FARM EMPLOYMENT IN NORTH DAKOTA

Rex W. Cox

The annual monthly average number of workers on North Dakota farms declined from 128,000 in 1950 to 63,000 in 1968, a drop of 51 per cent (Table 1). The decline in family workers was 48 per cent compared with a decline of 62 per cent in the number of hired workers. During the first part of the period, 1950-68, family workers accounted for about 78 per cent of the total number of workers. The proportions averaged about 81 per cent during the past two years, 1967 and 1968. There is no indication that farms are becoming so large that hired labor is supplanting family labor. Farms in North Dakota continue as family operated enterprises.

Table 1. Farm employment, North Dakota annual monthly averages, 1950 - 1968.

Year	Total Workers		Family Workers		Hired Workers	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
	1,000		1,000		1,000	
1950	128	100.0	99	77.3	29	22.7
1951	125	100.0	98	78.4	27	21.6
1952	121	100.0	97	80.2	24	19.8
1953	119	100.0	96	80.7	23	19.3
1954	117	100.0	93	79.5	24	20.5
1955	110	100.0	88	80.0	22	19.4
1956	106	100.0	84	79.2	22	20.8
1957	100	100.0	79	79.0	21	21.0
1958	100	100.0	78	78.0	22	22.0
1959	94	100.0	74	78.7	20	21.3
1960	92	100.0	71	77.2	21	22.8
1961	87	100.0	70	80.5	17	19.5
1962	88	100.0	69	78.4	19	21.6
1963	83	100.0	67	80.7	16	19.3
1964	78	100.0	64	82.1	14	17.9
1965	75	100.0	60	80.0	15	20.0
1966	71	100.0	57	80.3	14	19.7
1967	65	100.0	53	81.5	12	18.5
1968	63	100.0	52	82.5	11	17.5

The number of farms declined from 66,000 in 1950 to an estimated 45,000 in 1968 and the average size increased from 647 to 933 acres. Although the average size increased 40 per cent, the number of workers per farm declined from 1.9 in 1950 to 1.4 in 1968, a drop of 26 per cent (Table 2). Today one worker, on an average, handles about 666 acres compared with 334 acres in 1950. This represents a two-fold increase over the 19-year period.

Table 2. Acres in farms, number and average size of farms, number of workers per farm and acres per farm worker.

Year	Number of			Number of	
	Acres in Farms	Farms	Acres Per Farm	Workers Per Farm	Acres Per Worker
	1,000,000	1,000			
1950	42.7	66.0	647	1.9	334
1951	42.7	65.5	652	1.9	342
1952	42.7	64.5	662	1.9	353
1953	42.6	63.5	671	1.9	358
1954	42.6	62.5	682	1.9	364
1955	42.5	61.5	691	1.8	386
1956	42.5	60.5	702	1.8	401
1957	42.4	59.5	712	1.7	424
1958	42.3	58.5	723	1.7	423
1959	42.1	57.5	732	1.6	448
1960	42.1	56.0	752	1.6	458
1961	42.1	55.0	765	1.6	484
1962	42.1	53.0	794	1.6	478
1963	42.1	51.5	817	1.6	507
1964	42.0	50.5	834	1.5	540
1965	42.0	49.0	857	1.5	560
1966	42.0	48.0	876	1.5	591
1967	42.0	47.0	894	1.4	646
1968	42.0	45.0	933	1.4	666

The data in Table 3 are all in terms of indexes with base, 1950-52. For example, the index of the number of workers on farms was 50.4 in 1968 meaning that the number was 50.4 per cent of the average number in 1950-52. The indexes representing the value of marketings (i.e. cash sale of farm products) and the average prices of farm products sold by North Dakota farmers were 135.9 and 79.5, respectively, in 1968. The corresponding index of the volume of marketings was 170.9, that is, the volume in 1968 was about 71 per cent greater than in 1950-52. The Index of the volume of marketings per worker of 339.1 for 1968 was ob-

(Continued on Page 10)

Dr. Cox is professor, Department of Agricultural Economics.