

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Harry L. Hopkins, Administrator  
Corrington Gill, Assistant Administrator

Howard B. Myers, Director  
Division of Social Research

RESEARCH BULLETIN

RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Prepared by  
Irene Link

under the supervision of  
T. J. Woofter, Jr.  
Rural Research Section,  
Division of Social Research,  
Works Progress Administration  
and  
Carl C. Taylor, in charge  
Division of Farm Population and Rural Life,  
Bureau of Agricultural Economics,  
and  
Social Research for the Resettlement Administration

Washington  
June  
1937



## CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction.....	1
Summary.....	3
Federal relief programs in eight drought States.....	5
Drought relief activities.....	5
Work relief projects under F.E.R.A. and C.W.A.....	6
Provision for seed and feed.....	6
F.E.R.A. drought expenditures.....	7
Cattle purchase and crop reduction programs.....	7
Rural rehabilitation.....	7
Resettlement Program.....	8
Works Progress Administration.....	9
Emergency Conservation.....	11
Social Security Program.....	11
Trend of programs.....	14
Trend in cases.....	14
Trend in expenditures.....	15
Intensity of Federal aid per capita.....	15
Relief history of rural households.....	19
Reasons for opening relief cases.....	19
Length of time on relief since January 1932.....	20
Number of relief periods.....	21
Average amount of relief.....	22
Types of relief.....	23
Personal and occupational characteristics of rural relief households.....	27
Residence distribution.....	27
Age of heads of households.....	28
Sex of heads of households.....	29
Size of households.....	30
Family composition.....	31
Employability composition.....	31
Usual occupation of heads of households.....	32
Tenure status.....	34
Usual occupation of members other than heads.....	34
Current occupation of heads and other members of households.....	35
Size of farms.....	37
Length of continuous residence.....	37
Education of heads of relief households.....	38

	Page
Appendix A. Supplementary tables.....	43
Appendix B. Sample counties.....	55

#### TEXT TABLES

Table 1. Grants to eight States in the drought area by the F.E.R.A. for drought relief and the cattle purchase program, September 1933 through August 1935.....	
Table 2. Number of households in eight drought States receiving rural rehabilitation advances, June 1935.....	8
Table 3. F.E.R.A. grants earmarked for rural rehabilitation in eight drought States, April 1934 through June 1936.....	8
Table 4. Number of Resettlement Administration loan cases in eight drought States, August 1935 through October 1936.....	
Table 5. Grants by Resettlement Administration in eight drought States, November 1935 through October 1936.....	
Table 6. Reason for opening of rural cases in their first relief period in eight drought States and the United States, June 1935.....	20
Table 7. Number of months since January 1932 in which unemployment relief had been received by rural relief households in eight drought States, by usual occupation of the head, October 1935	21
Table 8. Rural households on relief in June 1935 which were closed prior to December 1, 1935, in three drought States, by number of periods on relief.....	22
Table 9. Average amount of relief granted to rural households in eight drought States, by size of household, June 1935.....	23
Table 10. Average amount of relief granted to rural households in eight drought States, by usual occupation of the head, June 1935.....	23
Table 11. Residence of rural relief households in eight drought States, June 1935.....	28
Table 12. Median age of male and female heads of rural relief households and of male heads of total rural households in eight drought States, June 1935.....	29
Table 13. Sex of heads of rural relief households in eight drought States, June 1935.....	29

## CONTENTS

### TEXT TABLES—Continued

	Page
Table 14. Median size of rural relief households in eight drought States, by residence, June 1935....	30
Table 15. Family composition of rural relief households in eight drought States, June 1935.....	30
Table 16. Employability composition of rural relief households in eight drought States, June 1935...	32
Table 17. Percent of farm operators on relief in eight drought States, June 1935.....	32
Table 18. Usual occupation of employable heads of rural relief households in eight drought States, June 1935.....	33
Table 19. Tenure status of farm operators on relief and in the general population in eight drought States, 1935.....	34
Table 20. Usual occupation of workers other than heads in rural relief households in eight drought States, June 1935.....	34
Table 21. Current occupation of employable heads of rural relief households in eight drought States, by usual occupation, June 1935.....	36
Table 22. Length of last continuous residence in county of farm operators on relief in eight drought States, June 1935.....	38
Table 23. Grade attainment in school of heads of rural relief households in eight drought States, October 1935.....	38

### FIGURES

Figure 1. Number of persons employed by Works Progress Administration in 57 counties in the drought area, September 1935 through December 1936.	10
Figure 2. Subregions represented and counties sampled in the drought area.....	12
Figure 3. Number of persons employed by Works Progress Administration in the United States and eight drought States, 1936.....	13
Figure 4. Percent of total rural families in major subregions of the Great Plains receiving public assistance in February 1935, February 1936, and August 1936.....	14
Figure 5. Expenditures for public and private assistance in 57 counties of the drought area, January 1935 through December 1936.....	16

## FIGURES—Continued

	Page
Figure 6. Federal aid per capita in the drought area, 1933-1936.....	18
Figure 7. Types of relief granted by F.E.R.A. in eight drought States, June and October 1935.....	25

## SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

## (Appendix A)

Table 1. Number of persons employed by Works Progress Administration in 57 counties of the drought area, by subregions, September 1935 through December 1936.....	43
Table 2. Employment on Works Progress Administration projects, as of last week in each month, in eight drought States and the United States, 1936.....	44
Table 3. Reason for opening of rural cases in their first relief period in eight drought States, by residence, by States, June 1935.....	45
Table 4. Number of months since January 1932 in which unemployment relief had been received by rural relief households in eight drought States, by usual occupation of the head, by States, October 1935.....	46
Table 5. Type of relief received by rural households in eight drought States, by States, June and October 1935.....	48
Table 6. Age and sex of heads of rural relief households in eight drought States, by States, June 1935	49
Table 7. Current occupation of employable heads of rural relief households in eight drought States, by usual occupation, by States, June 1935.....	50
Table 8. Current occupation of workers other than heads in rural relief households in eight drought States, by usual occupation, by States, June 1935.....	52

RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

## INTRODUCTION

Repeated droughts in the Great Plains and surrounding territory, often accompanied by wind erosion, have left in their wake a stricken populace whose needs have far exceeded the limited aid that could be given by local or State organizations. As a result, Federal assistance on a large scale has been necessary.

Since the economic and social distress occasioned by recurrent drought and other natural phenomena can be most satisfactorily measured by the extent of public and private relief granted,<sup>1</sup> the present study has undertaken to describe the trend and scope of the Federal relief programs in the drought area,<sup>2</sup> as well as the personal and occupational characteristics of the families who make up the relief population of the drought States.

All June and October 1935 data in the present report dealing with reasons for opening cases, types and amounts of relief, length of time on relief, and personal and occupational characteristics of heads and members of relief families are based on the Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population.<sup>3</sup> Seventy-four sample counties in eight States in the Great Plains Area were included in the survey. These States were Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota.<sup>4</sup> Supplementary data were available for 27 sample counties in the 3 States of Iowa, Montana, and South Dakota from the Survey of Rural Households Which Received Relief in June and Were Closed Prior to December 1, 1935.

Data on trends of relief in the drought area for five type of farming subregions—Spring Wheat, Northern Great Plains, Western Corn Belt, Winter Wheat, and Southwestern Great Plains—were obtained primarily from the Survey of Public and Private

---

<sup>1</sup>See Cronin, Francis D. and Beers, Howard W., *Areas of Intense Drought Distress, 1930-1936*, Research Bulletin, Series V, No. 1, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, 1937, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Two earlier bulletins in the series were: Cronin, Francis D. and Beers, Howard W., *idem*; and Taeuber, Conrad and Taylor, Carl C., *The People of the Drought States*, Research Bulletin, Series V, No. 2, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, 1937.

<sup>3</sup>For a description of the methodology of the survey, see Asch, Berta and Mangus, A. R., *Farmers on Relief and Rehabilitation*, Research Monograph VIII, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, 1937.

<sup>4</sup>For lists of sample counties, see appendix B.

## 2 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Assistance in Rural and Town Areas.<sup>5</sup> The sample in this survey for the entire drought area encompassed 57 counties, of which 45 were in the 5 subregions. The additional counties were scattered on the periphery of those subregions.

Amounts of expenditures by the various Federal agencies were obtained from records of the Division of Research, Statistics, and Finance, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Finance and Control Division, Resettlement Administration, and the Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration. Employment figures were obtained from the Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration, and Civilian Conservation Corps enrollment figures were obtained from *Monthly Statistical Summary: October 1936*, Emergency Conservation Work (Civilian Conservation Corps).

The information on employment and expenditures has been presented for the eight drought States for which data on characteristics of rural relief households were available.

---

<sup>5</sup>The three surveys referred to in this section were made by the Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration.

## SUMMARY

Drought was the chief factor responsible for the relief situation in the Great Plains and surrounding territory. In June 1935, conditions directly associated with drought were responsible for almost three-fifths of all rural cases which were on relief for the first time in the eight drought States with which the present study is concerned. Almost nine-tenths of the open country cases in North Dakota which were on relief for the first time, over four-fifths of those in Kansas, and three-fourths of those in South Dakota and in Colorado were receiving aid because of factors attributable to drought.

Throughout the drought area, farm families made up a greater proportion of the relief load than did nonfarm families; 68 percent of the heads of rural relief households in the eight drought States were farmers or farm laborers by usual occupation. At the time this study was made, three-fourths of the heads usually engaged in agriculture were still trying to make a living from the land.

The early impact of drought in the Northwest is reflected in the fact that almost three-tenths of the agricultural households on relief in October 1935 in North Dakota and over one-third of those in South Dakota had received relief from 20 to 24 months since January 1932. In the eight States as a whole, almost three-tenths of all agricultural households had been dependent from 15 to 19 months, and almost one-tenth had received relief in 24 months or more.

Over 60 percent of all rural cases in the drought area in June 1935 were on work relief only and 20 percent were on direct relief only, while less than 20 percent received both types of relief. The average relief grant was \$17. However, both types and amounts of relief varied considerably from State to State.

The relief problem was complicated by the overrepresentation of tenants on the relief rolls. Tenants made up 48 percent of the total farmers in the eight drought States, while more than 70 percent of the farm operator heads of households on the relief rolls in these States were tenants. In Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska, large proportions of tenants were no longer on farms in June 1935.

The effect of drought upon the economic condition of farm laborers is shown by the fact that in June 1935 almost seven-tenths of the farm laborers by usual occupation who were on relief were unemployed and seeking work.

#### 4 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

The typical farm family on relief in the eight drought States was larger than that in the general population for the area, and the average age of the head was less than that for the head of families in the general population. However, 92 percent of the rural relief families had one or more gainful workers, which indicates that these families might become self-supporting if given the opportunity.

By February 1935, over 20 percent of the rural families in all sections of the Great Plains Area were receiving Federal emergency relief, with the exception of the Western Corn Belt, which showed only 13 percent. A year later, despite a good crop yield in 1935 and the transfer of many farm families to the rural rehabilitation program, only a slight decrease in the relief load had occurred, and in August 1936 the total load for the area had risen to 21 percent. In the Spring Wheat Area, 34 percent of all rural families were on relief at that date.

Federal aid to the drought States was first given in 1932, but the first aid to the Great Plains Area earmarked for drought relief was given in the fall of 1933.

## FEDERAL RELIEF PROGRAMS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES

In the eight States<sup>6</sup> in the Great Plains Area which form the basis for this report, the distress due to depression factors has been intensified by the somewhat localized drought of 1933 and the extensive droughts of 1934 and 1936. Hence, programs for public assistance in the eight States have been planned on a larger scale than would have been necessary had the distress been due to depression ills alone.

### DROUGHT RELIEF ACTIVITIES

The first Federal aid received in the Great Plains Region was from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which made available about 18 million dollars for relief and work relief in the eight drought States, exclusive of Nebraska, between February 2, 1932, and September 30, 1934.<sup>7</sup>

During the spring and summer of 1933, a serious drought developed in two large areas: the Southwest Panhandle Region and the Northwest. Crops were impaired by deficient rainfall and high temperatures, and by the insect infestations and dust storms which accompanied these conditions. Several Federal agencies cooperated in making cash, credit, and supplies available to the needy persons residing in the drought-stricken areas.

In June 1933, 2 weeks after the organization of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, special requests for aid were received from regions suffering from drought, and in September 1933 the first grants earmarked for drought assistance were authorized to be made to six States: Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Texas.<sup>8</sup> By December 1933,<sup>9</sup> three additional States—Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin—also had been included in the designated drought area.

---

<sup>6</sup> Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota.

<sup>7</sup> From *Quarterly Report of Reconstruction Finance Corporation*, July 1 to September 30, 1934, inclusive, and February 2, 1932, to September 20, 1934, inclusive, p. 3 and table 6, p. 44.

<sup>8</sup> Whiting, T. E., *Preliminary Historical Statement Concerning Drought Relief*, (unpublished manuscript), Division of Research, Statistics, and Finance, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, May 1934.

<sup>9</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L., *Report of Activities in Drought and Storm Areas*, Wisconsin Emergency Relief Administration, December 1933.

## 6 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

From the first, State Emergency Relief Administrations were authorized to liberalize their regulations to provide maintenance for livestock which were perishing from lack of feed and pasture; and needy families unable to obtain refinancing loans from the Farm Credit Administration were handled by local emergency relief administrations as regular relief cases.

### Work Relief Projects Under F.E.R.A. and C.W.A.

In September 1933, special highway projects employing relief labor were started in the drought area by the F.E.R.A. and were developed by the Bureau of Public Roads. In November, the special highway projects were taken over by the Civil Works Administration which also developed other work projects in rural areas to give employment to drought sufferers.

