

**MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARMWORKER**

**ENUMERATION PROFILES STUDY**

**ARKANSAS**

**FINAL**

prepared for the

**Migrant Health Program  
Bureau of Primary Health Care  
Health Resources and Services Administration**

by

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## **PREFACE**

The mission of the Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC), Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services is to increase access to comprehensive primary and preventive health care and to improve the health status of under served and vulnerable populations. To achieve this mission the Migrant Health Program (MHP), BPHC provides support to organizations which offer technical assistance to or directly deliver primary health care services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). In order to better plan, develop and evaluate health care service delivery and utilization, information is needed on the numbers and distribution of farmworkers at the national, state, and county levels. Moreover, the legislation which authorizes the Migrant Health Program, Section 330g of the Public Health Service Act, requires that priorities for assistance be assigned to areas where the greatest need exists. Therefore, the MHP periodically seeks to obtain updated information about MSFWs; where they are working and living and what crops are being harvested, in order to more appropriately target limited resources to areas of greatest MSFW need.

These MHP enumeration reports are some of the few sources offering MSFW estimates at the county level. The last time such data was published by the MHP was in March 1990 with "An ATLAS of State Profiles Which Estimate Number of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers and Members of Their Families." This time with the Office of Pesticide Programs, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a funding partner, the MHP awarded a grant to the National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc. (NCFH). The NCFH consequently contracted with Alice C. Larson, Ph.D. of Larson Assistance Services to research and develop state estimates.

In the previous publication "ATLAS of State Profiles" the counting of MSFWs was done on a state-by-state basis which depended on the available data resources within each state, then a consultant was used to validate each state's submission. For this publication, Dr. Larson, assisted by a team of consultants, used a systematic approach to estimate the number of farmworkers included under the MHP definition. This research included the determination of the number of workers needed for specific seasonal hand labor tasks, and the examination of state employment records, local sources of information and large-scale databases (i.e., the National Agricultural Workers Survey of the U.S. Department of Labor, the National Farmworker Database of the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs, the Uniform Data System of the Bureau of Primary Health Care and the Census of Agriculture of the Bureau of the Census and U.S. Department of Agriculture). A major part of this effort involved the review of draft estimates by local and national knowledgeable individuals.

In this document, the MHP presents currently updated MSFW information beginning with ten states: Arkansas, California, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas and Washington. The MHP hopes to continue these collaborative efforts with other federal agencies and organizations in order to update the remaining states impacted and benefiting by the labor of our Nation's farmworkers.

Readers may wish to address questions or comments concerning these state estimates directly to Alice C. Larson, Ph.D., P.O. Box 801, Vashon Island, WA 98070 or via e-mail to [las@wolfenet.com](mailto:las@wolfenet.com). It is our hope and expectation that all federal, state, local public and private entities providing services to MSFWs will use this state and county specific enumeration data to plan, develop and implement improved services to our Nation's farmworkers.

The Migrant Health Program, BPHC gratefully acknowledges the efforts of the many groups across the nation who have made this publication possible. Our thanks not only to those who directly reviewed and commented on the estimates, but to those who participated and assisted along the way.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The research team is extremely grateful to the many people in Arkansas who offered information, data and suggestions that helped make this study possible. In addition, those who took the time to review draft documents offered a major contribution to improving the end result.

Estimating migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their non-farmworker household members is an extremely challenging task. This research has attempted to examine existing data and develop a reasonable approach to the estimation process. The user should carefully consider the description of study parameters to understand what is included or excluded from the final figures and the limitations of the research.

It is hoped this document will be found to be helpful in meeting the need for descriptive information on the migrant and seasonal farmworker population.

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## **DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

The Migrant Health Program of the Bureau of Primary Health Care, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has periodically undertaken an estimation of the population targeted for services by federally funded Migrant Health Centers. The results have helped better plan service utilization including determining if resources are appropriate to the need and identification of unserved areas. Four such studies have previously been undertaken; the last was published in 1990, *The Migrant Health Atlas*.

The Migrant Health Program is updating this information beginning with ten states: Arkansas, California, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas and Washington. Final reports, titled "Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study" (MSFW EPS) were prepared for each target state.

The National Center for Farmworker Health was engaged by the Migrant Health Program to act as its agent in securing, monitoring and finalizing an end product. In July 1998, agreement was reached with Larson Assistance Services to research and develop state estimates. Alice C. Larson, Ph.D., with the assistance of a team of consultants, is responsible for this document containing MSFW estimates for Arkansas.

