed?

1 ☐ Definitely would call 2 ☐ Probably would call 3 ☐ Probably would NOT call 4 ☐ Definitely would NOT call

✱ 9. Including you, how many of each of the following kinds of people worked in the operations of this farm business during each of the three periods indicated? *BY "YEAR-ROUND WORKERS," WE MEAN ANYONE WHO WORKED FOR AT LEAST 150 DAYS DURING THAT YEAR.*

[1] ☐ *IF YOU NEITHER OWNED NOR OPERATED THIS BUSINESS IN 1986, PLEASE CHECK HERE AND LEAVE THE THIRD COLUMN BLANK*

	Year-round workers in 1992	Peak season workers in 1992	Peak season workers in 1986
Workers directly employed by you (not counting your relatives)	_____	_____	_____
Family members paid as employees	_____	_____	_____
Family members who are not paid employees (part owners or other status)	_____	_____	_____
Workers who are employees of a farm labor contractor (not your employees)	_____	_____	_____
Workers who are employees of a custom harvesting or management service company (not your employees)	_____	_____	_____
People who work directly for you as independent contractors, not as employees	_____	_____	_____
	==========	==========	==========
Total number of different people working	_____	_____	_____

10. How many different people were on your own farm business payroll (as <u>your</u> employees) at any time in 1992?

_____ different people on at least one payroll in 1992.

✱ 11. What are the <u>main</u> crops or products (in terms of revenue, not acreage), produced by this farm business? *If one crop is clearly the main one, simply check that one. Otherwise indicate up to three by placing a "1" next to the one that brings in the most dollar sales, a "2" beside the one of the next greatest value, and "3" beside the third.*

_____	Dairy products	_____	Grapes	_____	Vegetables
_____	Poultry and eggs	_____	Nuts	_____	Grain(s)
_____	Other livestock and animal products	_____	Citrus fruits	_____	Other edible field crops
_____	Ornamentals	_____	Other tree fruit	_____	Non-edible field crops *(SPECIFY:* _____ *)*
_____	Other nursery products	_____	All other fruit	_____	Other crop *(SPECIFY:* _____ *)*

12. Below is a list of people who can provide services related to labor-management in your farm business. For each one, please indicate whether you use the services of someone like that and -- if so -- whether the person is employed on the staff of this farm business or is an outside provider with whom you contract for his or her services.

	Don't use anyone like this	Get this service from someone who -- Is employed on our staff	Contracts as an outside provider
A personnel specialist or consultant	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
An attorney	☐	☐	☐
Someone who recruits workers for you (not a labor contractor)	☐	☐	☐
Someone who trains production workers	☐	☐	☐
Someone who trains your supervisors	☐	☐	☐
Someone (other than the foreman) who helps you with your employees	☐	☐	☐
Payroll accountant or bookkeeper	☐	☐	☐

13. During a typical month of high production activity, how much time does someone in your farm business (not an outside service provider) spend filling out employment and labor-related reports required by federal, state and local agencies?

1 ☐ Less than 2 hours
2 ☐ 2 - 4.9 hours
3 ☐ 5 - 9.9 hours
4 ☐ 10 - 19.9 hours
5 ☐ 20 - 29.9 hours
6 ☐ 30 - 39.9 hours
7 ☐ 40 or more hours

14. In completing reports required by government agencies, which <u>one</u> of the following tasks usually consumes the most time?

1 ☐ Reading the instructions and understanding what is required
2 ☐ Gathering records needed to complete forms
3 ☐ Obtaining records or other information needed from employees
4 ☐ Filling out forms and writing up required reports
5 ☐ Another task *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____

_____)

✱ 15. During the two-year period including 1991 and 1992, were you (or one of your assistants) in contact with any of these government agencies for any reason?

✱ A. In the first column, please show which ones you contacted during this two-year period. *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.*

✱ B. In the second column, please show which ones contacted you -- that is, got in touch with you for an inspection or audit. *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.*

	A. Those we contacted	B. Those that contacted us
(1) Cooperative Extension (or U.C. Farm Adviser)	1 ☐	1 ☐
(2) State Employment Development Department (EDD)...	1 ☐	1 ☐
(3) Labor Comissioner OR Department of Industrial Relations	1 ☐	1 ☐
(4) Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) -- either State or Federal	1 ☐	1 ☐
(5) County Agricultural Commissioner or Cal-EPA	1 ☐	1 ☐
(6) U. S. Department of Labor (DOL)	1 ☐	1 ☐
(7) U.S. Department of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)	1 ☐	1 ☐
(8) Internal Revenue Service	1 ☐	1 ☐
No such contact with any agency or department on the list .	1 ☐	1 ☐

IMPORTANT

Many of the following questions ask about "production workers." If practices vary from crop to crop, please answer about production workers who work on your main crop -- the one bringing in the greatest revenue.

By "production workers," we mean non-supervisory employees of your farm business, including:

- people working in the field or in packing sheds
- mechanics working with machines used in producing crops
- other people working directly with soil, plants, livestock, crops, or farm equipment

Please do NOT include managers, supervisors, and people in this business who do NOT work in production operations-- like office workers.

16. Below are different methods some farm businesses use to help production workers understand their jobs or the farm operation. With how many of them do you use each method?

	I use this method with --		
	Most or all production workers	Some production workers	No production workers
Written job descriptions (outlining duties)	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
Written work rules, which are either posted or distributed to workers	☐	☐	☐
An employee handbook	☐	☐	☐
Group orientation meetings for new people	☐	☐	☐
Videotapes	☐	☐	☐
Audio tapes	☐	☐	☐
Verbal instructions from supervisor	☐	☐	☐
Tailgate meetings at the work site	☐	☐	☐
Staff meetings held indoors	☐	☐	☐
Regularly scheduled performance evaluation, with record given to or discussed with the worker privately	☐	☐	☐

17. A. Below is a list of different methods sometimes used to find new production employees. For each one, please check one of the answers in the first column showing whether you used that method in 1992.

✱ B. In the second column, please check one response for each method showing whether you used that method more, less or the same amount in 1986.

[1] ☐ Neither owned nor operated this business in 1986

	A. USE IN 1992		B. USE IN 1986			
	Used in 1992	Not used in 1992	Not used at all in 1986	Used less in 1986	About the same in 1986	Used more in 1986
(1) Having people just "walk in" or call us looking for work.	[1] ☐	[2] ☐	[1] ☐	[2] ☐	[3] ☐	[4] ☐
(2) Asking foremen or supervisors to recruit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(3) Asking current employees to refer workers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(4) Asking other growers or acquaintances to refer workers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(5) Using referral system of association or packing house	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(6) Posting signs inviting applicants	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(7) Advertising on radio or in newspaper	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(8) Placing job order with EDD Employment service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(9) Visiting potential employees in their homes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(10) Another method *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. Through which <u>one</u> of these methods did you obtain the largest number of workers in 1992? *ENTER METHOD NUMBER FROM QUESTION 17.*

METHOD NUMBER _____

19. A. How many different times, if any, did you place a job order with the EDD Employment Service during the last 12 months (that is, since this time in 1991)?