Beginning in April 1934, the Emergency Work Relief Program was expanded in the drought areas to provide cash earnings for needy families. Emphasis was placed on such projects as water conservation, food preservation, and road work. These projects were supervised by local and State E.R.A.'s.<sup>10</sup>

### Provision for Seed and Feed

From December 1933 to April 1934, the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation supplied State Emergency Relief Administrations with wheat, corn, oats, barley, and milo to be used as feed for livestock in the drought area.<sup>11</sup> Surplus agricultural and other products in the form of foodstuffs, clothing, and fuel were also distributed by this agency to drought-relief families during the winter of 1934-35. When this agency's distribution of grains was discontinued, State E.R.A.'s were authorized to use F.E.R.A. funds for the purchase of feed and seed.

In June 1934, the President appointed a drought committee consisting of the Secretary of Agriculture, the F.E.R.A. Administrator, the A.A.A. Administrator, and the Governor of the Farm Credit Administration to utilize special drought-relief funds through their respective agencies.

Amounts were made available to the Secretary of Agriculture for the disposition of surplus cattle in the drought area, and for the purchase, gift, sale, or other disposition of feed and seed. Allocations from the same special drought-relief funds of the F.E.R.A. were made to the Farm Credit Administration for loans for feed and seed.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup>From reports by Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration.

<sup>11</sup>*Monthly Report of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration*, February 1935, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup>*Idem.*

## FEDERAL RELIEF PROGRAMS

### F.E.R.A. Drought Expenditures

Grants earmarked for drought-relief and cattle programs totaling more than 73 million dollars were made to the eight drought States included in this study from September 1933 through August 1935 by the F.E.R.A. (table 1). This amount was approximately 40 percent of the total funds earmarked for drought relief in the United States. Of the grants in the eight States, 86 percent of the total amount was for human relief and 14 percent for the cattle purchase program.<sup>13</sup> After August 1935, the

Table 1—GRANTS TO EIGHT STATES IN THE DROUGHT AREA BY THE F.E.R.A. FOR DROUGHT RELIEF AND THE CATTLE PURCHASE PROGRAM, SEPTEMBER 1933 THROUGH AUGUST 1935<sup>a</sup>

State	Total	Drought Relief	Cattle Purchase Program
Total	\$72,202,093	\$62,537,676	\$9,664,417
Colorado	9,106,345	8,437,702	668,643
Iowa	4,836,750	4,175,900	660,850
Kansas	14,710,992	11,645,000	3,065,992
Montana	7,142,274	5,577,500	1,564,774
Nebraska	4,764,268	3,199,368	1,564,900
North Dakota	8,303,356	7,943,356	360,000
Oklahoma	8,849,033	7,444,925	1,404,108
South Dakota	14,489,075	14,113,925	375,150

<sup>a</sup>Including authorized transfers and the redeposit of balances.

Source: Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration.

F.E.R.A. began to taper off its activities, and cases still receiving relief under the F.E.R.A. were gradually absorbed by the new Works Program.

### Cattle Purchase and Crop Reduction Programs

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration did much to assist farmers in the drought area by paying crop reduction benefits, and by purchasing livestock from distressed farmers. In the eight drought States, the A.A.A. disbursed over 510 million dollars<sup>14</sup> from May 12, 1933, to June 30, 1936. Of this amount, about 10 percent was for cattle purchases and 1 percent for the purchase of sheep and goats, while 89 percent was in the form of rental and benefit payments. Without the rental and benefit payments of the A.A.A., the expenditures of strictly relief agencies in the drought States undoubtedly would have been much higher.

### Rural Rehabilitation

From April 1934 to June 30, 1935, destitute farm families were aided to reestablish themselves on a self-sustaining basis

<sup>13</sup>Monthly Report of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, November 1935, table B-8.

<sup>14</sup>Records of the Division of Finance, Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

## 8 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

through the rural rehabilitation program, which was part of the trend toward the differentiated treatment of relief groups. Rehabilitation of destitute families by supplying working capital and by adjusting debts was a major part of this program; and in June 1935, the month preceding transfer to the Resettlement Administration, over 44,000 families in the 8 drought States received rural rehabilitation advances (table 2).

Table 2—NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES RECEIVING RURAL REHABILITATION ADVANCES, JUNE 1935<sup>a</sup>

State	Number of Cases <sup>b</sup>
Total	44,591
Colorado	6,917
Iowa	1,228
Kansas	7,244
Montana	649
Nebraska	2,377
North Dakota	33
Oklahoma	8,210
South Dakota	17,933

<sup>a</sup>Data revised as of April 16, 1936.

<sup>b</sup>Exclusive of households under care that did not receive loans during the month.

Source: Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration.

From April 1934 through June 1936, \$82,281,000 had been granted by the F.E.R.A. to the States for the rural rehabilitation program. Of this, \$8,794,000, or nearly 11 percent, was allocated to the eight States in the drought area (table 3).

Table 3—F.E.R.A. GRANTS EARMARKED FOR RURAL REHABILITATION IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, APRIL 1934 THROUGH JUNE 1936

State	Amount
Total	\$8,793,793
Colorado	1,159,314
Iowa	1,066,040
Kansas	1,443,395
Montana	336,200
Nebraska	1,353,676
North Dakota	825,507 <sup>a</sup>
Oklahoma	1,508,661 <sup>a</sup>
South Dakota	1,101,000

<sup>a</sup>Reflects redeposits to United States Treasury of \$158,493 in North Dakota and \$191,914 in Oklahoma.

Source: Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration.

### Resettlement Program

The rural rehabilitation program of the F.E.R.A. was transferred to the Resettlement Administration as of July 1, 1935, although many States continued to make substantial advances to rural rehabilitation cases from Rural Rehabilitation Corporation funds. In Kansas the first Resettlement loan was made in August 1935, while the first North Dakota loan was made in November

1935. By October 31, 1936, almost 78,000 loan cases in the 8 States had received amounts totaling over \$26,000,000 (table 4).

Table 4—NUMBER OF RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION LOAN CASES IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, AUGUST 1935 THROUGH OCTOBER 1936

State	Number of Loan Cases
Total	77,726
Colorado	8,804
Iowa	4,085
Kansas	7,348
Montana	2,571
Nebraska	9,230
North Dakota	17,438
Oklahoma	9,732
South Dakota	18,518

Source: Compiled by the Record Section, Finance and Control Division, Resettlement Administration.

The character of the Resettlement Program was broadened somewhat in November 1935 when, in addition to loans, emergency grants had to be made to cope with the urgent need of agricultural cases in distressed areas. Resettlement grants carried a considerable portion of all agricultural cases needing relief in the drought area through the winter of 1935. The regular seasonal upturn in employment opportunities on the farm during the spring of 1936 reduced the volume of rural distress and brought a sharp decline in emergency grants. The rise in the amount of such grants in the fall of 1936 reflected the impact of the drought of that year (figure 5).

By October 31, 1936, emergency grants totaling over \$10,000,000 had been made by the Resettlement Administration in eight States of the drought area (table 5).

Table 5—GRANTS BY RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, NOVEMBER 1935 THROUGH OCTOBER 1936

State	Amount of Grants
Total	\$10,390,211
Colorado	876,920
Iowa	71,971
Kansas	1,379,984
Montana	252,170
Nebraska	721,757
North Dakota	2,395,218
Oklahoma	1,394,940
South Dakota	3,297,251

Source: Compiled by the Record Section, Finance and Control Division, Resettlement Administration.

### Works Progress Administration

With the gradual tapering off of the activities of the F.E.R.A. in the latter part of 1935, the Works Progress Administration, the most important agency under the Works Program, developed its extensive organization for providing jobs for employable

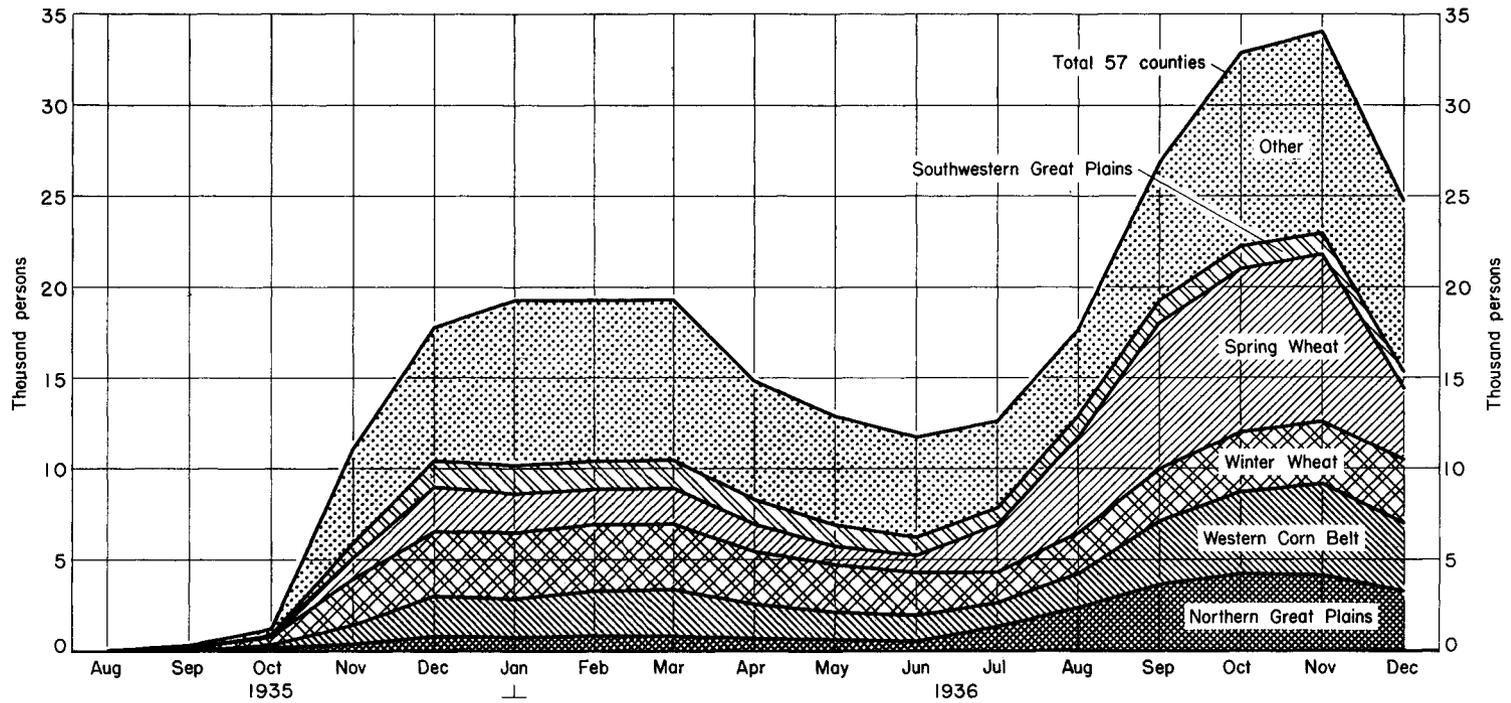


FIG. 1-NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED\* BY WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION\*\* IN 57 COUNTIES IN THE DROUGHT AREA

\*Exclusive of nonrelief employees

\*\* As of last payroll in month

SOURCE: Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration

AF-2207, W.P.A.

persons on the relief rolls. Figure 1 shows the number of persons, exclusive of nonrelief employees, working on W.P.A. projects<sup>15</sup> set up in 57 representative counties of the Great Plains Area, by subregions,<sup>16</sup> from September 1935 through December 1936.

Employment under the W.P.A. in the drought area as a whole reached a peak at the end of January 1936 that was maintained until spring, when employment opportunities became available in agriculture. The load remained relatively constant from May through July, followed by an increase in August. The effects of the 1936 drought caused a sharp rise in September, when special "emergency drought" projects were set up to aid distressed families. Reports for the total area, as of the last pay roll in November 1936, showed a greater number of persons employed on W.P.A. work projects in the 57 representative counties than in any preceding month.

Employment on all types of W.P.A. projects reached a peak for the United States as a whole in February 1936. After this date, total employment declined until late summer when a marked increase occurred, due largely to increases in the eight drought States and surrounding territory (figure 3 and appendix table 2).

#### Emergency Conservation

The work of the Civilian Conservation Corps has been the major activity of the Emergency Conservation phase of the Works Program. Of the 346,550 persons enrolled in the C.C.C. by October 31, 1936, nearly 13 percent were from the 8 States in the drought area. In addition, about half of the 6,700 Indians enrolled in the C.C.C. were employed in camps in the 8 States.<sup>17</sup>

#### Social Security Program

While the W.P.A. assumed the obligation of caring for a large majority of the persons in need because of unemployment, the State and local governments were left with the responsibility of caring for dependent unemployable persons. To aid in meeting this burden, provision was made in the Social Security Act for grants-in-aid to three large groups of unemployables: the aged, the blind, and women with dependent children.<sup>18</sup>

Although the Social Security Program had no special drought aspects, it began to expand rapidly in rural areas in the spring of 1936. As it took over certain types of unemployable cases, general relief was reduced.

---

<sup>15</sup>Also, see appendix table 1.