### **B. STUDY PURPOSE**

The MSFW EPS offers state-based information at the county level for the following three population sub-groups:

- Migrant farmworkers and seasonal farmworkers.
- Non-farmworkers present in the same household as migrant farmworkers and seasonal farmworkers (defined by the term "accompanied").
- Number of people ("children and youth") under age 20 in six age groups.

### **C. DEFINITION**

The MSFW definition used for this study is that of the Migrant Health Program. It

describes a seasonal farmworker as:

"An individual whose principal employment [51% of time] is in agriculture on a seasonal basis, who has been so employed within the last twenty-four months."

A migrant farmworker meets the same definition but "establishes for the purposes of such employment a temporary abode." (*U.S. Code, Public Health Services Act, "Migrant Health"*)

Included in the scope of study are individuals engaged in field and orchard agriculture; packing and sorting procedures in food processing; horticultural specialties (including nursery operations, greenhouse activities and crops grown under cover); and reforestation. Excluded from study are those working with livestock, poultry, and fisheries.

#### **D. LIMITATIONS**

This study is limited in scope in that only secondary source material, including existing database information, and knowledgeable individuals, have been utilized to generate information. This has meant taking reports and databases prepared for other purposes and adjusting them, as possible, for the MSFW EPS. Limited resources and time have prohibited primary research directly with farmworkers.

In addition, by employing only secondary source information, the definition of who is included as a migrant or seasonal farmworker is often tied to the parameters used by the generating source. Wherever possible, screens were used to exclude those not covered by the Migrant Health Program definition.

#### **E. GENERAL PROCESS**

##### **1. Basic Investigation Techniques**

The research conducted within each state had four major phases:

- (1) Basic data gathering and preparation of First Draft Estimate.
- (2) Review by local knowledgeable individuals and revision of First Draft Estimate.
- (3) Completion of Second Draft Estimate and additional review by a wider audience of knowledgeable individuals.
- (4) Revision as necessary and issuance of Final Estimate.

## **2. National Databases**

Prior to completion of any state profile, two national databases were analyzed specifically for this study. They represent the two largest continuous direct surveys of MSFWs in the country as of 1999.

The National Farmworker Database (NFD) of the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs contains information on clients eligible for services at job training programs targeted to MSFWs (Workforce Investment Act – WIA 167 Programs; formerly JTPA 402 Programs). This database, tied to programs throughout the country, contains 65,000 individuals and includes basic demographic, family characteristic and work history information. Figures from 1994 through August 1998 were used for this study and provided national and some state data.

The National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) of the U.S. Department of Labor (coordinated by Aguirre International) is a survey conducted three times annually gathering similar information through random selection of targeted counties, employers and subjects. Demographic, family and work history information is similar to the NFD. Data for a five-year period (1993-97) were used in the MSFW EPS, which included over 11,000 respondents offering national and regional information.

A third national database used to develop factor information was Migrant Health Program statistics prepared annually by each federally funded migrant health center. These gave the number of migrant farmworker and seasonal farmworker patients served. Data for 1996 and 1997, where available, were averaged.

## **3. State Specific Steps**

Work on each target state began with a mass mailing to identified service organizations assisting MSFWs, government agencies involved with agriculture, farm employer and crop commodity groups, special interagency MSFW committees and others. These included: migrant health centers, primary care associations, migrant education programs, migrant head start programs, legal services, job training programs, housing assistance centers, grower associations, extension service and agricultural economics departments of state land grant universities and other agents. State government agencies involved with agriculture, education, employment, forestry, health, labor and welfare were contacted.

Each was sent an introductory letter and questionnaire listing study factors for which information was sought. Those contacted were asked to provide anything they might have directly or list other resource documents or personnel.

Follow-up contacts were made with numerous individuals and internet sites from a variety of programs and agencies (a range of 14-54 for each of the ten target states) looking for state-specific information such as client-related demographics, enrollment data, crop production figures and acreage statistics. Although many different individuals, agencies, organizations and businesses were contacted, the list was in no way exhaustive of all of those involved with agriculture and MSFWs in each state. It is expected most of the key knowledgeable individuals were reached, many of whom were identified by questionnaire respondents.