[1] ☐ None, placed no job orders with EDD

[2] ☐ One job order

[3] ☐ Two or more job orders *(PLEASE GIVE ACTUAL NUMBER: _____)*

IF NONE, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 20 BELOW.

IF YOU PLACED ANY JOB ORDERS WITH EDD EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS, PLEASE ANSWER B - E BELOW:

B. How many different job openings were you trying to fill?

For a total of _____ job openings

C. How many different people were referred to you on job orders placed with EDD during the last 12 months?

A total of about _____ different people were referred

D. Of all the people referred to you by EDD during the last 12 months, how many did you actually hire?

Hired about _____ people EDD referred during the last 12 months

E. Taking everything into consideration, how satisfied were you usually with the response from EDD staff?

[1] ☐ Very satisfied

[2] ☐ Basically satisfied

[3] ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied

[4] ☐ Very dissatisfied

✱ 20. Please use this space to offer any suggestions you can on ways the Employment Development Department could be more helpful to farm employers like you who are trying to recruit staff. This can include either changes, additions, or both. *If you need more space, please continue on a blank sheet of paper.*

[1] ☐ Completely satisfied, have no suggestions.

21. When you're trying to decide whether to hire someone for a production job in your farm business, how important is each of the following?

		In making my decision, this would be -- A major factor	A minor factor	Not a factor
A.	Previous experience in similar work	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
B.	Demonstrated skills of the kinds needed to carry out the tasks involved	☐	☐	☐
C.	How much we can count on this person to come to work on time and stay as long as needed	☐	☐	☐
D.	How well the person gets along with fellow employees	☐	☐	☐
E.	The country where the person was born	☐	☐	☐
F.	Legitimate documents proving eligibility to work in U.S.	☐	☐	☐
G.	Another factor *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____ _____)	☐	☐	☐

22. When you're trying to decide whether someone has the qualifications you want, to what extent do you use information from each of the following sources ?

		Use information from this source -- A lot	Some	A little	Not at all
A.	Written application form	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐
B.	A written test or demonstration of skills or knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐
C.	Short-term trial basis (less than a day) or a practical test (performing a job task) before actually hiring the person	☐	☐	☐	☐
D.	Probationary period (more than a day)	☐	☐	☐	☐
E.	Interview with the worker	☐	☐	☐	☐
F.	Reference from previous employer	☐	☐	☐	☐
G.	Comments made by your foreman or another employee who knows the worker	☐	☐	☐	☐
H.	Medical examination	☐	☐	☐	☐

✱ 23. If a service were available to provide a free, objective assessment of applicant skills and knowledge, how often do you think you would use this service when hiring people for production jobs?

[1] ☐ Almost every time [2] ☐ More than half the time [3] ☐ Less than half the time [4] ☐ Never

24. Thinking only of the production employees who worked directly for your farm business during the last 12 months, about how many of them ever worked for you at some time before 1992?

A. In the first column, check one box showing how many of them EVER worked for you at any time before 1992.

B. In the second column, check one box showing how many of them worked for you as long ago as 1986 (or before 1986).

[1] ☐ This doesn't apply to me since I neither owned nor operated this business before 1992

	A. At some time BEFORE 1992	B. In 1986 OR BEFORE 1986
All (or almost all) of them	[1] ☐	[1] ☐
At least 75% (3/4) of them	[2] ☐	[2] ☐
At least half (50%), but less than 75%	[3] ☐	[3] ☐
At least 25% (1/4), but less than half	[4] ☐	[4] ☐
Less than 25%	[5] ☐	[5] ☐
None of them	[6] ☐	

✱ 25. A. About how many of the workers whom you employed in 1985 or 1986 do you think obtained legal U.S. resident status through the Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) program created by the 1986 immigration law?

About _____ of the people I employed in this business in 1985 or 1986 gained legal status in that way

[1] ☐ None of them [2] ☐ This doesn't apply. I neither owned nor operated this business in 1985 or 1986

IF NONE (OR IF YOU DIDN'T OWN OR OPERATE THIS BUSINESS IN 1985 OR 1986), PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 26 BELOW.

B. About how many of these legalized individuals were still working for you in this farm business during the last 12 months?

About _____ of them still worked for this business [0] ☐ None of them

26. Please answer the following questions about all the production workers whom you employed during your period of peak activity in the last 12 months:

A. If you asked your employees what they considered their permanent home, about how many would say "home" is a place less than 75 miles from your farm business?

About _____ of them OR About _____ % of them [8] ☐ Have no idea

B. What language do most of the production workers in this farm business speak on the job? *PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER.*

[1] ☐ English [2] ☐ Hmong [3] ☐ Lao [4] ☐ Mixtec [5] ☐ Spanish [6] ☐ Tagalog

[7] ☐ Another language *(PLEASE SPECIFY:* _____ *)*

C. Do you speak this language (the one checked in B above)?

[1] ☐ Yes, speak it fluently

[2] ☐ Speak well enough to communicate needed instructions

[3] ☐ Some, but not enough to talk adequately with workers

[4] ☐ No, can't speak it at all

IF YOU SPEAK WELL ENOUGH TO GIVE NECESSARY INSTRUCTIONS, SKIP TO Q 27.

D. How do you communicate the necessary instructions to employees who don't speak your language -- who tells them what they need to know?

[1] ☐ Hired foreman or crew boss tells them

[2] ☐ Non-supervisory worker tells them

[3] ☐ A member of my family tells them

[4] ☐ Someone else tells them *(PLEASE SPECIFY: _____)*

27. A. Did a union ever have certification to represent any of your production employees?

[1] ☐ Yes, in 1992

[2] ☐ Yes, and the last year that was true was *(PLEASE SPECIFY: 19____)*

[3] ☐ No, never

IF UNION DID NOT HAVE CERTIFICATION IN 1992, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 28.

B. *IF YES, IN 1992*: About what percentage of your non-supervisory production employees were represented by this union during the peak season in 1992?

About _____%

28. About how much will your total gross payroll for all directly hired employees be in the calendar year 1992 -- before taxes and other deductions? *Please do NOT include employer taxes, insurance and the like.*

[1] ☐ Less than $2,000

[2] ☐ $2,000 - $19,999

[3] ☐ $20,000 - $49,999

[4] ☐ $50,000 - $99,999

[5] ☐ $100,000 - $249,999

[6] ☐ $250,000 - $499,999

[7] ☐ $500,000 - $999,999

[8] ☐ $1,000,000 or more

29. On what basis do you usually calculate pay for most of the production employees working on your main product? *PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE, WHICHEVER APPLIES TO MOST PRODUCTION WORKERS.*

[1] ☐ Based strictly on number of hours worked

[2] ☐ Weekly or monthly salary

[3] ☐ Based strictly on the person's production or output (e.g. piece rates)

[4] ☐ Based on combination of number of hours a person worked and on his/her production level (e.g., piece rates plus hours)

[5] ☐ Some other basis *(PLEASE DESCRIBE: _____)*

30. Some farm businesses offer employee bonuses or additional pay based on incentives such as the quality of product harvested, absence of disease in livestock, accident-free months, etc. Not counting piece rates, can any of your production workers earn any other kind of "incentive pay"?