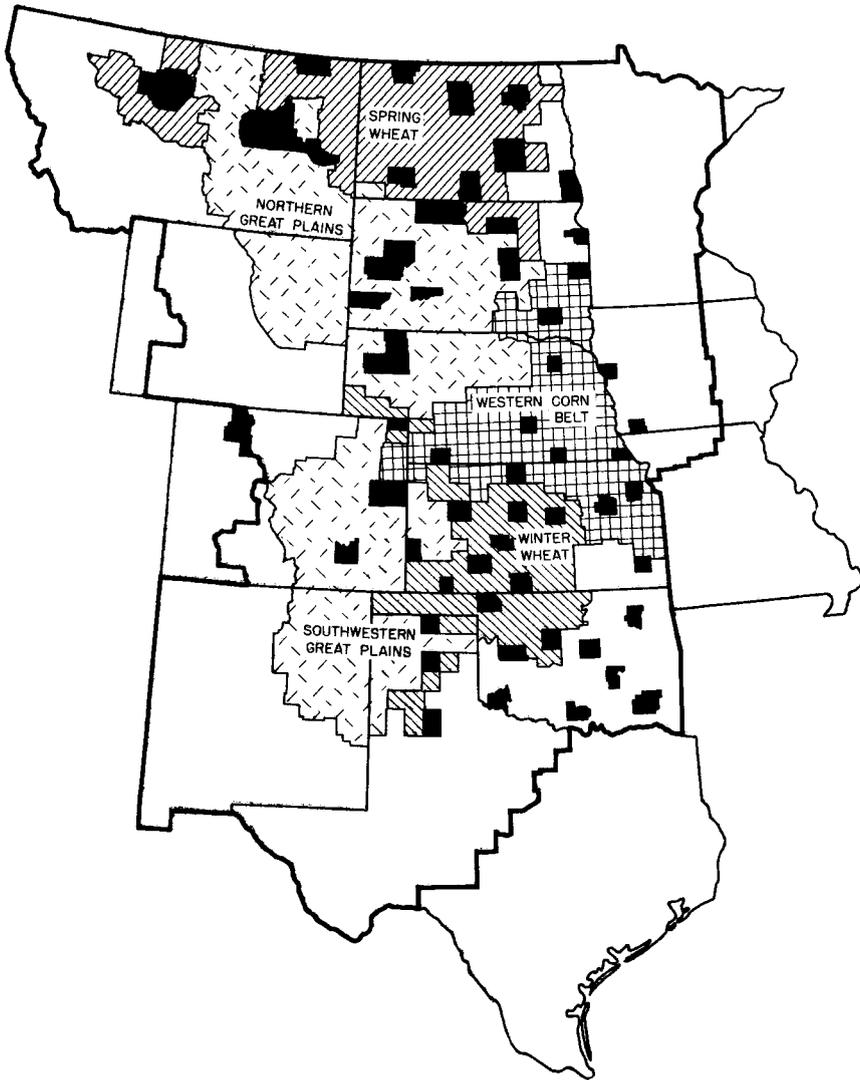
<sup>16</sup>For location of subregions, see figure 2.

<sup>17</sup>*Monthly Statistical Summary: October 1936*, Emergency Conservation Work (Civilian Conservation Corps).

<sup>18</sup>For the trend of expenditures, see figure 5.

12 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

FIG. 2 - SUBREGIONS REPRESENTED AND COUNTIES SAMPLED  
IN THE DROUGHT AREA



SOURCE: Survey of Public and Private  
Assistance in Rural and Town Areas

AF-2404, W. P. A.

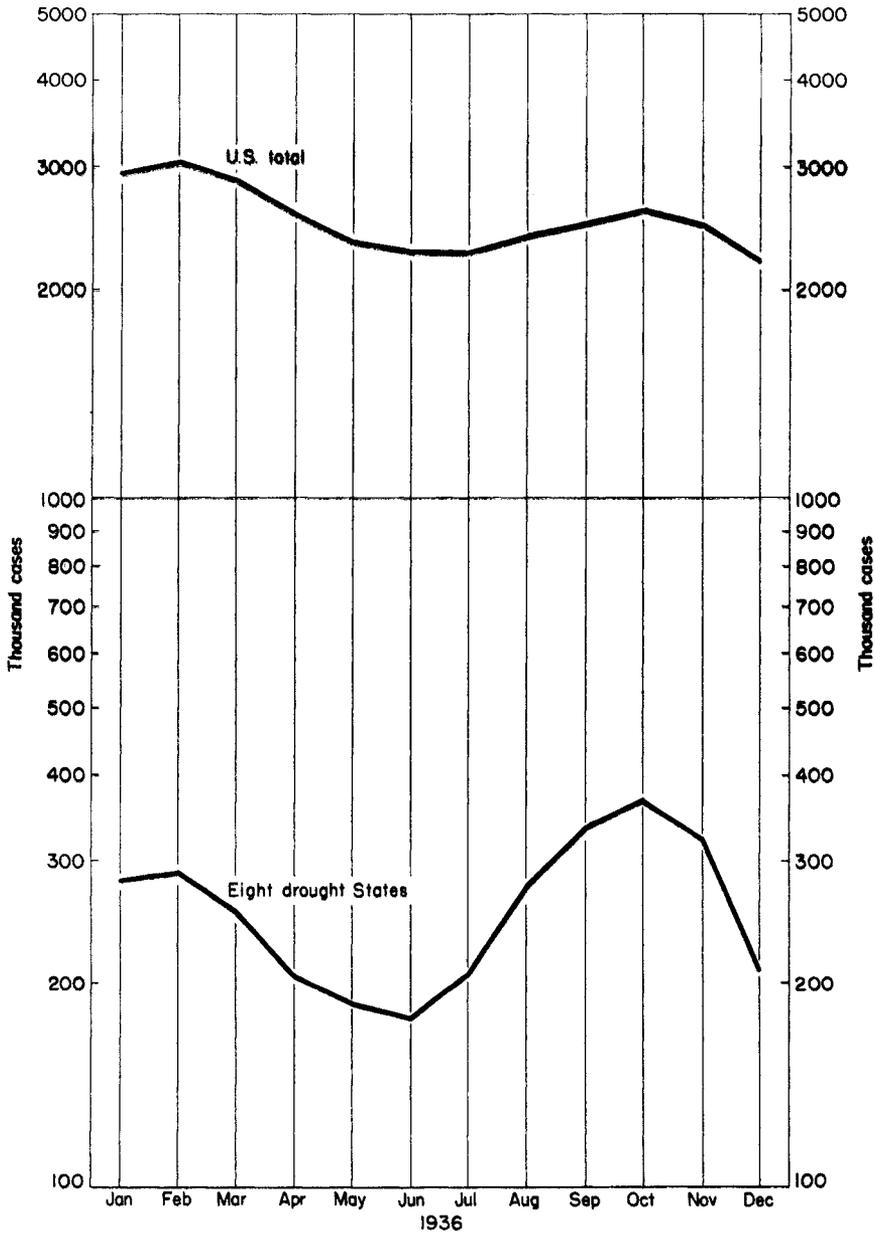


FIG. 3-NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED BY WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION\* IN THE UNITED STATES AND EIGHT DROUGHT STATES

\* As of last week in each month

SOURCE: Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration

AF-2201, W.P.A.

14 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

TREND OF PROGRAMS

Trend in Cases

After reaching a peak in the early months of 1935, the number of cases receiving public assistance in rural areas of the United States decreased during the remainder of the year.<sup>19</sup> The same general trend was evident in cases receiving public assistance in the drought area. However, this area experienced a marked upturn in public assistance in the summer of 1936 as the drought took effect.

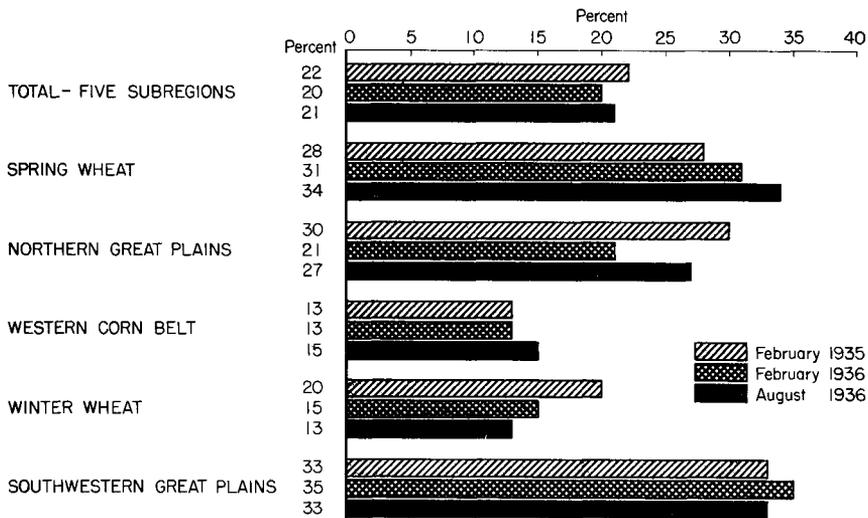


FIG. 4 - PERCENT OF TOTAL RURAL FAMILIES IN MAJOR SUBREGIONS OF THE GREAT PLAINS RECEIVING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE IN FEBRUARY 1935,\* FEBRUARY 1936,\*\* AND AUGUST 1936\*\*

\* Emergency relief

\*\* All relief financed by federal, state or local public funds, including W.P.A. employment and Resettlement emergency grants

AF-2284, W. F. A.

Figure 4 shows the percent of total rural families in major agricultural subregions of the drought area receiving public aid in February 1935, February 1936, and August 1936.<sup>20</sup> In February 1935, 20 percent or more of all rural families were

<sup>19</sup> See Asch, Berta and Mangus, A. R., *Farmers on Relief and Rehabilitation*, Research Monograph VIII, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, chapter VII.

<sup>20</sup> Data include all cases receiving relief financed by public funds, persons employed by Works Progress Administration, and Resettlement grant clients in 47 sample counties. In addition to the 45 counties listed in appendix B, page 55, Johnson County, Nebraska, is included in the Western Corn Belt sample and Teller County, Colorado, in the Southwestern Great Plains sample.

receiving emergency relief in the Great Plains Area with the exception of the Western Corn Belt, which showed only 13 percent. By February 1936, after a fairly good crop yield in 1935, a small decrease had occurred in the total relief load. However, by August 1936, a slight increase occurred once more, when the general total for the area was 21 percent.

In the Western Corn Belt and the Spring Wheat Area, the load was higher in August 1936 than during either of the two previous periods. Of the five subregions, the Winter Wheat Area and the Western Corn Belt suffered the least during the three periods.

#### Trend in Expenditures

Expenditures for public and private assistance in the 57 drought counties decreased slowly during the early months of 1935 and more rapidly during the summer (figure 5).

As the W.P.A. got under way, expenditures of general relief agencies began to fall off rapidly. The increasing importance of the Social Security Program in rural areas also contributed to the decline in general relief expenditures, which showed further decreases in the spring of 1936, and remained on a level during the summer.

The emergency grants to farmers in the drought area by the Resettlement Administration, starting in November 1935, showed an increase in the spring of 1936, and decreased during the summer months. In the fall of 1936, as the effects of the summer's drought were felt, expenditures for emergency grants again rose.

Both because of its larger case load and because earnings per person generally exceeded direct relief grants, W.P.A. expenditures were far greater than the total expenditures of the other agencies. After reaching a peak in March 1936, W.P.A. expenditures declined with the seasonal demands of agriculture. The impact of the drought of 1936 began to be felt early in the summer, however, and expenditures mounted rapidly throughout the fall. In December a sharp decline occurred, due largely to the shifting of responsibility for drought cases to the Resettlement Administration.

#### Intensity of Federal Aid per Capita

The total amount of Federal expenditures per capita in the counties of the drought area<sup>21</sup> since 1933 is one measure of the degree of distress caused by recurring droughts. A large number of counties had per capita expenditures of \$175 and over

---

<sup>21</sup>For methods of delimiting the drought area, see Cronin, Francis D. and Beers, Howard W., *Areas of Intense Drought Distress, 1930-1936*, *op. cit.*

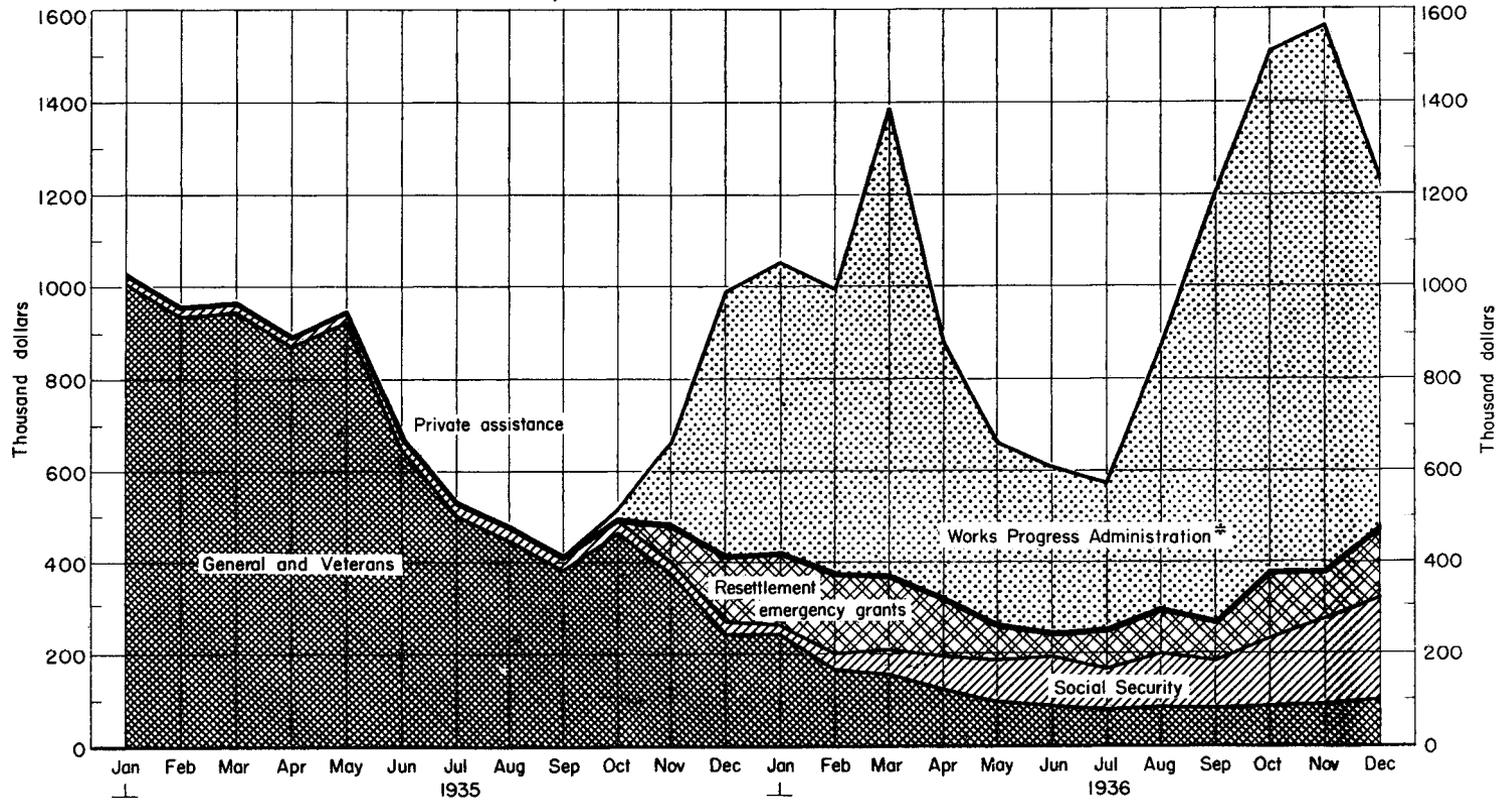


FIG. 5 - EXPENDITURES FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ASSISTANCE IN 57 COUNTIES OF THE DROUGHT AREA

\* Exclusive of earnings of nonrelief employees

SOURCES: Survey of Public and Private Assistance in Rural and Town Areas, and Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration

AF - 2209, W.P.A.

