

USE AND ORGANIZATION OF HIGH SCHOOL LABOR IN CENTRAL
UTAH

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Salt Lake and Utah Counties in Central Utah are peculiarly situated in relation to the farm labor problem due to the fact that farm units are small, having a general range of from five to sixty acres per farm, the average being near 30 acres. Because of this small farm ownership and the fact that most farms were operated by families, before our entrance into the war, there was a surplus of farm labor, a condition which did not encourage provision for labor housing or any facilities for the care of migrant labor.

The war with its attendant defense industries, of which there are many in that area, soon drained off all the surplus labor and has taken a heavy toll of the essential farm labor. Defense plant construction offering war time wages has presented the farmer with a serious problem in his effort to secure help to produce the food required to meet war time quotas. Inability to house transient labor in any appreciable amount, forced the use of the only other available local supply -- the high school student.

The problem in Utah County, due to the rural nature of the schools has required less organization because the major portion of students have had some farm experience and consequently fit in to the program with less effort. A few groups of students have been organized to work under the direction of supervisors but generally speaking the grower has supervised his own help.

During the season just past 80 per cent of all thinning, hoeing, topping and loading was done with student labor ranging in age from 14 to 18 years. The extension service in cooperation with the U. S. Employment Service placed a man in each town in the County who acted as employment agent or coordinator during the summer vacation. Wherever possible this man was a teacher who was acquainted with the students. All farmers were directed to his office to secure the help needed. During the beet harvest after the autumn term of school had begun, all requests for help were presented to the high school principal, who recruited from the rank and file of his students. When this procedure failed to secure the amount of help needed, a sugar beet vacation was declared. A two weeks' vacation was the maximum required in any case last season.

Due to the more urban nature of the schools in Salt Lake County, it became necessary to effect an entirely different organization. Students generally being unfamiliar with farm work were unable to do the work required with the amount of

^{1/} Utah-Idaho Sugar Company.

supervision the farmers, in most cases, were able to give. The problem was a knotty one and the need being so acute, it was decided that school superintendents and coordinators be made a part of the County Farm Labor Committee to help work out a satisfactory plan for student use.

The Committee was headed by a capable and influential farmer and was comprised otherwise of the County Agricultural Agent representing the Extension Service, Manager of the Local U. S. Employment Service Office, school representatives from each district involved, and representatives of the Beet Growers Association and the Sugar Company.

A plan evolved which embraced the organizing of students in groups of approximately 20 each to be accompanied by a supervisor whose wages were to be paid by the farmer. Where possible the supervisor was a teacher. Laws were so interpreted that school buses could be used for transporting students to and from the fields, provided all expense involved was paid relieving the school districts of all financial obligation. This was done by the supervisor acting as bus driver and by charging each worker a fifteen cent round trip fare to cover cost of gasoline, oil, etc.

The plan from this point on may be better explained by reading a letter sent to each grower at the beginning of the beet thinning season by the County Agricultural Agent.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
in
AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
STATE OF UTAH

Utah State Agricultural College
U. S. Department of Agriculture
County Commissioners and Farm
Bureaus Cooperating

Extension Service
County Agent Work
401 Federal Building,
Salt Lake City, Utah
May 11, 1943

RE: SUGAR BEET LABOR

To Sugar Beet Growers of Salt Lake County:

In the interest of providing necessary labor to take care of sugar beet thinning and hoeing, a cooperative program has been worked out by the county extension agent, Salt Lake County Farm Labor Committee, the schools, the U. S. Employment Service, Salt Lake Tooele Beet Growers Association and the Sugar Company.

Student workers have enlisted in this work. They will be recruited in crews of from 20 to 24 workers under the supervision of an experienced supervisor. Many of the boys thinned sugar beets last year. The crews will be made available under the following terms:

The student workers are to be paid at the rate of \$8.25 per acre for thinning fields planted with segmented or sheared seed.

The rate of pay for fields planted with common seed will be \$11 per acre.

Each farmer employing a supervised crew will be responsible to pay the wages of the crew supervisor at the rate of \$7.00 per day.