[1] ☐ Yes, some can [2] ☐ No, none can

31. A. How often do you tend to review or adjust **hourly wage rates** for most production jobs in this farm business? *Please check one answer in first column. If it varies, please check the answer that applies most often.*

B. How often do you review or adjust **piece rates** for most production jobs in this business? *Please check answer in second column.*

	A. Hourly rates	B. Piece rates
Yearly	[1] ☐	[1] ☐
Each season	[2] ☐	[2] ☐
Monthly	[3] ☐	[3] ☐
Weekly	[4] ☐	[4] ☐
Daily	[5] ☐	[5] ☐
Do it irregularly, with no usual pattern	[6] ☐	[6] ☐
When starting in a different field or block	[7] ☐	

C. In setting wage rates and/or piece rates, how much attention do you give to each of the following sources of information?

	A lot	Some	A little	None
Published surveys of wages	[1] ☐	[2] ☐	[3] ☐	[4] ☐
My own systematic survey of growers offering similar jobs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Informal conversations with some farm operators whom I know	☐	☐	☐	☐
The amount my employees say they should be paid	☐	☐	☐	☐
What unionized workers in this area are paid	☐	☐	☐	☐
Some other guideline or factor *(PLEASE DESCRIBE: _____)*	☐	☐	☐	☐

32. A. Do all hourly production employees working in the same type of job (on the same crop or product) get the same hourly rate of pay?

[1] ☐ Yes, all the same rate → *IF YES, PLEASE SKIP TO Q 33.*

[2] ☐ No, some get more than others

B. On what basis are different hourly rates paid? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.*

[1] ☐ Length of employment

[1] ☐ Evaluation of the person's job performance

[1] ☐ Time of day (which shift) the person works

[1] ☐ Time of year

[1] ☐ Other working conditions *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____ *)*

[1] ☐ Some other basis *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____

_____ *)*

33. Below is a list of benefits -- not required by law -- some businesses provide for employees.

A. For each kind, please check one of the first three boxes showing how many -- if any -- of your year-round production employees receive that benefit.

B. Check one of the second set of boxes showing how many of your seasonal production employees receive the same benefit.

	Number of employees receiving this benefit					
	A. Year-round employees			B. Seasonal employees		
	All or most	Some	None	All or most	Some	None
Health insurance	[1] ☐	[2] ☐	[3] ☐	[1] ☐	[2] ☐	[3] ☐
Vacation pay	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paid sick leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rent-free or subsidized housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Farm products (e.g., milk, fruit)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other benefits *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____ *)*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

34. Generally speaking, is it now easier or harder to get enough capable production workers than it was in 1986?

[1] ☐ Easier now [2] ☐ Harder now [3] ☐ About the same [4] ☐ Does not apply to me, since I neither owned nor operated this farm business in 1986

✱ 35. What do you expect to happen five years from now -- will it be easier or harder to get enough capable production workers in 1997 than it is now?

[1] ☐ It will probably be easier to get them in 1997 [4] ☐ Have no idea. Can't even guess.

[2] ☐ It will probably be harder in 1997

[3] ☐ It will probably not change, neither easier nor harder in 1997

36. For which tasks in what commodities was it hardest to find capable and reliable production workers in 1991-92?

[1] ☐ Does not apply to me. We had no trouble finding good production workers

_____ task in _____ commodity

_____ task in _____ commodity

✱ 37. Assuming that some jobs will be harder to fill than others, what jobs do you think will be hardest to fill with qualified workers in 1997? *PLEASE NAME THE TASKS AND COMMODITIES .*

✱ 38. If it gets much harder to fill jobs with qualified people in the future, how likely would you be to try each of the following possible methods of coping? *CHECK ONE ANSWER FOR EACH.*

	Definitely would try	Probably would try	Probably would NOT try	Definitely would NOT try
A. Work harder on direct recruitment efforts . . .	[1] ☐	[2] ☐	[3] ☐	[4] ☐
B. Hire applicants less qualified than I'd like, or provide more on-the-job training	☐	☐	☐	☐
C. Offer higher wages or change other terms to attract workers	☐	☐	☐	☐
D Increase use of farm labor contractors or custom harvesters	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. Increase use of equipment, tools or other ways to reduce the need for labor	☐	☐	☐	☐
F. Switch to crops that are less labor intensive . .	☐	☐	☐	☐
G. Close this farm business	☐	☐	☐	☐

✱ 39. How is this farm business officially organized?

[1] ☐ Sole proprietorship [2] ☐ Family partnership [3] ☐ Other partnership [4] ☐ Corporation

✱ 40. What is the total acreage operated by this farm business?

[1] ☐ Less than 50 acres	[4] ☐ 500 - 999 acres	[7] ☐ 5,000 - 9,999 acres
[2] ☐ 50 - 199 acres	[5] ☐ 1,000 - 1,999 acres	[8] ☐ 10,000 - 49,999 acres
[3] ☐ 200 - 499 acres	[6] ☐ 2,000 - 4,999 acres	[9] ☐ 50,000 acres or larger

✱ 41. In how many different counties in California does this farm business grow or produce crops?

[1] ☐ One county

Which county is that?

_____County

[2] ☐ Two or more counties *(PLEASE GIVE NUMBER:* _____counties*)*

Thinking strictly in terms of the dollar value of what this farm business produces (rather than the acreage involved), in which county do you produce most?

In _____County

✱ 42. A. What was the total value of all crop and livestock sales produced in this farm business in 1992? *CHECK ONE ANSWER IN FIRST COLUMN.*

B. And what was the total value of sales of your main crop or product (the one you identified as number 1 in Question 11)? *CHECK IN SECOND COLUMN.*

	A. Total value of all sales	B. Total value of main crop or product
Less than $40,000	[1] ☐	[1] ☐
$40,000 - $99,999	[2] ☐	[2] ☐
$100,000 - $249,999	[3] ☐	[3] ☐
$250,000 - $499,999	[4] ☐	[4] ☐
$500,000 - $999,999	[5] ☐	[5] ☐
$1,000,000 - $4,999,999	[6] ☐	[6] ☐
$5,000,000 or more	[7] ☐	[7] ☐

When you finish filling out the questionnaire, please mail it (and the pink form) back in the enclosed postage-paid envelope as soon as possible.