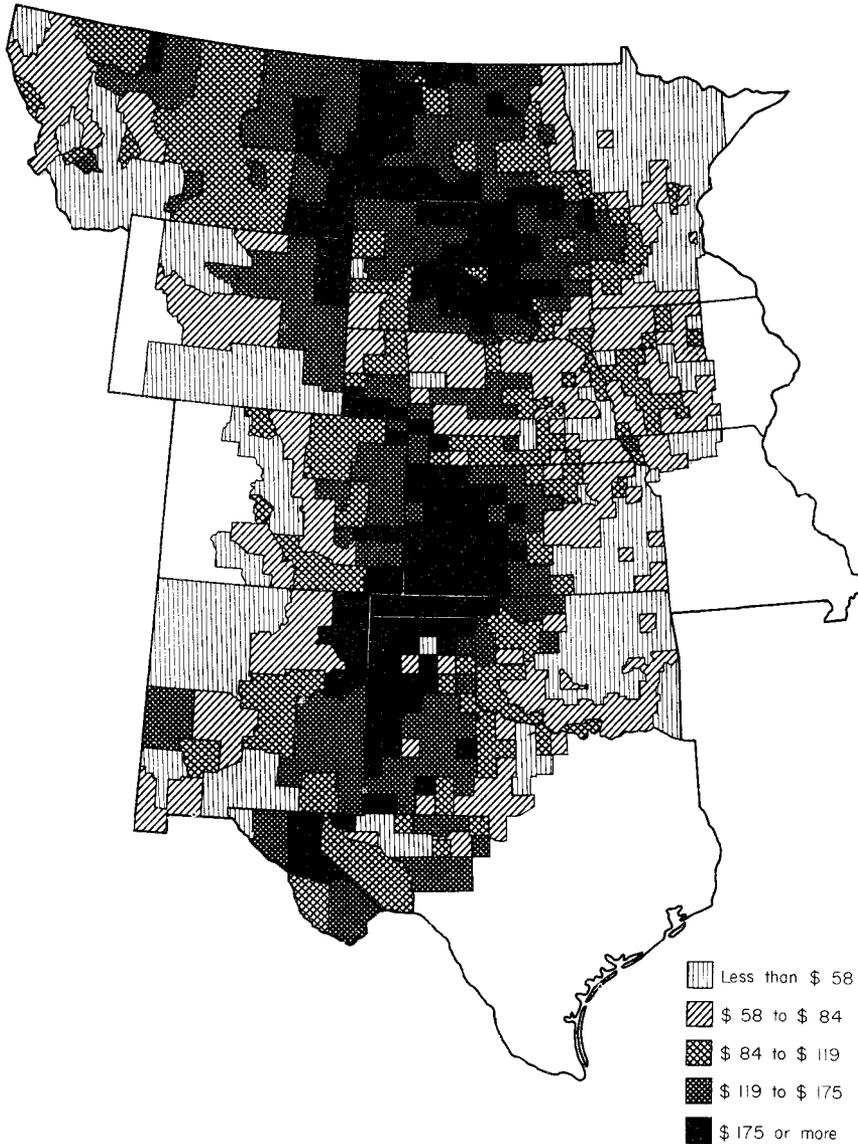
(figure 6).<sup>22</sup> These were concentrated in the "Dust Bowl" region<sup>23</sup> and in the Spring Wheat section of the Dakotas and eastern Montana. The lightly shaded areas on the map indicate the counties where the need for relief was less serious. In these less severely stricken counties, per capita expenditures ranged from \$119 to less than \$58.

---

<sup>22</sup>Per capita expenditures include total amounts in dollars obtained by counties and related to total county population, urban and rural.

<sup>23</sup>Parts of Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

FIG. 6 - FEDERAL AID PER CAPITA IN THE DROUGHT AREA  
1933-1936



SOURCES: F. E. R. A., C. W. A., A. A. A., R. A., W. P. A.,  
and Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population

AF-2264, W. P. A.

## RELIEF HISTORY OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDS

### Reasons for Opening Relief Cases

While the amount of Federal relief expenditures in the drought States is one index of the need of rural households, the extent to which drought was the chief causative factor in rural distress can be appreciated only by an analysis of the reasons which forced households to apply for relief.

Conditions directly associated with drought were responsible for the opening of almost three-fifths of the June rural relief cases in sample counties of the eight drought States that were in their first relief period (table 6). "Loss of job" was the direct cause for the opening of only 14 percent of the cases in their first relief period. However, a considerable portion of the cases on relief in this region were farm operators who were still on their farms. Consequently, although they had not "lost" their jobs, they were in need of relief because of either crop failure or depletion of assets.

Crop failure and loss of livestock<sup>24</sup> were found to have caused one-third of the openings of rural cases in the eight drought States that were in their first relief period in June 1935. Loss or depletion of assets was responsible for almost one-fourth of the cases. These two types of economic losses, which are closely related, are directly associated with drought effects. In the total rural United States, these two factors were specified as the causes of only 47 percent of the first openings of rural relief cases (table 6).

Kansas, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota showed the highest proportions of rural households whose need for relief in June 1935 was directly caused by loss or depletion of assets and by crop failure or loss of livestock (appendix table 3).

The needs of families living in the open country in these States were particularly affected by these two factors. They caused almost nine-tenths of the first openings of open country relief cases in North Dakota, over four-fifths of the openings in Kansas, and three-fourths of those in Colorado and South Dakota.

---

<sup>24</sup>A study of 13 sample counties in the Winter Wheat Area in June 1934 showed that about 46 percent of all families—90 percent of the farm families—were receiving relief because of crop failure. See Beck, P. G. and Forster, M. C., *Six Rural Problem Areas, Relief—Resources—Rehabilitation*, Research Monograph I, Division of Research, Statistics, and Finance, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, 1935, p. 54.

## 20 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Iowa had the lowest proportion (11 percent) of first openings of rural relief cases caused by loss of livestock and crop failure, due to the fact that nonagricultural cases were predominant on the relief rolls of that State and also to the lesser severity of the drought. This State showed the highest number of rural relief openings caused by loss of job (38 percent).

Table 6—REASON FOR OPENING OF RURAL CASES IN THEIR FIRST RELIEF PERIOD IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES<sup>a</sup> AND THE UNITED STATES, JUNE 1935

Reason for Opening		Eight Drought States <sup>c</sup>	United States <sup>d</sup>
Total:	Number	14,410	69,063
	Percent	100.0	100.0
Loss of job in ordinary employment		13.8	22.5
Loss or depletion of assets		23.6	32.6
Crop failure or loss of livestock		33.2	14.2
Insufficient income		14.2	13.2
Old age, death, illness, etc. <sup>b</sup>		7.6	13.3
Miscellaneous		7.6	4.2

<sup>a</sup>See appendix table 3 for data by individual States.

<sup>b</sup>Loss of aid from relatives\* and "transfer to other agency" included.

<sup>c</sup>Based on data for 74 sample counties.

<sup>d</sup>Based on data for 300 counties and 83 New England townships.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

### Length of Time on Relief Since January 1932

Almost three-tenths of all rural cases which were on relief in October 1935 in the eight drought States, whose heads were usually engaged in agriculture, had been on relief from 15 to 19 months since January 1932 (table 7). Almost one-tenth had received relief in 24 months or more.<sup>25</sup> In Oklahoma, over one-third of the agricultural households had received relief from 15 to 19 months, and an additional two-fifths (37 percent) had been on relief from 10 to 14 months (appendix table 4). In Montana, almost one-fifth of the relief households had received assistance in 30 months or more.

The early impact of drought conditions in the Northwest is reflected in the fact that while one-fourth of the agricultural households in North and South Dakota in October 1935 had received relief from 15 to 19 months, almost three-tenths of the households in North Dakota and over one-third of those in South Dakota had received relief from 20 to 24 months. Almost one-fifth of the farm households in North Dakota and almost one-sixth of those in South Dakota had received relief in 24 months or more.

Depletion of agricultural and economic resources had early been experienced by an even greater proportion of farm families

<sup>25</sup>Data are not available as to the number of continuous months in which relief was received. It is probable, however, that most of the cases which had been on relief for as long as 2 years had received relief continuously.

in Montana, where over two-fifths of the households had received relief in 24 months or more prior to October 1935. In the eight drought States, the proportions of farm operators and farm laborers who had received relief for 15 to 24 months since January 1932 were approximately the same.

Table 7—NUMBER OF MONTHS SINCE JANUARY 1932 IN WHICH UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF HAD BEEN RECEIVED<sup>a</sup>  
BY RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES,<sup>b</sup>  
BY USUAL OCCUPATION OF THE HEAD, OCTOBER 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation <sup>c</sup> of Head	Total		Number of Months							
	Number	Percent	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-46
Total	19,294	100.0	6.7	11.2	25.8	28.6	18.1	6.1	2.8	0.7
Agriculture	11,736	100.0	5.2	10.8	27.1	29.9	17.9	6.1	2.6	0.4
Farm operators	8,298	100.0	4.1	9.7	28.0	23.9	17.8	7.2	3.0	0.3
Farm laborers	3,438	100.0	7.7	13.4	25.2	29.9	18.0	3.6	1.6	0.6
Nonagriculture	5,210	100.0	9.1	11.8	24.5	27.2	18.1	5.6	3.0	0.7
White collar	546	100.0	13.2	17.6	23.8	23.1	16.9	2.9	1.8	0.7
Skilled	770	100.0	7.8	9.1	22.1	30.9	21.3	6.8	1.0	1.0
Semiskilled	638	100.0	10.6	17.9	21.3	29.8	13.5	2.5	3.8	0.6
Unskilled	3,256	100.0	8.4	10.3	25.8	26.6	18.4	6.4	3.4	0.7
No usual occupation	314	100.0	15.9	15.3	28.7	26.1	5.1	3.8	2.6	2.5
Not working or seeking work	2,034	100.0	7.5	11.8	20.7	25.3	21.8	7.3	3.6	2.0

<sup>a</sup>Data are not available as to the number of continuous months in which relief was received.

<sup>b</sup>See appendix table 4 for data by individual States.

<sup>c</sup>Usual occupation\* is defined as any nonrelief job held for at least 4 consecutive weeks within the last 10 years.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, October 1935.

More than one-fourth of the heads of households on relief who were nonagricultural workers, who were not workers, or who had no usual occupation had been dependent from 15 to 19 months. The largest proportion (29 percent) of the heads with no usual occupation had been on relief from 10 to 14 months. These persons, however, constituted a relatively small group.

#### Number of Relief Periods

The number of relief periods, or times on relief, varied widely from State to State, due both to differences in the severity of need and to administrative policies with respect to the opening and closing of cases. Detailed data on number of relief periods are available for only three of the drought States, Iowa, Montana, and South Dakota. Of all rural cases in Montana which were on relief in June 1935 and were closed prior to December 1 of that year, almost two-fifths had been on relief four times or more, whereas in South Dakota only one-fifth of the rural relief households had had as many relief periods. Over one-fourth of the farm operators in Montana had been on relief five times or more, whereas in South Dakota less than one-twentieth of the farm operators had this relief record (table 8). The length of each period cannot be determined from the available information.

## 22 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Table 8—RURAL HOUSEHOLDS ON RELIEF IN JUNE 1935 WHICH WERE CLOSED PRIOR TO DECEMBER 1, 1935, IN THREE DROUGHT STATES, BY NUMBER OF PERIODS ON RELIEF

Usual Occupation	Total Households		Number of Periods on Relief				
	Number	Percent	1	2	3	4	5 and Over
Montana (8 sample counties)							
Total	449	100.0	18.5	23.9	19.8	18.9	18.9
Farm operators	200	100.0	15.5	19.5	18.5	20.5	26.0
Farm laborers	19	†	†	†	†	†	†
All others	230	100.0	21.7	27.9	19.6	19.1	11.7
South Dakota (9 sample counties)							
Total	667	100.0	20.7	33.2	26.2	11.8	8.1
Farm operators	336	100.0	23.5	34.2	26.5	11.3	4.5
Farm laborers	81	100.0	14.8	37.1	22.2	9.9	16.0
All others	250	100.0	18.8	30.4	27.2	13.2	10.4
Iowa (10 sample counties)							
Total	592	100.0	22.8	31.8	21.8	13.5	10.1
Farm operators	80	100.0	25.0	37.4	26.0	8.8	8.8
Farm laborers	161	100.0	16.8	32.3	26.5	16.8	13.6
All others	351	100.0	25.1	30.2	22.8	13.1	8.8

† Percent not computed on a base of less than 50 cases.

Source: Survey of Rural Households which Received Relief in June and were Closed Prior to December 1, 1935.

### Average Amount of Relief

Variations in the amounts of relief granted to families in the eight drought States in June 1935 reflect, to some extent, the varying intensity of drought effect in those States, although differences in administrative policies in each State account for some of the differences in expenditures.

