

FARMER SPONSORED LABOR IN SOUTHERN IDAHO 1943

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Through 1942 and the spring of 1943, The Amalgamated Sugar Company recruited and sponsored seasonal farm labor for South Central Idaho. Camps were established in various areas and feeding facilities were set up in these camps, through the help of the County Labor Advisory Board in the six counties in South Central Idaho and the Farm Security Administration,

This program was exceedingly expensive for the company and full farmer cooperation was not fully evident because they had no personal financial responsibility in obtaining of this labor.

In June of 1943, a meeting was held by the County Agricultural Advisory Committee, the War Food Administration and the State Extension Service. It was proposed that a new committee be set up to handle the labor relations with the War Food Administration and the State Extension Service. Under the new set up, the Amalgamated Sugar Company would no longer be the sole sponsor of labor brought into this area. However, it might participate in helping defray expenses and contribute like any other user of labor.

Three things were in mind under this new set up.--First, each individual farmer in the area would be responsible for the handling and harvesting of his own crops in the fall,-- whether it be beans, potatoes or sugar beets. Second, that each farmer would have a financial obligation which would tend to utilize this type of labor to the fullest extent and third, because of his responsibility to this labor, records of their employment could more efficiently be handled.

Five counties out of six in Southern Idaho subscribed to this type of sponsoring agricultural field labor. Committees were set up in each county and incorporated under the name of the County Farm Labor Sponsoring Association.

Considerable discussion was involved in these setups and especially the fee that each farmer would have to pay to the Association for the use of this labor and the farmers responsibility to the War Food Administration when this labor was brought in. It was finally decided that each farmer would pay \$.05 per acre for all farm land owned by him to defray the expenses of this sponsorship. Further assessments could be assessed if the Association went in the "red" because of the 75% work clause in the contract of the War Food Administration on sponsored labor.

After this initial setup, Association contracts were entered into with the War Food Administration for the bringing in

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of Mexican Nationalists, Jamaicans and Japanese evacuees. Nine camps were established and the restaurant facilities bought from The Amalgamated Sugar Company by the War Food Administration in its entirety. These nine camps were established in vacant buildings in small towns, at the county fairgrounds, abandoned school houses, abandoned CCC Camps, CCC Camps that had been moved to more strategic areas in the agricultural districts and one abandoned college building. The use of fairgrounds and vacant buildings in small towns proved very satisfactory. The heating apparatus, hot water showers and good restaurant facilities were established and the labor as a whole was contented.

After the establishment of these camps, the men were then farmed out to farm labor homes if the farmers and laborers agreed to that particular place. This was encouraged so as to lessen the burden of transportation in the more isolated camps.

The contract that each farmer signed is well illustrated by an example from the Twin Falls County Labor Sponsoring Association which follows:

ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT
OF TWIN FALLS COUNTY FARM LABOR SPONSORING ASSOCIATION

Believing that there is and probably will continue to be a shortage of farm labor required for the harvesting of this season's crops in Twin Falls County, Idaho, we, the undersigned parties to this Memorandum of Membership Agreement and its counterparts, subscribing to the theory that a cooperative organization can best execute the requirements necessary to the recruiting and importation of farm labor, herein set forth the conditions and qualifications necessary for membership in such an association, and agree as follows:

1. The name of this organization shall be: "TWIN FALLS COUNTY FARM LABOR SPONSORING ASSOCIATION."

2. The purposes of this Association are to cooperate with the War Food Administration, the United States Employment Service, the Extension Service, and the Twin Falls County Farm Labor Committee in recruiting and importing and placement of farm labor during the balance of the year 1943.