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP

Appendix 2

Survey Questionnaire--Short Version

ID ____ ____ ____ ____

CONFIDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

SHORT VERSION:

EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR FARM BUSINESS

WHAT WE'RE ASKING YOU TO DO:

- Please try to answer every question (except those we ask you to skip). If you're not sure of the exact answer to a question, give us your best estimate.
- Most questions can be answered by checking one box or by writing in a number, word or phrase. Check only one box UNLESS THE INSTRUCTIONS SAY TO "CHECK ALL THAT APPLY."
- If you think that checking a box will be misleading, please check the answer that comes closest. Then add a note, explaining whatever you think we should know.
- Please read all directions carefully -- *ESPECIALLY THOSE IN ITALICS.*
- When you finish filling out the questionnaire, please return it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope as soon as possible.
- Please do NOT write your name or the farm business name anywhere on the questionnaire. The I.D. number will tell us which questionnaires have arrived and who needs reminder letters or phone calls. Once we have completed entering the data from questionnaires into the computer, we will destroy the questionnaires, so no one will be able to tell who participated or who said what.

THANKS VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER: Please remember that most questions ask only about one farm business -- the one identified at the top of the pink form. If you own or operate more than one farm business, please answer only about the one named on the pink form.

1. A. In what year did you or a member of your family first operate this business?

In 19_____

B. Which of the following functions does this farm business perform? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.*

[1] ☐ Land preparation	[1] ☐ Cultivation and/or plant care
[1] ☐ Harvesting	[1] ☐ Animal husbandry and/or care
[1] ☐ Planting	[1] ☐ Marketing
[1] ☐ Packing or preparing for market	[1] ☐ Another major function *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____ *)*

✱ 2. Roughly what were your farm business's *total labor expenses* for the entire 12-month period in 1992? Round off to nearest $10,000 if expenses total *less* than $500,000, or to the nearest $50,000 if expenses total more than $500,000. *Please include wages, payroll taxes, insurance required by law, fringe benefits, and payments to labor contractors and custom harvesters.*

About $_____.00

[1] ☐ No labor expenses in 1992. I did almost all the work myself (and the only people helping me were co-owners or unpaid family members).

PLEASE TRY TO ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS (UNLESS THERE'S A SPECIAL NOTE TO SKIP ONE OR MORE).

IF YOU HAD NO LABOR EXPENSES IN 1992, MANY QUESTIONS WON'T APPLY TO YOU. PLEASE PROCEED AS FOLLOWS:

If there is a star (✱) next to a question number or letter (like Question 2), please try to answer as much of it as you can.

If there is no star (like questions 3 and 4), please skip those and look for the next one with a star (✱).

3. How many custom harvesters did you do business with in 1992?

With _____ in 1992

4. How many farm labor contractors did you do business with in 1992?

With _____ in 1992

✱ 5. Including you, how many of each of the following kinds of people worked in the operations of this farm business year-round and during peak season in 1992? *BY "YEAR-ROUND WORKERS," WE MEAN ANYONE WHO WORKED FOR AT LEAST 150 DAYS DURING THAT YEAR.*

	Year-round workers in 1992	Peak season workers in 1992
Workers directly employed by you (not counting your relatives)	_____	_____
Family members paid as employees	_____	_____
Family members who are not paid employees (part owners or other status)	_____	_____
Workers who are employees of a farm labor contractor (not your employees)	_____	_____
Workers who are employees of a custom harvesting or management service company (not your employees)	_____	_____
People who work directly for you as independent contractors, not as employees	_____	_____
	==========	==========
Total number of different people working	_____	_____

6. How many different people were on your own farm business payroll (as your employees) at any time in 1992?

_____ different people on at least one payroll in 1992.

* 7. What are the main crops or products (in terms of revenue, not acreage), produced by this farm business? *If one crop is clearly the main one, simply check that one. Otherwise indicate up to three by placing a "1" next to the one that brings in the most dollar sales, a "2" beside the one of the next greatest value, and "3" beside the third.*

_____	Dairy products	_____	Grapes	_____	Vegetables
_____	Poultry and eggs	_____	Nuts	_____	Grain(s)
_____	Other livestock and animal products	_____	Citrus fruits	_____	Other edible field crops
_____	Ornamentals	_____	Other tree fruit	_____	Non-edible field crops *(SPECIFY: _____)*
_____	Other nursery products	_____	All other fruit	_____	Other crop *(SPECIFY: _____)*

IMPORTANT

Many of the following questions ask about "production workers." If practices vary from crop to crop, please answer about production workers who work on your main crop -- the one bringing in the greatest revenue.

By "production workers," we mean non-supervisory employees of your farm business, including:

- people working in the field or in packing sheds
- mechanics working with machines used in producing crops
- other people working directly with soil, plants, livestock, crops, or farm equipment

Please do NOT include managers, supervisors, and people in this business who do NOT work in production operations-- like office workers.

8. A. How many different times, if any, did you place a job order with the EDD Employment Service during 1992?

[1] ☐ None, placed no job orders with EDD

[2] ☐ One job order

[3] ☐ Two or more job orders *(PLEASE GIVE ACTUAL NUMBER: _____)*

IF NONE, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 9 BELOW.

B. *IF YOU PLACED ANY JOB ORDERS WITH EDD EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS, PLEASE ANSWER:*

Taking everything into consideration, how satisfied were you usually with the response from EDD staff?

[1] ☐ Very satisfied

[2] ☐ Basically satisfied

[3] ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied

[4] ☐ Very dissatisfied

✱ 9. Please use this space to offer any suggestions you can on ways the Employment Development Department could be more helpful to farm employers like you who are trying to recruit staff. This can include either changes, additions, or both. *If you need more space, please continue on page 8 or on a blank sheet of paper.*

[1] ☐ Completely satisfied, have no suggestions.

10. When you're hiring for a production job in your farm business and trying to decide whether someone has the qualifications you want, to what extent do you usually use information from each of the following sources ?

		Use information from this source --			
		A lot	Some	A little	Not at all
A.	Written application form	[1] ☐	[2] ☐	[3] ☐	[4] ☐
B.	A written test or demonstration of skills or knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐
C.	Short-term trial basis (less than a day) or a practical test (performing a job task) before actually hiring the person	☐	☐	☐	☐
D.	Probationary period (more than a day)	☐	☐	☐	☐
E.	Interview with the worker	☐	☐	☐	☐
F.	Reference from previous employer	☐	☐	☐	☐
G.	Comments made by your foreman or another employee who knows the worker	☐	☐	☐	☐
H.	Medical examination	☐	☐	☐	☐

✱ 11. If a service were available to provide a free, objective assessment of applicant skills and knowledge, how often do you think you would use this service when hiring people for production jobs?