The highest average relief benefits were granted to rural households in Colorado (\$23), North Dakota (\$21), and Nebraska (\$20). The average June 1935 grant in the eight drought States was \$17<sup>26</sup> (table 9), and this varied according to size of household from \$12 for a single person to \$25 for a family of nine or more persons. In Oklahoma, the average grant per household was only \$11, and all grants by size of household were correspondingly low in comparison with the other drought States surveyed.

The amount of relief granted each household was also related to the type of occupation pursued by the head of the family. Nonagricultural workers received the largest average grants, \$18, as compared with an average of \$16 for agricultural workers and for those with no usual occupation. The lowest average amount, \$15, was granted to those families whose heads were not workers (table 10). The contribution of farm products to the family living was taken into consideration in determining the

<sup>26</sup>The average benefit for all rural relief households in the United States was \$16.90. (Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.)

size of grants, which accounts for the comparatively lower amounts for agricultural than for nonagricultural workers.

Table 9—AVERAGE AMOUNT OF RELIEF GRANTED TO RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, BY SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD, JUNE 1935<sup>a</sup>  
(74 Sample Counties)

State	Total	Average Grant by Size of Household								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 and Over
Total	\$17	\$12	\$13	\$15	\$16	\$18	\$19	\$21	\$22	\$25
Colorado	23	14	18	23	25	28	27	32	33	41
Iowa	18	8	14	15	19	20	22	22	25	27
Kansas	19	12	14	18	20	22	27	26	24	29
Montana	17	8	13	15	16	19	22	24	25	29
Nebraska	20	13	16	18	20	22	24	29	31	32
North Dakota	21	13	15	19	20	23	23	26	26	29
Oklahoma	11	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
South Dakota	16	10	16	14	17	17	18	18	20	19

<sup>a</sup>Exclusive of cases opened or reopened during the month.  
Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

In the agricultural group, farm owners and laborers received larger grants than tenants. In the nonagricultural group, white collar workers had the highest average grant (\$22), skilled and semiskilled workers received the same amount of relief (\$20), and unskilled workers were granted the smallest average amount (\$17).

Table 10—AVERAGE AMOUNT OF RELIEF GRANTED TO RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, BY USUAL OCCUPATION OF THE HEAD, JUNE 1935<sup>a</sup>  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation of Head	Average Grant								
	Total	Colorado	Iowa	Kansas	Montana	Nebraska	North Dakota	Oklahoma	South Dakota
Total	\$17	\$23	\$18	\$19	\$17	\$20	\$21	\$11	\$16
Agriculture	16	26	20	19	17	20	21	11	13
Farm operators	17	26	20	18	17	20	21	11	12
Owners	17	26	19	16	17	21	21	11	11
Tenants	15	26	20	18	17	20	21	11	13
Farm laborers	17	24	20	21	19	19	20	10	19
Nonagriculture	18	24	17	22	20	22	26	11	21
White collar	22	31	20	23	†	†	32	11	22
Skilled	20	23	17	21	21	†	26	12	21
Semiskilled	20	28	29	22	19	†	24	12	23
Unskilled	17	22	17	21	20	20	22	11	20
No usual occupation	16	†	†	†	†	†	†	10	17
Not working or seeking work	15	17	15	14	13	16	16	10	14

† Average not computed for less than 50 cases.

<sup>a</sup>Exclusive of cases opened or reopened during the month.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

### Types of Relief

During June 1935, as figure 7 indicates, over 60 percent of all cases in the drought area were on work relief only and 20 percent were on direct relief only. Less than 20 percent of the

## 24 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

cases in the entire area received both direct and work relief during that month.<sup>27</sup> The proportion of cases receiving each type of relief varied widely by States, however, largely because of differences in State and local administrative policies with regard to the type of relief given. South Dakota did not have any cases receiving both types of relief, but in Colorado and North Dakota about 35 percent of the cases were on direct and work relief during the month (figure 7 and appendix table 5).

The situation had changed considerably by October 1935, since many E.R.A. work projects had been discontinued with the transfer of workers to the Works Program. Of those remaining on relief rolls in the drought States, 57 percent were given direct relief only and 33 percent work relief only, while 10 percent received both types of relief.

In October, more than three-fifths of all relief cases in seven of the eight States were receiving direct relief only. In Oklahoma, however, only about 7 percent of the cases were receiving direct relief only, and 77 percent were still receiving work relief only.

Montana showed the least change in type of relief granted between June and October 1935. Because of the isolated, sparsely settled nature of the rural areas in this State, there had never been an extensive work program in operation. Practically all small projects which had been in operation in rural areas were liquidated in the spring of 1935 in anticipation of the Works Program.

---

<sup>27</sup>In some instances, cases received both types of relief concurrently; in others, they were transferred from one type of aid to the other during the month.

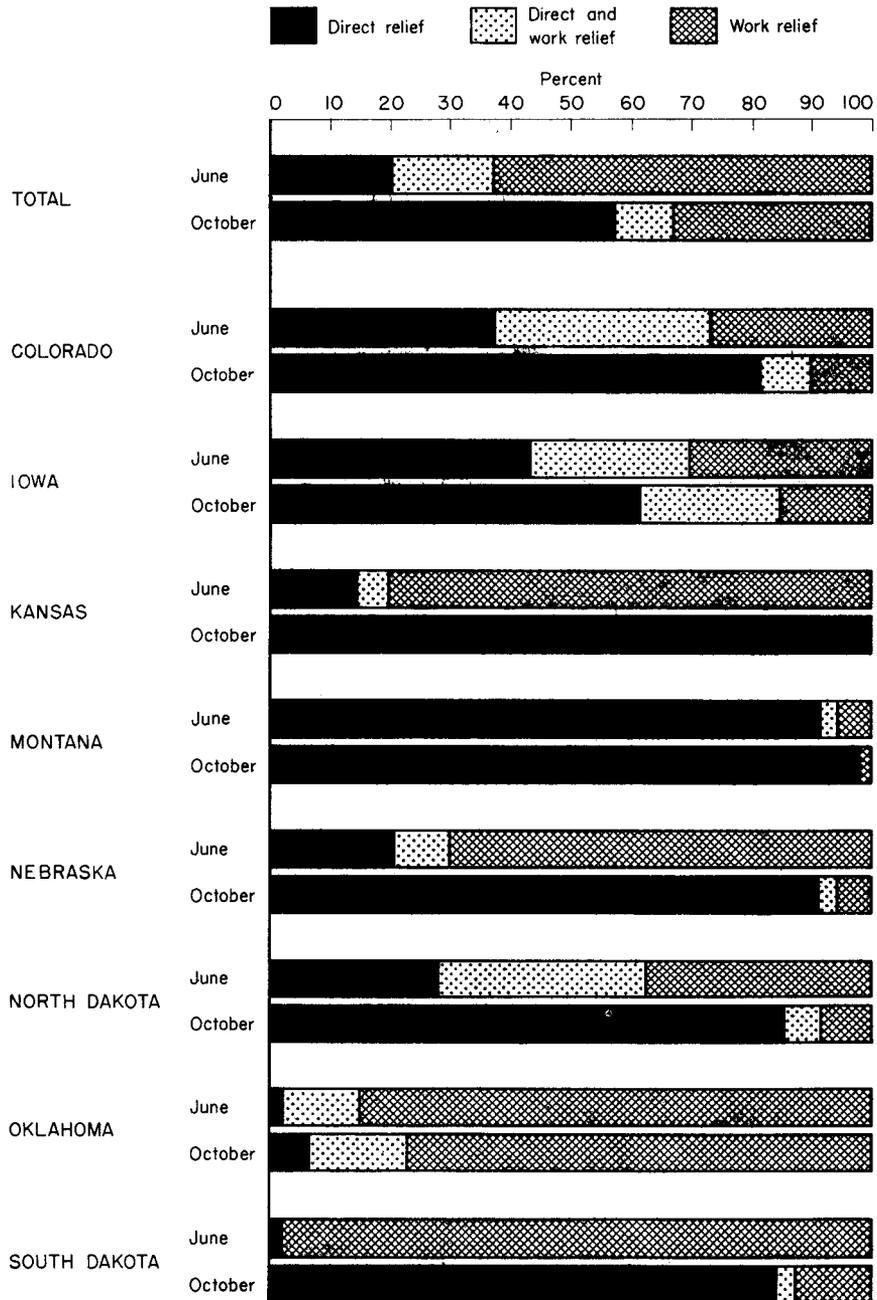


FIG. 7 - TYPES OF RELIEF GRANTED BY F.E.R.A. IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES  
 June and October 1935

SOURCE: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population  
 147401 O-37-3

AF-2199, W.P.A.



## PERSONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS

A study of the personal and occupational characteristics of rural relief households is an important means of determining the nature of the relief problem and the ability of the households to cope with economic disaster. This section will attempt to describe the human factors involved in the relief problem in the drought States by presenting statistical data pertaining to residence distribution, age of heads, size of households, family composition, employability composition, usual and current occupations of heads and members, tenure status, size of farms, and education of heads of relief households.

In June 1935, 92 percent of the relief households had one or more gainful workers, which would indicate that, given the opportunity, most of the relief families in the drought States could sustain themselves. When this study was made, three-fourths of the heads usually engaged in agriculture were still trying to make a living from the land.

In its efforts to remain self-supporting, the average relief family in the drought States in the summer of 1935 was somewhat handicapped by having more members than did the average family in the general rural population in the same area. The head of the household was somewhat younger than the average head in the rural population. In most cases, the household consisted of husband, wife, and children, and, in the majority of cases, the relief household was entirely dependent on the husband and father, who was the sole worker. The average farm of relief families was much smaller than the average for the area.

The rural relief problem in the drought States was intensified by the high percentage of tenants who came on relief. In all eight States, tenants were overrepresented on relief rolls. There was also a relatively high rate of displacement among the tenants in June 1935 as measured by the number who had current employment on farms,

### Residence Distribution

In the eight drought States as a whole, 61 percent of the rural relief households were in the open country<sup>28</sup> and 39 percent in

---

<sup>28</sup>Open country—outside of centers of 50 inhabitants or more. Villages—centers of 50 to 2,499 inhabitants.

## 28 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

villages (table 11). In Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska, 68, 61, and 70 percent, respectively, of the relief households lived in villages, which was not surprising since a large proportion of relief heads in these States followed nonagricultural pursuits. North Dakota and Oklahoma had the highest proportion of relief cases in the open country as might be expected from the fact that the great majority of the heads of households were farm operators or farm laborers.

Table 11—RESIDENCE OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES,  
JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

State	Total Rural		Open Country		Village	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	29,760	100.0	18,130	60.9	11,630	39.1
Colorado	2,128	100.0	984	46.2	1,144	53.8
Iowa	2,156	100.0	690	32.0	1,466	68.0
Kansas	2,796	100.0	1,098	39.3	1,698	60.7
Montana	1,594	100.0	1,024	64.2	570	35.8
Nebraska	2,286	100.0	698	30.5	1,588	69.5
North Dakota	6,230	100.0	4,634	74.4	1,596	25.6
Oklahoma	9,430	100.0	7,318	77.6	2,112	22.4
South Dakota	3,140	100.0	1,684	53.6	1,456	46.4

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

### Age of Heads of Households

Age of heads of households is closely related to family composition, since dependent children are usually associated with young households. Heads of rural relief households in the eight drought States were much younger than those in the general population of those States.

The median age of male relief heads was 40.4 years (table 12), while, according to the 1930 Census, 44.3 years was the median for all rural male heads in the same area. Oklahoma, with a median age of only 36.2 years, had the youngest male relief heads, while North Dakota, South Dakota, and Iowa had the next youngest (41.4 years for the Dakotas, and 41.2 years for Iowa).

The median age for male heads in the general rural population in Oklahoma was 42.2 years; in North Dakota, 44.7 years; in South Dakota, 43.9 years; and in Iowa, 45.5 years. The median ages for male relief heads in Colorado, Montana, and Nebraska were practically identical with the census median ages for rural male heads (table 12).

In five of the eight drought States, the greatest number of male heads were in the 25 to 34-year age group (appendix table 6). In Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota, only a little over two-fifths of the male heads were 45 years of age or older, while the proportion of male heads in this group in other States (excepting Oklahoma with only 32 percent) ranged from 46 to 51 percent.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS 29

These data agree with the results of a study<sup>29</sup> in October 1933 which included the Cash Grain and Wheat Areas. At that time, also, heads on relief were found to be younger than heads in the general population.

Table 12—MEDIAN AGE OF MALE AND FEMALE HEADS OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS AND OF MALE HEADS OF TOTAL RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES,<sup>a</sup> JUNE 1935

State	Median Age of Heads of Relief households <sup>b</sup>			Median Age of Male Heads in Total Rural Households, 1930
	All Heads	Male	Female	
Total	40.9	40.4	46.9	44.3
Colorado	44.9	44.1	51.7	44.1
Iowa	41.5	41.2	47.0	45.5
Kansas	42.9	42.3	46.7	45.4
Montana	45.4	44.8	49.4	45.0
Nebraska	45.1	44.9	46.4	44.0
North Dakota	41.8	41.4	47.7	44.7
Oklahoma	36.7	36.2	44.5	42.2
South Dakota	41.7	41.4	46.3	43.9

<sup>a</sup>See appendix table 6 for distribution of heads of relief households in individual States by age.

<sup>b</sup>Based on data for 74 sample counties.

Sources: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935 and Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population Vol. VI, table 13.

Female heads of relief households were older than male heads, their median age being 46.9 years for the eight States. However, there was considerable variation from State to State, the median age of female heads ranging from 44.5 years in Oklahoma to 51.7 years in Colorado.

Sex of Heads of Households

Of all heads of rural relief households in the eight drought States, 92 percent were males and 8 percent were females (table 13).