Once all state specific information was received, factor information was extracted. Sources were compared and analyzed to account for any differences. Results were contrasted against national database information and conclusions drawn regarding the best factor, data range or average to use. Draft estimates and maps were then prepared for review.

#### **4. Review of Draft Estimates**

The Draft One document was sent out for review to knowledgeable individuals in the state who had provided information for preparation of the estimates, assisted in some other manner, or expressed an interest in receiving a copy.

Reviewers were asked to comment on methodological steps, resources utilized and factors employed. If they found something they felt was incorrect, they were requested to offer suggestions for improvement in the form of specific information which could be incorporated into the estimates. Where clarification was needed after receipt of comments, direct conversation or exchange of correspondence were utilized to assure a complete understanding of the issues raised or obtain additional information. Often additional research was necessary to determine the appropriate direction to correct the estimates.

After consideration of all issues raised from a variety of sources, revisions were made as necessary. Draft Two estimates, tables, maps and supporting documents were then prepared and shared with Draft One reviewers as well as other local and national sources. Comments were again incorporated into the Final Report. In all, five people helped review and refine the Arkansas estimates and document.

## **F. ENUMERATION METHODOLOGY**

The four separate industry classifications within the study MSFW definition; field agriculture, nursery/greenhouse – crops grown under cover, food processing, and reforestation; were each addressed differently. An adjustment was made to

final worker estimates to account for duplicate counts within and across counties. Finally, population sub-groups and children's and youth's ages were calculated.

## 1. Field Agriculture

The field agriculture estimate used a "demand for labor" (DFL) process that examines the number of workers needed to perform temporary agricultural tasks, primarily harvesting. The results estimate full-time equivalent (FTE) workers required for the task during the period of peak labor demand. Calculations, prepared for each county, are derived through a formula using four elements:

$$DFL = \frac{A \times H}{W \times S}$$

Where:

A = crop acreage.

H = hours needed to perform a specific task (e.g., harvest) on one acre of the crop.

W = work hours per farmworker per day during maximum activity.

S = season length for peak work activity.

## 2. Nursery/Greenhouse and Crops Grown Under Cover

Nursery/greenhouse workers and those involved in crops grown under cover were more difficult to estimate than workers in field agriculture as many different categories fall within these classifications. This includes: bedding plants, cut flowers, florist greens, floriculture, flower seed crops, foliage plants, greenhouse vegetables, mushroom production, potted flowering plants, sod and vegetable seed crops. Some products are grown in covered structures while others are raised in open acreage. Tasks differ with the type of product and production needs.

For these industry categories, the best resource was found to be direct employment reports. Statewide monthly figures were used to subtract the lowest employment month from the highest month to obtain a rough estimate of "temporary" laborers. Results for a three-year period were averaged to avoid any aberration attributable to a single year. The county proportion of the state acreage and enclosed space total for nursery/greenhouse operations and crops grown under cover was calculated and multiplied by the statewide employment estimate to determine each county's temporary worker share.

### **3. Food Processing**

Those employed temporarily in the food processing industry are also very difficult to estimate. Examination was made of many sources to assess both the extent of employment and distribution by county.

Three Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes were identified as most likely to meet the Migrant Health Program definition used in this study. Information specific to relevant companies in each county was pulled from a national directory of food processors. This provided estimates of total number of employees.

The same source used to estimate nursery/greenhouse workers provided the average highest and lowest monthly employment figures for food processing employees. This information was only available statewide. Calculations were made to determine the percent of temporary to permanent workers. This percentage was applied to each county in the respective state to estimate the number of temporary food processing workers.

### **4. Reforestation**

Reforestation activity is different from work in the other industry classifications as stands of trees are left to grow from five to forty-five years or longer. This means only a proportion of timberland in a state is engaged by tree planters each year. As the exact location of this labor differs annually, a worker estimate can only be provided on a statewide basis.

A DFL approach was taken to estimate tree planters using statewide data. Research found two different sets of factors for the DFL elements. Accordingly, two estimates were prepared resulting in a range. The final worker figure became the midpoint of this estimation range.

### **5. Adjustment for Duplication**

An adjustment was made to account for those employed in more than one job covered by the MSFW definition. This involved dividing all worker estimates by a factor for average jobs per MSFW. These adjusted county estimates could then be more appropriately added to develop a state total.

### **6. Sub-Group Estimates**

Sub-groups estimated for the study included migrant farmworkers, seasonal