[1] ☐ Almost every time [2] ☐ More than half the time [3] ☐ Less than half the time [4] ☐ Never

12. Please answer the following questions about all the production workers whom you employed during your period of peak activity in 1992:

A. What language do most of the production workers in this farm business speak on the job? *PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER.*

[1] ☐ English [2] ☐ Hmong [3] ☐ Lao [4] ☐ Mixtec [5] ☐ Spanish [6] ☐ Tagalog

[7] ☐ Another language *(PLEASE SPECIFY: _____)*

B. Do you speak this language (the one checked in A above)?

[1] ☐ Yes, speak it fluently ▼

[2] ☐ Speak well enough to communicate needed instructions ▼

[3] ☐ Some, but not enough to talk adequately with workers ▼

[4] ☐ No, can't speak it at all ▼

IF YOU SPEAK WELL ENOUGH TO GIVE NECESSARY INSTRUCTIONS, SKIP TO Q 13.

C. How do you communicate the necessary instructions to employees who don't speak your language -- who tells them what they need to know?

[1] ☐ Hired foreman or crew boss tells them

[2] ☐ Non-supervisory worker tells them

[3] ☐ A member of my family tells them

[4] ☐ Someone else tells them *(PLEASE SPECIFY: _____)*

13. A. Did a union ever have certification to represent any of your production employees?

[1] ☐ Yes, in 1992 ▼

[2] ☐ Yes, and the last year that was true was *(PLEASE SPECIFY: 19____)* ▼

[3] ☐ No, never ▼

IF UNION DID NOT HAVE CERTIFICATION IN 1992, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 14.

B. *IF YES, IN 1992*: About what percentage of your non-supervisory production employees were represented by this union during the peak season in 1992?

About _____%

14. About how much was your total gross payroll for all directly hired employees in the calendar year 1992 -- before taxes and other deductions? *Please do NOT include employer taxes, insurance and the like.*

[1] ☐ Less than $2,000	[5] ☐ $100,000 - $249,999
[2] ☐ $2,000 - $19,999	[6] ☐ $250,000 - $499,999
[3] ☐ $20,000 - $49,999	[7] ☐ $500,000 - $999,999
[4] ☐ $50,000 - $99,999	[8] ☐ $1,000,000 or more

15. Some farm businesses offer employee bonuses or additional pay based on incentives such as the quality of product harvested, absence of disease in livestock, accident-free months, etc. Not counting piece rates, can any of your production workers earn any other kind of "incentive pay"?

[1] ☐ Yes, some can [2] ☐ No, none can

16. A. Do all hourly production employees working in the same type of job (on the same crop or product) get the same hourly rate of pay?

[1] ☐ Yes, all the same rate → *IF YES, PLEASE SKIP TO Q17.*

[2] ☐ No, some get more than others

B. On what basis are different hourly rates paid? *CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.*

[1] ☐ Length of employment

[1] ☐ Evaluation of the person's job performance

[1] ☐ Time of day (which shift) the person works

[1] ☐ Time of year

[1] ☐ Other working conditions *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____ *)*

[1] ☐ Some other basis *(PLEASE DESCRIBE:* _____

_____ *)*

17. Below is a list of benefits -- not required by law -- some businesses provide for employees.

A. For each kind, please check one of the first three boxes showing how many -- if any -- of your year-round production employees receive that benefit.

B. Check one of the second set of boxes showing how many of your seasonal production employees receive the same benefit.

Number of employees receiving this benefit

	A. Year-round employees			B. Seasonal employees		
	All or most	Some	None	All or most	Some	None
Health insurance	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
Vacation pay	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paid sick leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rent-free or subsidized housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Farm products (e.g., milk, fruit)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other benefits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

* 18. How is this farm business officially organized?

1 ☐ Sole proprietorship 2 ☐ Family partnership 3 ☐ Other partnership 4 ☐ Corporation

* 19. What is the total acreage operated by this farm business?

1 ☐ Less than 50 acres
2 ☐ 50 - 199 acres
3 ☐ 200 - 499 acres
4 ☐ 500 - 999 acres
5 ☐ 1,000 - 1,999 acres
6 ☐ 2,000 - 4,999 acres
7 ☐ 5,000 - 9,999 acres
8 ☐ 10,000 - 49,999 acres
9 ☐ 50,000 acres or larger

* 20. In how many different counties in California does this farm business grow or produce crops?

1 ☐ One county

Which county is that?

_____ County

2 ☐ Two or more counties *(PLEASE GIVE NUMBER:* _____ counties*)*

Thinking strictly in terms of the dollar value of what this farm business produces (rather than the acreage involved), in which county do you produce most?

In _____ County

✱ 21. A. What was the total value of all crop and livestock sales produced in this farm business in 1992? *CHECK ONE ANSWER IN FIRST COLUMN.*

B. And what was the total value of sales of your main crop or product (the one you identified as number 1 in Question 7)? *CHECK IN SECOND COLUMN.*

	A. Total value of all sales	B. Total value of main crop or product
Less than $40,000	1 ☐	1 ☐
$40,000 - $99,999	2 ☐	2 ☐
$100,000 - $249,999	3 ☐	3 ☐
$250,000 - $499,999	4 ☐	4 ☐
$500,000 - $999,999	5 ☐	5 ☐
$1,000,000 - $4,999,999	6 ☐	6 ☐
$5,000,000 or more	7 ☐	7 ☐

When you finish filling out the questionnaire, please mail it (and the pink form) back in the enclosed postage-paid envelope as soon as possible.

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP

Appendix 3
Comments From Non-Participants

Refused (07)

1. Remove me from your list. I only have 1.3 acres, including my residence.

2. We don't care to participate.

3. Thanks, but no thanks. I don't fill out questionnaires.

4. I'm very small. Any information I have would be of little help. Thank you.

5. I received your farming activities questionnaire. I will not participate in the survey. Please do not send any follow-up letters. None will be answered. Since the proliferation of the computer, I have been inundated with government surveys. It's "raw data mania" out here in the bush these days. therefore, I have established a firm policy – No law requirement, no questions answered. Additionally, I'm old enough to know there is no such word as, "Confidential" regarding any information handled by others. I have taken time to write this reply because your letter was courteous, and your questionnaire probably worthwhile. Unfortunately, this means of gathering information has been grossly abused by all levels of government with their vast array of agencies. Very respectfully,...

6. Gentlemen, Please remove me from your mailing list. I'm 85 years old & not a farm operator. Thank you for your attention to my request. Signed

7. Your questionnaire is directed towards farming. Our operation is cow/calf and we do not have the considerations involved here.

8. This is a family cow & calf operation, didn't know how to answer all your questions.

9. I'm calling to tell you why I'm not going to return it. First of all, you're right. It's too long. Even the short version is too long and 90% of this doesn't pertain to us. My business is cattle & horses. There's a big difference between cattle & traditional farm crops. We don't have a big peak time of year. We grow a bit of hay, but one person can do that.

10. No!! Response - But thank you for thinking of us.

11. Instead of me putting this right in "file 13," I thought I'd call to tell you I'm not going to do it. It's a matter of time, see I'm semi-retired and I know that doesn't make much sense, but I just don't have the time.

12. We are the property's owner, but not own chickens, just raise them. We made contract with egg company. Thank you!

13. I have 5 cattle on a small ranch and one employee. Have had only him in the last 30 years. Boys in a rented house on the place helps me.