Table 13—SEX OF HEADS OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES,<sup>a</sup> JUNE 1935 (74 Sample Counties)

State	Total		Male	Female
	Number	Percent		
Total	29,760	100.0	91.8	8.2
Colorado	2,128	100.0	86.8	13.2
Iowa	2,156	100.0	94.2	5.8
Kansas	2,796	100.0	88.6	11.4
Montana	1,594	100.0	89.7	10.3
Nebraska	2,266	100.0	84.3	15.7
North Dakota	6,230	100.0	93.2	6.8
Oklahoma	9,430	100.0	95.4	4.6
South Dakota	3,140	100.0	89.6	10.4

<sup>a</sup>See appendix table 6 for distribution of heads of households in individual States by sex.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

<sup>29</sup>McCormick, T. C., *Comparative Study of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households*, Research Monograph II, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, 1935, p. 89, table 21.

### 30 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Oklahoma had the highest percentage of male heads of households (95 percent), while Nebraska had the highest percentage of female heads (16 percent).

#### Size of Households

In general, rural relief households in June 1935 were larger than households in the general rural population in 1930. The median size of rural relief families was 4.5 persons for the 8 States (table 14) in comparison with a median size of 4.1 persons for all rural households.

Table 14—MEDIAN SIZE OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, BY RESIDENCE, JUNE 1935

State	Average Number of Persons			
	Relief Households <sup>a</sup>			All Rural Households (1930 Census)
	Total	Open Country	Village	
Total	4.5	4.8	4.0	4.1
Colorado	3.9	4.2	3.6	4.0
Iowa	4.6	4.7	4.6	3.9
Kansas	3.9	4.4	3.6	3.9
Montana	4.5	4.7	4.0	3.7
Nebraska	4.0	4.6	3.7	4.1
North Dakota	5.0	5.3	4.3	4.6
Oklahoma	4.8	4.9	4.5	4.4
South Dakota	4.0	4.3	3.7	4.3

<sup>a</sup>Based on data for 74 sample counties.

Sources: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935 and Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population Vol. VI, table 5.

The average size of rural relief families varied considerably from State to State. In both Kansas and Colorado the median size of rural relief families was only 3.9 persons. The small median size of the family in Kansas was due in part to the unusually high percentage of families consisting of husband and

Table 15—FAMILY COMPOSITION OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Family Composition	Total	Colorado	Iowa	Kansas	Montana	Nebraska	North Dakota	Oklahoma	South Dakota
Total: Number	29,780	2,128	2,156	2,796	1,594	2,286	6,230	9,430	3,140
Total: Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Husband-wife	13.0	14.0	11.6	18.2	11.5	15.4	10.0	12.5	14.8
Husband-wife-children	65.3	53.8	73.3	53.6	62.5	54.3	70.4	71.7	58.3
Nonfamily man	11.3	16.6	7.4	14.2	13.6	13.0	10.6	8.6	14.5
Nonfamily woman	3.1	5.9	1.3	5.2	4.0	7.0	2.1	1.2	5.0
Father-children	2.5	2.8	2.2	2.6	2.4	2.1	2.7	2.7	2.1
Mother-children	4.8	6.9	4.2	6.2	6.0	3.2	4.2	3.3	5.3

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

wife without children (table 15). In Colorado, the small median size was the result of the exceptionally high proportion of single men on the relief rolls. The largest rural relief

families were in North Dakota, where they averaged five persons, and in Oklahoma, where they averaged almost as many persons.

In all drought States, families residing in the open country were larger than those in villages. The large size of open-country families in these States has particular bearing on the relief problem in view of the fact that such large percentages of rural relief households lived in the open country.

#### Family Composition

The composition of families receiving relief is a good indication of the kind of relief and rehabilitation problems in each State. Normal families, consisting of husband and wife, or of husband, wife, and children, formed 78 percent of all rural relief households in the eight drought States in June 1935 (table 15). The percentages of normal families were highest in Iowa (85 percent), Oklahoma (84 percent), and North Dakota (80 percent). Of all rural families in the United States in 1930, 81 percent were normal according to the present definition.<sup>30</sup>

Single men and women constituted a relatively large proportion of the total rural relief load in the area (14 percent). Colorado had the highest proportion of such cases on the relief rolls (23 percent).

Broken families, consisting of father or mother with children, did not occur in large enough numbers to constitute a special relief problem. Only 7 percent of the rural relief families in all eight States were of this type. Nebraska and Colorado had the largest number of households containing broken families (10 percent each).

#### Employability Composition

The number of gainful workers,<sup>31</sup> especially male workers, in a family is directly related to the prospects of a family sustaining itself if given the economic opportunity. Only 8 percent of all rural relief households in the eight drought States had no gainful workers, but almost two-thirds of them (63 percent) were dependent on one male worker (table 16). The proportions of such households ranged from 55 percent in Nebraska to 72 percent in Iowa. In Nebraska, 19 percent of the relief households had no gainful workers; in Kansas, 16 percent had none; and in Montana, 13 percent had none. Less than 5 percent of the total households were entirely dependent on female workers.

---

<sup>30</sup>"Types of Families in the United States," *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Special release, August 5, 1935, table 1.

<sup>31</sup>Persons 16 to 64 years of age inclusive, working or seeking work.

## 32 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

### Usual Occupation of Heads of Households

Another important aspect of the relief situation is the occupational background of the heads of families. The proportion of farmers on relief in the eight drought States was far higher than the proportion of farmers on relief in all rural areas of

Table 16—EMPLOYABILITY COMPOSITION OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Employability Composition	Total	Colorado	Iowa	Kansas	Montana	Nebraska	North Dakota	Oklahoma	South Dakota
Total: Number	29,760	2,128	2,156	2,796	1,594	2,286	6,230	9,430	3,140
Total: Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
One male worker only	62.8	57.9	72.2	59.7	59.7	55.2	57.7	68.4	63.3
Two or more male workers only	12.5	9.4	12.1	10.5	10.8	9.0	12.9	15.0	11.6
One female worker only	3.9	6.2	2.8	5.1	4.8	7.0	2.3	2.7	6.1
Two or more female workers only	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.4	1.1	0.9	0.6	0.8	0.5
One male and one female worker	5.4	5.0	6.9	4.5	6.3	4.3	5.7	5.7	4.7
One male and two or more female workers	1.6	0.9	0.6	1.2	0.6	0.9	2.7	1.9	1.1
Two males and one female worker	4.0	2.7	1.8	2.4	3.2	2.9	7.5	3.6	3.1
Two males and two or more female workers	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.9	3.0	0.8	1.1
No workers	7.9	17.3	2.9	15.7	12.9	18.9	7.6	1.1	8.5

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

the United States. In June 1935, 12 percent of the farm operators by usual occupation<sup>32</sup> in the eight drought States were on relief rolls (table 17) in comparison with only 6 percent for the country as a whole. Within the eight States, 68 percent of all heads of rural relief households were farmers (table 18) while the comparable proportion for all sample counties in the United States was only 53 percent.<sup>33</sup>

Table 17—PERCENT OF FARM OPERATORS<sup>a</sup> ON RELIEF IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

State	Percent of Total Farmers on Relief, 1935
Total	12.1
Colorado	11.0
Iowa	2.1
Kansas	3.7
Montana	11.6
Nebraska	4.2
North Dakota	26.6
Oklahoma	23.3
South Dakota	11.7

<sup>a</sup>By usual occupation.

Sources: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935 and United States Census of Agriculture: 1935.

The proportions of heads of relief households who were farmers and farm laborers varied somewhat among the drought States.

<sup>32</sup>Usual occupation is defined as any job held for at least 4 consecutive weeks within the last 10 years.

<sup>33</sup>Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS 33

Table 18—USUAL OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYABLE HEADS<sup>a</sup> OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS  
IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation	Number	Percent
All 8 States		
Total	26,796	100.0
Agriculture	18,282	68.2
Nonagriculture	7,954	29.7
No usual occupation	560	2.1
Colorado		
Total	1,718	100.0
Agriculture	1,016	59.1
Nonagriculture	666	38.8
No usual occupation	36	2.1
Iowa		
Total	2,032	100.0
Agriculture	914	45.0
Nonagriculture	1,106	54.4
No usual occupation	12	0.6
Kansas		
Total	2,290	100.0
Agriculture	1,246	54.4
Nonagriculture	1,000	43.7
No usual occupation	44	1.9
Montana		
Total	1,342	100.0
Agriculture	946	70.5
Nonagriculture	382	28.5
No usual occupation	14	1.0
Nebraska		
Total	1,792	100.0
Agriculture	974	54.3
Nonagriculture	774	43.2
No usual occupation	44	2.5
North Dakota		
Total	5,608	100.0
Agriculture	4,580	81.6
Nonagriculture	1,002	17.9
No usual occupation	26	0.5
Oklahoma		
Total	9,222	100.0
Agriculture	6,844	74.2
Nonagriculture	2,232	24.2
No usual occupation	146	1.6
South Dakota		
Total	2,792	100.0
Agriculture	1,762	63.1
Nonagriculture	792	28.4
No usual occupation	238	8.5

<sup>a</sup>Persons 16 to 64 years of age inclusive, working or seeking work.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

## 34 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

North Dakota had the highest proportion (82 percent) of agricultural workers in the relief load, followed by Oklahoma (74 percent), and Montana (71 percent). Iowa was the only State in which nonagricultural workers predominated on the relief rolls.

### Tenure Status

In June 1935, more than seven-tenths of the farm-operator heads of relief households in the drought States were tenants (table 19). The percentage of farm operators on relief who were tenants was highest in Oklahoma (87 percent) and lowest in Montana (44 percent). In each of the eight States, tenants were greatly overrepresented on relief.

Table 19—TENURE STATUS OF FARM OPERATORS ON RELIEF AND IN THE GENERAL POPULATION IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, 1935

State	Farm Operators <sup>a</sup> on Relief, <sup>b</sup> June 1935				Percent of Tenants Among Total Farm Operators, 1935
	Total		Owners	Tenants <sup>c</sup>	
	Number	Percent			
Total	14,530	100.0	28.9	71.1	48.3
Colorado	700	100.0	31.7	68.3	39.0
Iowa	472	100.0	26.3	73.7	49.6
Kansas	728	100.0	22.8	77.2	44.0
Montana	838	100.0	56.3	43.7	27.7
Nebraska	544	100.0	26.0	74.0	49.3
North Dakota	4,154	100.0	43.4	56.6	39.1
Oklahoma	5,648	100.0	12.9	87.1	61.2
South Dakota	1,446	100.0	37.5	62.5	48.6

<sup>a</sup> by usual occupation.

<sup>b</sup> based on data for 74 sample counties.

<sup>c</sup> including sharecroppers.

Sources: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935 and United States Census of Agriculture: 1935.

### Usual Occupation of Members Other Than Heads

One-half of the members of relief households other than heads who were gainful workers reported agriculture as their usual occupation (table 20), as compared with 63 percent of the heads.

Table 20—USUAL OCCUPATION OF WORKERS OTHER THAN HEADS IN RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, JUNE 1935 (74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation	Total	Colorado	Iowa	Kansas	Montana	Nebraska	North Dakota	Oklahoma	South Dakota
Total: Number	12,598	624	698	840	548	754	3,978	4,004	1,152
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	50.5	49.3	24.1	32.6	41.6	46.4	63.1	49.7	46.2
Farm operators	1.3	0.6	0.3	0.7	2.6	1.9	1.4	1.1	1.6
Farm laborers	49.2	48.7	23.8	31.9	39.0	44.5	61.7	48.6	44.6
Nonagriculture	19.1	27.9	55.9	35.0	20.8	32.9	15.5	10.4	13.4
White collar	3.7	3.8	8.1	10.7	2.6	6.9	3.5	1.2	4.3
Skilled	0.6	0.6	1.4	1.4	—	0.3	0.4	0.3	1.6
Semiskilled	1.4	3.8	3.7	1.9	2.5	3.2	1.0	0.4	1.2
Unskilled	13.4	19.7	42.7	21.0	15.7	22.5	10.6	8.5	6.3
No usual occupation	30.4	22.8	20.0	32.4	37.6	20.7	21.4	39.9	40.4

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

Practically all of these agricultural workers were farm laborers, chiefly on the home farm. The smallest proportions of agricultural workers were found in Iowa and Kansas; the largest proportion, in North Dakota.

Two-thirds of the members whose usual occupations were in nonagricultural industries had worked at unskilled occupations. About one-third of the members who were reported as workers had not yet acquired experience at any occupation. The proportion was as high as 40 percent in both Oklahoma and South Dakota.

#### Current Occupation of Heads and Other Members of Households

A much higher proportion of agricultural than of nonagricultural workers was employed<sup>34</sup> at the usual occupation in June 1935 (table 21 and appendix tables 7 and 8). Of workers usually engaged in agriculture, 76 percent of the heads and 88 percent of the other members were currently employed at their usual occupation, as compared with 25 percent of the heads and 45 percent of the other members who were nonagricultural workers. Since practically all of the agricultural workers other than heads in rural relief households were farm laborers, it is assumed they were working on the home farms and were not comparable to farm laborers who were heads of families.

Only 5 percent of the farm owners by usual occupation were unemployed in June 1935. As farm owners made up only 16 percent of the total employable relief loads in the eight States, this displacement was a relatively minor factor in the relief situation. However, since farmers still on their farms were considered employed, the above percentage cannot be compared to unemployed groups with nonagricultural occupations.

Displacement of tenants, on the other hand, was a more serious factor, since tenants by usual occupation made up 39 percent of the employable relief load. In Kansas, where tenants constituted one-fourth of the relief load, over one-fourth of them were unemployed and seeking work (appendix table 8). Almost one-third of the tenants by usual occupation in Nebraska were unemployed and seeking work. The greatest proportionate displacement of tenants was in Iowa with almost two-fifths of the tenants in this category.

Almost seven-tenths of the heads of rural relief households who were farm laborers were unemployed and seeking work in the eight drought States in June 1935—a situation obviously the result of adverse economic conditions on farms.

Only a little more than 2 percent of those whose usual occupation was agriculture had shifted to nonagricultural employment by June 1935. The shift from nonagricultural to agricultural

---

<sup>34</sup>A farm operator residing on a farm was considered employed.