3. The Directors of this Association shall be:

Carl Leonard	Filer, Idaho;
J. D. Claiborn	Kimberly, Idaho;
Harold Brown	Filer, Idaho
John Savage	Murtaugh, Idaho;
Harold Harvey	Buhl, Idaho;
Walter Reese	Castleford, Idaho; and
C. D. Requa	Twin Falls, Idaho;

and the officers of this Association shall be;

Carl Leonard	Chairman
J. D. Claiborn	Vice-Chairman
Harold Brown	Secretary-Treasurer

Such officers shall constitute an Executive Committee for the transaction of any and all business necessary to the Labor Procurement Program under the direction of the Directors of this Association. Such Executive Committee may incur reasonable and necessary obligations in the name of the Association, may pay and discharge the same from available funds of the Association, and may hire an Acting Secretary to keep records and perform such other clerical duties as may be necessary to the conduct of the Association business.

4. The Chairman and/or the Executive Committee are empowered to sign a contract with the War Food Administration for the importation of such farm labor as may be deemed necessary. The Board of Directors may adopt such By-laws as may be deemed necessary for the conduct of Committee Business.

5. It is specifically agreed that a membership fee shall be paid by each member at the time of signing this Agreement in the amount of five cents (5¢) per acre on all land farmed by such signer as owner-operator or as tenant-operator and that further assessments may be levied in such amounts by the Executive Committee as are found absolutely necessary to meet unforeseen penalties on labor contract minimum time guarantees.

6. The obligations and liabilities of this Association shall be borne by the members; each member to be responsible for and to pay his pro rata share of such obligations and liabilities; such pro rata share to be determined on the basis of the ratio between each member's acreage and the aggregate acreage of all members.

7. As between members of this Association and non-members, the members of the Association shall have prior rights to employment of the laborers furnished by the War Food Administration.

8. This Association shall cease December 31, 1943.

9. It is understood that several of these Written Agreements, identical in form and substance, are being circulated and signed and in that regard it is agreed that each separate Agreement shall be regarded as a counterpart and that all said counterparts shall constitute the whole or entire Agreement covering the subject matter hereof.

10. It is understood that the acreage set opposite each signature hereto shall be the basis for determining each signer's contribution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the undersigned has set his hand and the seal on the day set opposite his name;

Signatures	Address	No. of Acres	Date Signed
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The signup on this Agreement was well received by the farmers after meetings were held in each locality and the full

plan explained to the farmers. The only financial participation that The Amalgamated Sugar Company had in this type of sponsorship was that it contributed .05¢ per acre to all beets grown within each county. This was done to give aid to the financial setup of each County Association and to also participate in the handling and the distribution of the labor for the various crops.

After the Association signup, with sufficient acreage, and the labor was brought in by the War Food Administration, a man was employed as bookkeeper for each camp and it was his duty to keep track of the payrolls for the War Food Administration and to collect the 10% or \$1.00 a day to be paid to the foreign governments to be returned to the men upon their return to their countries. Also, deductions were made by these bookkeepers for the board in these camps. After these deductions were made, a payment to the worker was made from the bank account as established by the Association. By this method, each farmer realized his responsibility to the Association in keeping accurate work records and very little difficulty was experienced along this line.

When the peak of harvest labor was reached in Southern Central Idaho area, it was felt at first that there might have been such a demand for this labor that the sugar beet crop would not get its proper share of this labor because of the high prices paid for the picking of potatoes. However, this did not develop and a continuous flow of beets came into the factory and not for one single day was it necessary to put a slice restriction on the factory after it started. It was found out that the farmer sponsor would naturally take his potatoes out first, then go to his beets and then release this labor to his neighbor. No discrimination was shown by the U. S. Employment Service men at the various camps toward any crops. The farmer simply came in and signed up for his labor and received labor according to the position he held on the labor list.

As would be anticipated, some farmers did not sign up with the Association and consequently because of the shortage of non-sponsored labor, these men could not get help until the members were through. After the members were finished, these men were allowed to use sponsored labor, but they had to pay to the Association \$.25 per day per man used.

I am anticipating in another year that approximately 90% of the farmers who need harvest labor in these counties will sign up with the Association. In these counties we are anticipating using this method of sponsorship for spring and summer work in 1944 and the ground work for this type of an organization is now starting to function.