14. We are not a farm business. We have a little horse ranch, but we don't have any employees.

15. This is not farming operation.

16. This is a cotton gin. It is a Calif. Corp. not a farm.

17. Going out of Business. My time is being stretched thin by my commitments to closing the farm.

18. What part of no NO don't you understand

19. Called...Sorry, don't have time.

20. Doesn't apply.

21. Not interested.

22. No thank you.

23. What is this for? Jesus, I look at this thing and have way too much paperwork. In order for us to do this, it would probably take 4-5 hours for one of our employees to complete. The single greatest problem we have is paperwork & so what if you do evaluate it? We're pissed off. You people can go ahead and....I'm furious. It's just going to cause more paperwork and it's used against the farmer. It's just a load of crap; key hindrance to employment & really, the reason you folks have no clue as to what's going on on the farm is that you never go out to the farms. The University professor should just go out for 3 months on to the farms & work with the payroll people. The University is the most inefficient business in the world. Blatant, incompetence & lack of responsibility. Maybe you should turn to Rush Limbaugh, you know he's right. People who work in this world are just fed up. I'm just furious. I don't feel that we get back any of this stuff. Get farmers and ask how many of them actually use things from the University & you'd come out it's maybe 1 in 100.

24. Pest control company. Takes more time than we have & we don't fill anything that's not mandated.

Ineligible (11)

1. Concerning the census, my ranch is a ranch facility for breeding Thorough Breeds. Prior to my Chapter 11 filing in July of 1992, I had one employee. Due to my current position I was forced to let him go. Presently my grandchildren assist me with the care & up keep of my horses and their surrounding area. If in the future my position should improve and I could hire someone, I would advertise and have a lengthy interview the applicant to ensure they know horses and work well with animals. I regret that I can not be of more assistance, however, most of your questions appear to pertain specifically to farming.

2. Please be informed that this company is included with .....(name of company).

No Longer In Business (12)

1. I'd be happy to speak w/you but we just received some papers from the dept. of Agriculture & we don't do this kind of business anymore. Used to do cattle and had

40 acres of an olive vineyard but husband's deceased now & they no longer have a business. Records must be very old and out of date.

2. No longer in business.

3. This property is located in Arizona and for the past 2 years, due to heavy frost, there has been no activity at all. It is Jojoba beans & will probably be completely abandoned.

4. I have retired and I am not up to date on the farming.

5. No longer in business. Please remove my name from your mailing list.

6. I am no longer farming.

7. No longer farming.

8. No longer in operation.

9. Do not farm anymore. Did not own any farmland; rented land only up to 1989.

10. This has not operated as a business for over 7 years. The land, a very small acreage, has been incorporated into the city and now is nothing more than an oversize residential lot.

11. Retired - no longer in business.

12. This farming operation no longer exists.

13 This business has not been in operation for the last 5 years.

14. Retired!

15. No longer farming.

16. I have retired from this business.

17. This farming operation doesn't exist as of 2-1-92.

18. This farm is no longer operating as a farm.

19. Farm is no longer in business. It was no longer making money.

20. Deceased. This land has not been operated as a farm for a number of years. The land will be sold in near future.

21. We are no longer farming.

22. No longer in business. Partnership dissolved after 1992 spring berry crop.

23. This company is no longer active in farming.

24. Company is out of business.

25. Until approximately seven years ago, we operated a ranch that had a total of + 1700 acres of land used for grain, cattle, poultry and a hatching egg operation. My Dad retired, my brother went to Nevada and I entered the Commercial Real Estate Market. The profit margin, when there was one, was too small to support all of us.

26. The land has been sold.

27. This business closed in October 1991, due to the extreme cost of Workmen's' Comp and various other cost in California, to say nothing of these continuous forms that were required.

28. No longer in business.

29. To let you know that we are no longer in business.

30. Farm no longer operates in California as of mid-1991, due to rental regulatory and employee related costs.

31. Never a farm; no longer in business anyway.

32. No longer engaged in farming.

No Longer Operates This Business and New Operator Unknown (13)

1. Retired in 1992.

2. I do not operate, and new operator unknown.

3. This farm is currently being rented out. It had only one crop of wheat in 1992 and the family did all the work except for harvesting wheat, which was done by a contractor.

4. Farm sold & new operator unknown.

5. New operator unknown.

6. Neither own nor operate farm business.

7. Business has been sold and is no longer in operation by us.

8. I no longer operate, and new operator unknown.

9. I have no responsibility and I do not know who is farming it now.

10. I got frustrated when my employees had more net income than I. We sold our dairy business in 1991.

11. I have retired and lease the land to another. I raised almonds. They were removed and land is in raw crops.

12. Sold thoroughbred ranch in 1989 and have never planted any crops.

13. We are no longer farming.

14. Ceased operating 4/1/91.

Unable to Participate (14)

1. Due to stroke, I am unable to respond.

Neither Own Nor Operate A Farm Business (15)

1. This does not apply.
2. Land is leased out. Do not have labor.
3. We are not a farming company. All property is leased out.
4. I don't own a farm. Have a pesticide dealer's license and am designated pesticide agent. No dealings with the EDD, and that he has 1/2 FTE employee.
5. This is not a farm business. I am a farm labor contractor who does planting & harvesting for other farms. I own no farm, acreage, etc. I called your number & they said I would not have to fill out the survey.
6. The questions do not apply. We are a hunting ranch that raises game & maintains the game habitat. Receive no income from the property.
7. Not a farm. An "Association (non-profit)" that maintains a small ditch for irrigation.
8. Our land is leased out, any cost or income of crops not known. This is cash rent.
9. Does lawn maintenance only, no farm work.
10. I don't have a farm. I am a commercial prune harvester.
11. We just took control over the ranch in the last 12 months and do no farming or ranching ourselves. We lease out the acreage to tenants, and have no employees.
12. No farm business here.
13. I am an agriculture management consultant & labor contractor. I do not operate a farm.
14. The questionnaire does not apply because we are a farm labor contractor.
15. Is commercial packers.
16. This is not a farm.
17. Please note - We are not in the farming business. We are in the walnut processing business.
18. We're a public agency (government). Citrus growers: Collect tissue samples (leaves); submit to agency owned lab; test for Tristeza Virus; eradicated citrus if virus is

detected. Source of funds: Special tax assessment.

19. Pursuant to our telephone conversation this is to confirm the following: Manage absentee owners' citrus properties; these properties do not use any labor; labor is supplied indirectly by **. Farm labor contractor, not a farm business.

20. Do not operate any farms.

21. Please note: This is not a farm business. We are a wholesale distributor.

22. Please find enclosed the short version of the questionnaire you have requested us to fill out. I do not believe it is relevant to our business because we are strictly a Date Packing Co. - no farming involved. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me.

23. We provide all field labor for another company - owned by same people. Farm labor contractor.

24. We no longer farm. We are commercial packers.

25. We are responding to the questionnaire sent by your office. At this time, we wish to notify you that we are strictly a contract grower operation, therefore the questions, do not apply to our type of agricultural operation. Please amend your records accordingly. If you wish more information, do not hesitate to call.