These crews will be available beginning Monday, May 17.

We urge that you immediately notify any one of the following agencies if you desire to arrange for one of those crews:

County Agricultural Agent - telephone 4-2552, Extension 215.
Glenn Johnson of U. S. Employment Service, telephone 3-5735. W. F. Bailey of Granite School District, telephone 6-8618. P. M. Mickelsen of Jordan School District, telephone Midvale 62-J3. West Jordan Sugar Factory, telephone Midvale 400.

Please keep in mind that you cannot expect the immediate placement of a crew. Anticipate your needs three or four days before you want a crew delivered, and we will endeavor to meet your needs.

Mr. Byron Haderlie of the West Jordan Sugar Factory has been named as general supervisor of these supervised crews, and it will be the responsibility of the grower to make **settlement with him** after the completion of the work. Please cooperate with us in this matter so that all labor claims can be promptly settled with the workers. This will avoid misunderstandings.

Yours very truly

(Signed) V. L. Martineau

COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AGENT

VLM:N

An "Application for Sugar Beet Labor" form was used, as follows;

APPLICATION FOR SUGAR BEET LABOR

Place _____

Date _____

I herewith make application for a crew of student workers and their supervisor. It is my understanding that I am to pay for beet thinning work at the rate of;

- \$8.25 per acre for fields planted with segmented seed or sheared seed.
- 11.00 per acre for fields planted with common seed

In addition I am to pay the wages of the crew supervisor at the rate of \$7.00 per day during the time the crew is employed in thinning my fields.

I further agree to make full settlement upon completion of the work on my farm.

(Signed) _____
Grower

(Signed) _____
Supervisor

A record of work done and earnings which was made up in pads and made out in triplicate, one copy being retained by the employer, one by the employee and one by the supervisor was also used.

Name of Employer	Address	Phone
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Name of Employer				O.K.'d by
Date	Type of Work	Rate & Basis of Pay	Units completed	Earnings
_____	_____	_____	_____	Super-visor
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Field No. _____
Signature of Farmer

Signature of Supervisor

This report was filled out for each student at the end of each day by the supervisor and precluded all future argument relative to earnings.

A chart was also furnished each supervisor showing "Rate of Pay for Thinning Sugar Beets Based on Lineal Rods Per Acre" as an aid in calculating earnings.

RATE OF PAY FOR THINNING SUGAR BEETS
BASED ON LINEAL RODS PER ACRE

Rate of Pay

No. Rods	Segmented or Sheared Seed \$8.25 per Acre	Regular Seed \$11.00 per Acre	Explanation
1	.00515	.00687	43560 sq. ft.
2	.01030	.01374	per acre
3	.01545	.02061	
4	.02060	.02748	160 sq. rods
5	.02575	.03435	per acre
6	.03090	.04122	
7	.03605	.04809	1600 Lineal
8	.04120	.05496	Rods per Acre
9	.04635	.06183	Based on 20"
10	.05150	.06870	row.
20	.1030	.1374	
30	.1545	.2061	10-20" Rows
40	.2060	.2748	in one rod
50	.2575	.3435	
60	.3090	.4122	MEASURING STICK
70	.3605	.4809	
80	.4120	.5496	1 stick - 6.6'
90	.4635	.6183	1 " - 6'7"
100	.5150	.6870	2-1/2 - 1 Rod
200	1.030	1.374	
300	1.545	2.061	
400	2.060	2.748	
500	2.575	3.435	
600	3.090	4.122	
700	3.605	4.809	
800	4.12	5.496	
900	4.635	6.183	
1000	5.15	6.870	

A summary of Harvest Work done by students in Salt Lake County reads as follows:

Granite District:

Number of students, 900. Topped and loaded 9013 tons.

Earned ----- \$12,348.00

Jordan District:

Number of students, 1053. Topped and loaded 15,860 tons.

Earned ----- 22,731.00

City Schools:

Number of students, 247. Topped and loaded 1312 tons.

Earned ----- 1,798.00

Total earned by students.----- \$36,877.00