Table 21—CURRENT OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYABLE HEADS<sup>a</sup> OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES,<sup>b</sup> BY USUAL OCCUPATION, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation	Total		Current Occupation									
			Agriculture				Nonagriculture					Unemployed and Seeking Work
	Number	Percent	Total	Farm Owners	Farm Tenants <sup>c</sup>	Farm Laborers	Total	White Collar	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	
Total	26,796	100.0	54.2	15.1	34.3	4.6	9.0	1.2	0.7	0.6	6.5	36.8
Agriculture	18,282	100.0	76.3	21.6	48.6	6.1	2.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	1.8	21.5
Farm operators	14,530	100.0	88.7	27.0	60.3	1.4	1.7	0.2	0.1	0.1	1.3	9.6
Owners	4,200	100.0	94.2	92.4	1.5	0.3	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	5.0
Tenants <sup>c</sup>	10,330	100.0	86.5	0.4	84.3	1.8	2.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	1.6	11.4
Farm laborers	3,752	100.0	28.3	0.6	3.4	24.3	4.0	0.2	0.3	0.1	3.4	67.7
Nonagriculture	7,954	100.0	7.2	1.1	3.9	2.2	25.4	3.4	2.2	1.8	18.0	67.4
White collar	1,066	100.0	9.2	2.8	4.3	2.1	28.8	22.3	0.8	0.8	4.9	62.0
Skilled	1,338	100.0	7.5	1.0	4.6	1.9	20.8	0.9	11.7	0.6	7.6	71.7
Semiskilled	1,060	100.0	9.4	0.9	5.3	3.2	20.8	0.4	0.4	10.7	9.3	69.8
Unskilled	4,490	100.0	6.1	0.7	3.3	2.1	27.1	0.4	0.1	0.2	26.4	66.8
No usual occupation	560	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.0

<sup>a</sup> Persons 16 to 64 years of age inclusive, working or seeking work.

<sup>b</sup> See appendix table 7 for data by individual States.

<sup>c</sup> Including sharecroppers.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

employment was slightly larger (7 percent). This shift was greatest in Oklahoma, where 14 percent of the nonagricultural workers had become farmers or farm laborers.

The shift from ownership to tenancy was not great in the eight drought States (2 percent). The financial aid given to owners by Federal agencies can be assumed to be the reason for this small occupational change in a period of acute agricultural distress.

#### Size of Farms

The ability of a farmer to succeed in agriculture is related to whether or not he has sufficient acreage for the type of farming practiced in a given area. In 13 representative counties in drought States studied during the spring of 1935,<sup>35</sup> farm owners and tenants on relief were found to be operating farms considerably smaller in size than the average farm operated by nonrelief farmers.

The average farm of operators on relief in the two Wheat Areas in June 1935 was much smaller in size than that operated by farmers in the general population. In the Spring Wheat Area, the average-sized farm of owners on relief was 338 acres, against 745 acres for all owners; and the average-sized farm of tenants on relief was 310 acres against 483 acres for all tenants. The Winter Wheat Area reported average sizes of 146 and 115 acres for owners and tenants on relief, as compared with 423 and 304 acres for all owners and tenants.<sup>36</sup>

#### Length of Continuous Residence

In general, relief clients had settled in the drought States long before the recent drought period. Over one-half of the farm operators in the June 1935 sample had resided in the same county for 20 years or more. Only 13 percent of the operators had been living in their county of residence for less than 5 years. However, there had been a fairly constant rate of migration into the drought States during each of the 5 preceding years (table 22).

The proportions of farm operators who had maintained continuous residence in the county for 20 years or more ranged from 39 percent in Colorado to 71 percent in North Dakota.

---

<sup>35</sup> See series of bulletins on natural and economic factors affecting rural relief and rehabilitation in the drought area, Research Bulletins K-1 to K-13, Resettlement Administration, 1936.

<sup>36</sup> Asch, Berta and Mangus, A. R., *Farmers on Relief and Rehabilitation*, op. cit., chapter VI.

38 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

However, 64 percent of the cases in Colorado reported residences in the county for at least 10 years.

Table 22—LENGTH OF LAST CONTINUOUS RESIDENCE IN COUNTY OF FARM OPERATORS ON RELIEF IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, JUNE 1935 (74 Sample Counties)

State	Total <sup>a</sup>		Years								
	Number	Percent	Less Than 1	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10-19	20 and Over
Total	12,660	100.0	0.4	2.8	3.0	3.2	3.5	3.8	12.0	19.0	52.3
Colorado	698	100.0	0.9	2.0	3.7	4.9	4.9	5.1	14.6	25.2	38.7
Iowa	472	100.0	0.9	1.7	4.2	2.5	4.7	3.0	8.5	13.1	61.4
Kansas	728	100.0	-	4.7	3.3	3.6	6.6	2.7	12.9	11.5	54.7
Montana	836	100.0	-	3.1	1.4	1.7	2.4	2.2	16.5	26.1	46.6
Nebraska	536	100.0	0.4	4.1	5.2	6.3	3.4	4.5	12.3	21.3	42.5
North Dakota	3,812	100.0	0.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.6	8.8	14.0	70.6
Oklahoma	5,370	100.0	0.5	3.8	4.1	4.5	4.6	5.4	13.4	22.0	41.7
South Dakota	208	100.0	1.0	1.0	2.9	1.0	2.9	6.7	14.4	17.3	52.8

<sup>a</sup>Exclusive of unknowns.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

Education of Heads of Relief Households

Relief heads of households in October 1935 in eight drought States usually had had only an elementary school education. The median grade completed varied little from State to State (table 23).

Table 23—GRADE ATTAINMENT IN SCHOOL OF HEADS OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, OCTOBER 1935 (74 Sample Counties)

School Grade or Year Completed	Total	Colorado	Iowa	Kansas	Montana	Nebraska	North Dakota	Oklahoma	South Dakota
Total: Number	17,556	1,156	1,238	1,756	766	1,200	3,440	6,660	1,340
Total: Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No schooling	3.5	2.2	1.6	2.1	4.2	1.8	4.2	4.7	1.8
Less than 4 years	7.2	6.4	6.0	4.1	4.2	6.5	6.2	10.1	4.0
4-5 years	17.8	12.6	16.2	13.9	15.9	11.0	14.4	24.9	9.6
6 years	10.3	6.6	12.6	7.5	9.1	9.0	8.3	13.0	8.7
7 years	9.7	8.7	5.3	9.6	8.4	5.5	12.0	10.2	10.4
8 years	36.3	43.5	43.5	46.5	41.3	41.1	41.7	24.9	46.1
High school									
1 year	4.7	6.6	2.6	4.8	5.2	5.3	2.9	5.3	5.2
2 years	3.4	5.0	4.4	3.2	4.4	5.0	3.6	2.6	3.3
3 years	1.5	1.7	2.1	1.0	0.5	3.2	1.5	1.3	1.2
4 years	4.3	4.5	5.3	6.7	3.9	9.5	3.7	2.4	6.9
College									
1 year	0.5	0.9	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.9
2 years	0.5	1.0	-	0.1	0.8	0.3	0.6	0.4	1.2
3 years	0.1	-	-	0.2	-	0.3	0.3	-	0.3
4 years	0.2	0.3	0.2	-	1.0	0.7	0.1	-	0.4
Graduate	*	-	-	-	0.3	-	-	-	-
Median year completed	8.0	8.3	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.4	8.1	6.8	8.3

\*Less than 0.05 percent.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, October 1935.

Only in Oklahoma did the median fall below the eighth grade. In that State it was 6.8, reflecting the limited educational

opportunities in most southern and southwestern States. However, Montana and North Dakota had almost as many illiterate heads of households as did Oklahoma. Only 1 percent of the household heads in all eight States combined had attended college and practically no college graduates were reported.



Appendix A

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES



## APPENDIX A

Table 1—NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED<sup>a</sup> BY WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION<sup>b</sup>  
IN 57 COUNTIES OF THE DROUGHT AREA, BY SUBREGIONS,  
SEPTEMBER 1935 THROUGH DECEMBER 1936

Month and Year	Total 57 Counties	Total 45 Counties	Subregion				
			Northern Great Plains	Western Corn Belt	Winter Wheat	Spring Wheat	Southwestern Great Plains
1935							
September	278	147	c	20	127	c	c
October	1,172	822	147	153	434	73	15
November	11,073	5,847	361	1,026	2,513	1,190	757
December	17,772	10,414	749	2,233	3,527	2,428	1,477
1936							
January	19,225	10,155	705	2,100	3,686	2,098	1,566
February	19,254	10,398	781	2,440	3,659	1,939	1,579
March	19,243	10,460	740	2,563	3,621	1,968	1,568
April	14,838	8,272	626	1,893	2,903	1,509	1,341
May	12,894	6,894	578	1,529	2,611	1,002	1,174
June	11,702	6,214	498	1,423	2,337	931	1,025
July	12,587	7,755	1,271	1,291	1,704	2,566	923
August	17,638	12,905	2,330	1,842	2,241	5,282	1,210
September	26,829	19,234	3,618	3,456	2,882	8,029	1,249
October	32,846	22,208	4,171	4,524	3,206	9,089	1,218
November	34,019	22,919	4,098	5,020	3,404	9,269	1,128
December	24,709	15,288	3,215	3,733	3,506	3,958	876

<sup>a</sup>Exclusive of nonrelief employees.

<sup>b</sup>As of last pay roll in month.

<sup>c</sup>No work project in operation.

Source: Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration.

Table 2—EMPLOYMENT ON WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION PROJECTS, AS OF LAST WEEK IN EACH MONTH,  
IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES AND THE UNITED STATES, 1936

State	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
United States	2,925,605	3,035,852	2,871,637	2,570,315	2,339,740	2,255,898	2,249,357	2,376,565	2,476,966	2,576,691	2,478,062	2,187,976
Total 8 States	279,910	286,991	252,672	204,842	185,518	176,534	206,731	272,831	329,695	365,954	321,607	207,069
Colorado	42,186	42,764	39,033	33,281	29,625	28,328	27,902	29,631	28,641	27,278	27,307	20,018
Iowa	33,679	35,198	30,760	26,527	21,113	19,408	19,047	23,139	28,472	33,658	28,594	21,420
Kansas	43,863	47,390	45,076	39,298	34,473	30,402	31,988	40,989	47,899	53,995	53,507	40,301
Montana	16,296	18,522	19,861	14,162	10,773	10,489	13,475	18,319	20,791	21,706	21,993	9,239
Nebraska	20,424	23,945	21,497	19,125	16,238	14,512	14,194	23,468	24,981	31,385	29,562	19,253
North Dakota	13,476	12,980	11,997	10,990	8,717	8,399	23,462	41,378	42,708	45,541	32,120	17,997
Oklahoma	93,051	90,593	69,669	49,654	54,503	55,596	55,063	58,357	82,093	87,257	87,162	58,118
South Dakota	16,935	15,591	14,779	11,805	10,076	9,400	21,600	37,550	54,110	65,134	41,362	20,723

Source: Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, Works Progress Administration.

Table 3—REASON FOR OPENING OF RURAL CASES IN THEIR FIRST RELIEF PERIOD IN  
EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, BY RESIDENCE, BY STATES, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Reason for Opening, by Residence		Total	Colo- rado	Iowa	Kansas	Mon- tana	Ne- braska	North Dakota	Okl- ahoma	South Dakota
Total rural:	Number	14,410	858	1,212	1,790	534	1,906	2,130	4,158	1,822
	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Loss of job in ordinary employment		13.8	23.8	38.3	19.9	19.4	13.3	14.4	3.6	8.2
Loss or depletion of assets		23.6	21.9	9.7	44.0	16.5	25.8	9.5	20.4	37.1
Crop failure or loss of livestock		33.2	28.4	11.1	21.2	39.7	18.5	57.4	40.5	30.9
Insufficient income		14.2	10.5	26.2	5.4	9.4	18.6	8.6	22.3	1.2
Old age, death, illness, loss of aid from relatives, or transfer to other agency		7.6	13.5	9.7	7.6	14.6	15.5	8.9	2.5	3.5
Miscellaneous		7.6	1.9	5.0	1.9	0.4	8.3	1.2	10.7	19.1
Total open country:	Number	8,132	374	396	788	326	602	1,410	3,184	1,052
	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Loss of job in ordinary employment		5.8	12.3	20.2	10.2	9.2	9.0	5.7	2.6	1.7
Loss or depletion of assets		16.0	13.4	7.1	35.5	12.3	17.3	3.7	14.9	25.9
Crop failure or loss of livestock		55.0	60.4	30.3	45.1	62.6	47.1	83.1	50.0	49.2
Insufficient income		12.0	4.3	27.7	4.1	6.7	16.3	3.8	20.2	0.4
Old age, death, illness, loss of aid from relatives, or transfer to other agency		4.0	8.0	8.1	4.6	9.2	8.3	3.7	2.1	2.5
Miscellaneous		7.2	1.6	6.6	0.5	—	2.0	—	10.2	20.3
Total village:	Number	6,278	484	816	1,002	208	1,304	720	974	770
	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Loss of job in ordinary employment		24.1	32.7	47.1	27.5	35.6	15.3	31.4	6.6	17.1
Loss or depletion of assets		33.5	28.5	11.0	50.7	23.1	29.8	20.8	38.6	52.5
Crop failure or loss of livestock		5.1	3.7	1.7	2.4	3.8	5.2	6.9	9.7	5.7
Insufficient income		16.9	15.3	25.5	6.4	13.5	19.6	18.1	29.1	2.3
Old age, death, illness, loss of aid from relatives, or transfer to other agency		12.4	17.7	10.5	10.0	23.0	18.9	19.2	3.7	4.9
Miscellaneous		8.0	2.1	4.2	3.0	1.0	11.2	3.6	12.3	17.5