26. We are a labor contractor. We do not run a farming operation.

27. A processing plant for cherries. We bring in our fruit from Washington & Oregon in SO2 solution for our use. We have no farms or any related services.

28. We are not a farm but a custom harvester.

29. We are a processor; only of lettuce and onions. We don't farm in any way. Please let us know if there is any other way we can help.

30. This is not a farm business. He is a labor contractor.

31. We are processing plant only. We buy our product from a variety of growers. Per our conversation on 3/18/93, we do not fall into the proper classification for this survey.

32. We are a cooler and shipper. We are not involved in farming operations.

33. We are a farm labor contractor.

Appendix 4

Respondent Suggestions to EDD

(Questionnaire item #20)

1. I have no sense of the type of worker that would be referred. Hiring can be a major business risk. Are people at EDD (prejudice, I know) more likely to file claims against business? Employers are very wary !

2. Past experience with EDD referrals have produced workers who would obviously prefer not to be working, but are forced into it. We do not need this type of employee.

3. Don't plan to use it - my other strategies are more effective because they rely on long term relationships.

4. I've found from past experiences that none of these people want to do farm labor.

5. Improve quality of applicants - Better knowledge of what applicant looking for farm job can do, rates of pay, desires, driving record availability, etc.

6. Send people who qualify for the type of work requested, not just someone who says "I've done this kind of work."

7. EDD is to far removed from my area to be responsive. People who sign up at EDD don't want to travel 20-30 miles for 4-5 days of work.

8. We use to phone 6:00 a.m. - 6:30 a.m. for workers. Now we go through two to three operators after 8:00 a.m. to ask for workers.

9. They need to screen people more to make sure they do have the qualifications needed for the job.

10. EDD staff seemed very helpful, but people that were sent out were so far away from what we wanted, it was sad. We think EDD is so wanting to place people that they aren't trying to truly match people with jobs. Now EDD is the last place we call when needing someone. We only call if we are really desperate.

11. Not following directions given on Job Order as to scheduling applicants - not matching applicants to the job.

12. Not satisfied-Office sent injured worker who is suing for "disability" after only 4 days employment - for previous injury-then-The office does not retain their records so can't verify "previous injury." And insurance company will not answer my phone calls or pay any attention to written responses to his lawyer.

13. The only people that go to EDD looking for a job are those that are unqualified or problem drinkers. We have to be very desperate for a working man before we call EDD.

14. In the past, I work people from Employment Service and they were trouble make.

15. Wish they had on file someone w/specific training. We are almond harvesters and it is detailed tractor work. EDD is very good at assisting us w/workers.

16. I do not intend to use EDD in future because of complex and time consuming payroll

reporting requirements. Contract labor is much simpler and cheaper.

17. Reduce paperwork and bureaucracy.

18. Form districts in different areas, thus transportation is less a problem.

19. After several bad experiences many years ago, I never used them again.

20. I will never use the EDD — my experience has been that they feel that the employer is always wrong!!!

21. I have a problem where workers complete work with us, file as unemployed, and then go to Mexico for 3 or 4 months while collecting unemployment.

22. In the past, we have used EDD on a number of occasions to locate employees. The workers sent to us, for the most, were lazy time punchers. We find that most of the unemployed farm workers don't care about anything except receiving benefits. Most of our employees were referred to us by our foreman. Maybe you can show these people in the future that you need to give an employer an honest days work.

23. A possible system that we can call or write concerning: a) fraudulent health claims; b) fraudulent unemployment claims. We experience workers that want more than the system allows.

24. Send out people that are wanting to work and are qualified.

25. Could hire helpful, friendly people who try to help if you call w/questions.

26. I have not used them in many years, because they only sent out drunks or undesirable people.

27. Go back to bracero program.

28. They should always have to show up to collect unemployment check so that they don't go to Mexico for 3 months and come back to a windfall of money. Some of the truck drivers, plant workers, seasonal workers, etc., think it's funny! They make good money 8 months out of the year & get 4 months paid vacation.

29. Send qualified people out for the job, not just anybody!

30. They have an attitude problem.

31. Never have had any quality workers come through EDD!!! Don't send workers who cannot meet I-9 requirements (don't have ID).

32. Supply what we request. Individuals with the qualifications that we require.

33. Not familiar with EDD.

34. The EDD is very slow to send out referrals & even slower to follow-up to see if any of those referred actually showed up for a interview. I have often waited one week or more with no response from EDD & had to call them to see if they had forgotten about me or if there was a problem w/the order.

35. I hate doing these kinds of surveys (in case anyone cares!). Better screening methods of potential employees.

36. Get more qualified persons!

37. Reduce the paperwork.

38. As presently constituted EDD are a hazard and of no value except to collect funds. Totally inconsistent in establishing rates from one employer to another.

39. Lower benefits; many men don't want a job because the benefits they collect are too attractive at EDD.

40. Do not use EDD services.

41. We used the service before, we had bad luck. It seems their attention is to help collect unemployment $ and not job placement.

42. Need workers now & then. Yet can't get, as there is too much paper work from them taking to long. No time for work on the job!

43. When hired person from EDD quits, EDD should find out why person quit. This is why I quit hiring from EDD.

44. Give us information on what is available. I would like to be able to call EDD and ask for approved workers. I heard this is how it's done in Washington (state).

45. They don't seem to understand what type of workers you are looking for or they are not available.

46. Cash unemployment pay plus the welfare benefit are too high. We cannot give the medical coverage that people can get on welfare.

47. The EED is a tax sucking agency of the state that is set up to reward workers for not working and provides jobs for government workers who provide no productivity to the economy of California.

48. Would suggest that they screen those individuals referred more carefully. Perhaps brief them on dress and manners.

49. Previous hires from EDD included people with pre-existing health conditions or work injuries. It is difficult to screen for this problem.

50. Many of the people we wanted to hire, really did not want to work. They did not last very long if they did accept the job.

51. Please send out workers who speak English only.

52. Put the burden of unemployment insurance on someone else. I pay decent wages to employees when they are working for me. Why do I have to make unemployment contributions as well? Someone else should be responsible to pay unemployment insurance. I'm better off to never hire these people, then I won't be charged for their unemployment. This system stinks!

53. GET RID OF EDD.

54. Show farmers which workers have continually been on and out of jobs just to collect unemployment. This will save them the hassle of going through so many workers. It will also save them money & the EDD paperwork.

55. Will not send out temp workers.

56. Basic distrust of Govt. Agencies. No credibility from the way govt. works (lazy - inefficient). Who would like to employ people who they recommend?

57. I wouldn't waste my time.

58. EDD should not send people other than farm workers to farms. My experience has been that people recruited through EDD are really not interested in working.

59. Let kids work, get them off the streets. Now I am nervous hiring kids because of the labor laws!

60. We have never found any help. Workers through them (EDD) seem too familiar with industrial claims, unemployment, etc., and don't want to work!

61. Never had need to use EDD.

62. Bad experience in 10/90, so do not call. Last one was a "fraud" disability. Dissatisfied w/staff in 90 & 91.

63. We use the same contractor every year.

64. They should screen the people more before sending them out especially when you ask them to. Also these stupid forms you have to fill out when somebody wants unemployment benefits; they can lie on them and the EDD believes them and gives them the money. This is not right.

65. We have very low turnover and don't use the EDD.

66. At this time, we don't need the EDD.

67. Insure that more people actually want to work when they come out. Also what they are sent out for, they can do.

68. In the past, anyone from EDD was been worthless!

69. Never used the department for employees.

70. Have no contact with local EDD office.

71. Need people who want to work - not just trying to get turned down for the job. Need better interviews by EDD.

72. Completely dissatisfied; have too many suggestions.

73. We don't know how to tell a phony social security card and Green card from an authentic one.

74. Having to make payroll deposits at irregular intervals. I have a tough time keeping it straight.

75. The employees from EDD are not reliable. They work a few days & quit for various reasons (no transportation, no baby-sitter, go to another job). We have never found a good employee from EDD. Evidently they receive unemployment too early or are lazy or go to welfare and don't have to look for job.

76. The people hired all quit within one week.

77. People don't want to work anymore because they can sit at home and draw unemployment and welfare and make more money having babies than they can working. We need to make people work for what they get. Quit the giveaway programs. You have a hard job because people don't want to work.

78. Cancel the Employment Development Department, as it relates to Agriculture.

79. If they don't want to work, don't send the workers to us and don't give them anymore unemployment.

80. When placing job ads and experience is requested, EDD has often sent inexperienced or other-experienced applicants.

81. We use the EDD to recall our workers who are receiving unemployment benefits because ours is a seasonal job. More companies should use this method. It is very satisfactory.

82. More specific information on applicant's experience.

83. Completely dissatisfied with EDD job referral service - I will not use it again. Many employees were able to continue collecting U.I. benefits even through work was available.

84. There is no shortage yet, have not needed EDD. We anticipate a shortage soon.

85. In the past, I have found EDD referred workers to not have much incentive to work.

86. Never used EDD for recruiting.

87. Generally, we find that for farm labor, EDD only seems to serve those people who don't want to work.

88. Not used.

89. Most people referred were not telling truth about qualifications; should be screened better.

90. Screening referrals as to ability and willingness to perform work.

91. I will not deal with an organization that treats me like a criminal. EDD employees need an attitude change and serve the employers as well as employees. I don't expect it to happen until the negative individuals are fired and you won't do that!

92. In the past when we asked for job applicants, the people sent were worthless! We haven't used the EED for recruiting for 15 or more years.

93. Do not use.

94. Quality of people from EDD is substandard.

95. Have not used in many years.

96. Not used.

97. They have no idea how to evaluate a prospective employee. When called, they send anybody.

98. Should screen the people they refer. Most of the workers they send are not qualified for the job.

99. No problem with EDD. Our experience with people who come to us from EDD really don't want to work. They come just to qualify for their unemployment requirements.

100. Most people that come from EDD - First question is how much is pay and how long is work? When they find out that work is 2 to 4 weeks and 4.50/hr - they would rather stay on UI. Get something for nothing. Reduce payments and they will look for work.

101. Only one person showed up to interview for the position (grader/driver). He was taken out to the grader and asked to drive it. He had obviously never been on one in his life.

102. Less paperwork; less requirements for hiring (I.D. etc.).

103. Stay out of our business - Reduce paper work and conform more with Federal Reporting! I keep my laborers at a minimum to reduce the paper work involved and the cost down.

104. Hold EDD workers absolutely responsible for their actions. Fire the incompetents. Fire their managers. With the layoff of any employee, request an evaluation from previous employers. Make that grade point average available to prospective new employers.

105. Could screen applicants better.

106. I have never seen good quality candidates come from EDD.

107. Need to move faster. By the time they send people out it's too late, as we have extremely perishable crops!! The type of people responding don't want to work in the field harvesting.

108. Have better people that want to work!

109. Use stronger methods to get unemployed workers who are receiving benefits to return to work promptly.

110. Do not use EDD services.

111. I didn't even think about using the EDD to recruit workers. I got all I wanted by myself.

112. Eliminate it. It doesn't develop employment, it is just a money hole.

113. Most referrals did not want to work so I gave up. Have not used them in years.

114. I wouldn't hire from EDD. That means that the employee uses EDD.

115. Different programs from the past just don't work. The only time people come by looking for work is when their unemployment benefits run out or if they're hungry.

116. Discontinue EDD and send refund check to the taxpayer.

117. Have had more than adequate supply of production employees for several years. Basically use own crew and able to provide seasonal workers with relatively long periods of work by season (pruning, thinning, harvest) than many smaller farmers. Also pay slightly above going wage rate in area.

118. By checking qualifications and making sure applicant meets criteria for employment.

119. Completely NOT satisfied.

120. People looking for jobs with Employment Development Dept. do not want field work.

121. EDD office is very bad for recruit farm workers.

122. Make sure they really want to work.

123. In the past I have contacted EDD and requested workers with special skills, drive tractor and able to disc, spray, etc. People referred workers to me who did not understand or have experience in working with tractor to disc etc.

124. A certified labor bank - showing reliability, performance and honesty & training of applicants. (I don't think this could be done without jeopardizing certain rights.)

125. My experienced workers who receive unemployment do not come back when I have work for them as long as they continue to get unemployment checks.

126. Don't use

127. We find it easier to hire day laborers that are known to us personally. Do not find a need for EDD at this time in our operation.

128. That they make certain the people they send over are actually willing to work.

129. Most field workers referred were very poor workers. Some wanted cash under the table to keep their benefits.

130. Not responsive to our needs. Requires too much lead time to find an employee. When we have an opening, we need to fill that job within hours , not days.

131. Careful screening of employees that want to work.

132. EDD not needed.

133. Never used EDD Employment Service. Operation is small and all harvest labor is provided by Farm Labor Contractor. We directly hire only 1 (student) to irrigate during peek season.

134. Never yet had anyone from the EDD satisfactory in any way.

135. We did not use EDD for recruitment & had no need to.

136. Not to get involved.

137. We don't recruit.

138. My suggestions for change have to be brought to the attention of some other governing authority.

139. I need the people want work, not the one sit along.

140. More careful screening of potential job applicants to determine actual skills.

141. We do not use EDD. We tried them but too much hassle. They would send 30-40 people to fill one position. We have plenty of walk ins.

142. Don't need EDD in my business.

143. Eliminate people who don't really want to work or work just enough to qualify for unemployment.

144. None - workman's comp expense too great to allow us to hire employees.

145. Better screening of people sent to farms.

146. EDD drug screening and skill evaluation.