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

## 46 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Table 4—NUMBER OF MONTHS SINCE JANUARY 1932 IN WHICH UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF HAD  
BEEN RECEIVED<sup>a</sup> BY RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT  
DROUGHT STATES, BY USUAL OCCUPATION OF  
THE HEAD, BY STATES, OCTOBER 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation <sup>b</sup> of Head	Total		Number of Months							
	Number	Percent	1 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 46
Colorado										
Total	1,180	100.0	13.9	11.9	20.3	24.1	14.9	7.4	6.1	1.4
Agriculture	702	100.0	11.4	12.0	22.8	25.3	15.1	7.4	5.1	0.9
Farm operators	542	100.0	8.1	10.7	25.1	24.7	16.6	7.0	6.7	1.1
Farm laborers	160	100.0	22.5	16.2	15.0	27.5	10.0	8.8	-	-
Nonagriculture	372	100.0	16.7	14.5	17.7	23.1	15.6	6.5	5.4	0.5
White collar	52	100.0	34.6	11.5	11.5	23.1	3.9	7.7	7.7	-
Skilled	46	†	†	†	†	†	†	-	-	-
Semiskilled	30	†	-	†	†	†	†	-	†	-
Unskilled	244	100.0	15.6	10.7	18.8	23.0	18.0	8.2	4.9	0.8
No usual occupation	36	†	†	-	†	†	†	-	†	†
Not working or seeking work	70	100.0	11.4	2.9	14.3	20.0	14.3	17.1	14.3	5.7
Iowa										
Total	1,258	100.0	5.7	9.5	19.2	32.8	20.5	9.1	3.5	0.7
Agriculture	462	100.0	8.3	12.1	15.6	34.2	22.9	4.3	2.6	-
Farm operators	192	100.0	10.4	15.6	16.7	38.5	10.4	5.2	3.2	-
Farm laborers	270	100.0	6.7	9.6	14.8	31.1	31.9	3.7	2.2	-
Nonagriculture	742	100.0	4.6	8.4	21.3	31.4	18.6	10.8	3.3	1.1
White collar	48	†	†	†	†	†	†	-	†	-
Skilled	78	100.0	7.7	5.1	20.5	30.8	33.3	2.6	-	-
Semiskilled	56	100.0	-	17.9	25.0	25.0	17.9	3.5	10.7	-
Unskilled	560	100.0	3.6	7.5	22.5	30.7	17.1	13.6	3.6	1.4
No usual occupation	14	†	-	†	†	†	-	-	-	-
Not working or seeking work	40	†	-	-	†	†	†	†	†	-
Kansas										
Total	2,246	100.0	8.4	13.7	22.9	22.8	19.2	6.4	3.8	2.8
Agriculture	980	100.0	6.3	12.9	27.7	25.1	18.2	4.5	4.1	1.2
Farm operators	320	100.0	3.7	18.1	28.7	24.4	15.0	4.4	4.4	1.3
Farm laborers	660	100.0	7.6	10.3	27.3	25.5	19.7	4.5	3.9	1.2
Nonagriculture	652	100.0	8.6	15.6	20.6	24.8	18.1	7.4	2.8	2.1
White collar	62	100.0	6.5	29.0	25.8	3.2	29.0	-	-	6.5
Skilled	138	100.0	8.7	11.6	23.2	29.0	14.5	7.2	2.9	2.9
Semiskilled	100	100.0	14.0	18.0	12.0	30.0	16.0	4.0	2.0	4.0
Unskilled	352	100.0	7.4	14.2	21.0	25.6	18.2	9.7	3.4	0.5
No usual occupation	44	†	†	†	†	†	-	-	-	†
Not working or seeking work	570	100.0	10.2	13.0	16.5	16.8	23.8	9.1	4.6	6.0
Montana										
Total	892	100.0	7.4	8.3	17.5	18.1	13.7	16.4	16.6	2.0
Agriculture	580	100.0	6.2	7.9	15.9	16.2	12.8	18.3	20.3	2.4
Farm operators	520	100.0	3.5	6.5	14.6	16.5	13.9	20.4	22.3	2.3
Farm laborers	60	100.0	30.0	20.0	26.7	13.4	3.3	-	3.3	3.3
Nonagriculture	210	100.0	13.3	10.5	20.0	20.0	14.3	11.4	8.6	1.9
White collar	18	†	†	-	†	†	†	-	†	-
Skilled	32	†	†	-	†	†	†	†	†	-
Semiskilled	42	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	-
Unskilled	118	100.0	11.9	13.6	16.9	15.3	11.9	16.9	11.8	1.7
No usual occupation	4	†	-	-	-	†	-	-	†	-
Not working or seeking work	98	100.0	2.0	6.1	22.5	24.5	18.4	16.3	10.2	-
Nebraska										
Total	1,536	100.0	11.6	16.4	26.3	24.6	19.0	2.1	-	-
Agriculture	570	100.0	7.0	21.0	26.0	27.4	17.2	1.4	-	-
Farm operators	260	100.0	9.2	15.4	28.5	32.3	13.1	1.5	-	-

Table 4—NUMBER OF MONTHS SINCE JANUARY 1932 IN WHICH UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF HAD BEEN RECEIVED<sup>a</sup> BY RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, BY USUAL OCCUPATION OF THE HEAD, BY STATES, OCTOBER 1935—Continued  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation <sup>b</sup> of Head	Total		Number of Months							
	Number	Percent	1 - 4	5 - 9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-47
Nebraska—Continued										
Agriculture—Continued										
Farm laborers	310	100.0	5.2	25.8	23.9	23.2	20.6	1.3	-	-
Nonagriculture										
White collar	74	100.0	10.8	16.2	35.2	10.8	27.0	-	-	-
Skilled	82	100.0	14.6	-	29.3	26.8	29.3	-	-	-
Semiskilled	80	100.0	15.0	25.0	17.5	32.5	10.0	-	-	-
Unskilled	264	100.0	18.2	10.6	21.9	16.7	30.3	2.3	-	-
No usual occupation	24	†	†	-	†	-	-	†	-	-
Not working or seeking work	442	100.0	10.4	16.3	28.5	27.6	14.0	3.2	-	-
North Dakota										
Total	3,696	100.0	3.3	7.3	16.8	25.9	28.9	13.9	3.8	0.1
Agriculture										
Farm operators	2,488	100.0	3.1	6.9	17.8	25.3	28.1	15.9	2.7	0.2
Farm laborers	278	100.0	2.9	10.1	10.8	26.6	34.5	12.2	2.9	-
Nonagriculture										
White collar	92	100.0	8.7	21.7	26.1	13.0	17.4	13.1	-	-
Skilled	82	100.0	-	12.2	7.3	41.5	17.1	21.9	-	-
Semiskilled	60	100.0	6.7	-	10.0	33.3	30.0	6.7	13.3	-
Unskilled	360	100.0	4.4	5.6	13.3	28.3	35.6	2.8	10.0	-
No usual occupation	18	†	-	-	†	†	-	†	-	-
Not working or seeking work	318	100.0	3.1	5.7	18.2	24.5	31.5	10.7	6.3	-
Oklahoma										
Total	6,926	100.0	5.7	12.3	37.3	35.2	9.4	0.1	-	-
Agriculture										
Farm operators	3,748	100.0	3.7	10.7	38.6	35.8	11.1	0.1	-	-
Farm laborers	1,376	100.0	7.7	13.5	33.6	35.9	9.3	-	-	-
Nonagriculture										
White collar	112	100.0	3.6	19.6	28.6	39.3	8.9	-	-	-
Skilled	180	100.0	11.1	7.8	32.2	43.3	5.6	-	-	-
Semiskilled	210	100.0	11.4	19.1	33.3	30.5	5.7	-	-	-
Unskilled	1,012	100.0	9.1	12.5	41.1	31.4	5.9	-	-	-
No usual occupation	92	100.0	4.4	32.6	39.1	19.6	4.3	-	-	-
Not working or seeking work	196	100.0	4.1	18.4	32.6	40.8	4.1	-	-	-
South Dakota										
Total	1,560	100.0	6.3	9.6	13.8	24.4	31.9	9.1	3.2	1.7
Agriculture										
Farm operators	228	100.0	6.2	4.4	10.5	23.7	42.1	10.5	2.6	-
Farm laborers	324	100.0	3.7	10.5	12.3	25.9	30.3	9.3	4.3	3.7
Nonagriculture										
White collar	88	100.0	22.7	13.6	22.7	18.2	20.5	-	2.3	-
Skilled	132	100.0	1.5	10.6	10.6	16.7	40.9	15.2	3.0	1.5
Semiskilled	60	100.0	6.7	16.7	13.3	33.3	20.0	6.7	3.3	-
Unskilled	346	100.0	5.2	8.1	15.0	18.5	32.9	12.2	5.2	2.9
No usual occupation	82	100.0	9.7	12.2	17.1	43.9	12.2	4.9	-	-
Not working or seeking work	300	100.0	6.7	10.7	14.7	28.0	32.0	6.0	1.3	0.6

† Percent not computed on a base of less than 50 cases.

<sup>a</sup> Data are not available as to the number of continuous months in which relief was received.

<sup>b</sup> Usual occupation<sup>a</sup> is defined as any nonrelief job held for at least 4 consecutive weeks within the last 10 years.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, October 1935.

48 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Table 5—TYPE OF RELIEF RECEIVED BY RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES,  
BY STATES, JUNE AND OCTOBER 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Type of Relief <sup>a</sup>	June		October	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All 8 States				
Total	28,040	100.0	16,114	100.0
Direct only	5,652	20.2	9,232	57.3
Work only	17,632	62.8	5,330	33.1
Work and direct	4,756	17.0	1,552	9.6
Colorado				
Total	1,990	100.0	1,044	100.0
Direct only	742	37.3	850	81.5
Work only	536	26.9	108	10.3
Work and direct	712	35.8	86	8.2
Iowa				
Total	1,934	100.0	1,100	100.0
Direct only	836	43.2	674	61.3
Work only	590	30.5	172	15.6
Work and direct	508	26.3	254	23.1
Kansas				
Total	2,712	100.0	2,052	100.0
Direct only	396	14.6	2,048	99.8
Work only	2,178	80.3	4	0.2
Work and direct	138	5.1	—	—
Montana				
Total	1,466	100.0	752	100.0
Direct only	1,340	91.4	732	97.4
Work only	84	5.7	16	2.1
Work and direct	42	2.9	4	0.5
Nebraska				
Total	2,170	100.0	1,230	100.0
Direct only	450	20.7	1,122	91.2
Work only	1,520	70.1	70	5.7
Work and direct	200	9.2	38	3.1
North Dakota				
Total	5,850	100.0	2,836	100.0
Direct only	1,638	28.0	2,424	85.4
Work only	2,188	37.4	240	8.5
Work and direct	2,024	34.6	172	6.1
Oklahoma				
Total	8,862	100.0	5,920	100.0
Direct only	190	2.1	388	6.6
Work only	7,540	85.1	4,570	77.1
Work and direct	1,132	12.8	962	16.3
South Dakota				
Total	3,056	100.0	1,180	100.0
Direct only	60	2.0	994	84.2
Work only	2,996	98.0	150	12.7
Work and direct	—	—	36	3.1

<sup>a</sup>In some instances, cases received both types of relief concurrently; in others, they were transferred from one type of aid to the other during the month.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June and October 1935.

Table 6—AGE AND SEX OF HEADS OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES,  
BY STATES, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Sex and Age		Total	Colorado	Iowa	Kansas	Montana	Ne- braska	North Dakota	Oklahoma	South Dakota
Total males:	Number	27,316	1,848	2,032	2,476	1,430	1,924	5,802	8,992	2,812
	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
16-24 years		8.7	5.6	5.4	7.8	5.3	6.0	5.3	14.5	6.2
25-34 years		27.3	22.3	27.1	26.7	17.9	21.8	27.1	31.6	26.7
35-44 years		23.5	23.0	26.3	19.8	26.0	21.3	25.4	22.2	24.9
45-54 years		20.3	20.0	20.9	19.6	23.5	21.1	23.1	18.2	19.8
55-64 years		13.8	16.3	16.9	13.8	17.2	17.5	12.6	11.8	14.9
65 years and over		6.4	12.8	3.4	12.3	10.1	12.3	6.5	1.7	7.5
Median age		40.4	44.1	41.2	42.3	44.8	44.9	41.4	36.2	41.4
Total females:	Number	2,426	280	124	318	164	358	416	438	328
	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
16-24 years		8.5	6.4	6.5	6.3	1.2	10.6	9.1	8.7	13.4
25-34 years		14.9	13.6	9.7	13.8	8.5	19.0	12.0	17.4	18.3
35-44 years		20.6	17.9	27.4	25.8	25.6	16.2	19.2	24.2	14.6
45-54 years		25.2	17.1	27.4	19.5	30.5	22.4	30.8	32.4	20.7
55-64 years		16.8	24.3	22.6	12.0	19.5	10.6	17.8	16.0	18.3
65 years and over		14.0	20.7	6.4	22.6	14.7	21.2	11.1	1.3	14.7
Median age		46.9	51.7	47.0	46.7	49.4	46.4	47.7	44.5	46.3

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

50 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Table 7—CURRENT OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYABLE HEADS<sup>a</sup> OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, BY USUAL OCCUPATION, BY STATES, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation	Total		Current Occupation									Unemployed and Seeking Work
			Agriculture				Nonagriculture					
			Total	Farm Owners	Farm Tenants <sup>b</sup>	Farm Laborers	Total	White Collar	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	
Number	Percent											
Colorado												
Total	1,718	100.0	40.3	13.6	24.1	2.6	9.5	1.4	0.9	0.6	6.6	50.2
Agriculture	1,016	100.0	62.6	21.1	38.4	3.1	1.4	0.4	0.4	-	0.6	36.0
Farm operators	700	100.0	82.0	29.2	51.1	1.7	1.4	0.6	0.2	-	0.6	16.6
Owners	222	100.0	91.0	88.3	2.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.0
Tenants <sup>b</sup>	478	100.0	77.8	1.7	73.6	2.5	2.1	0.8	0.5	-	0.8	20.1
Farm laborers	316	100.0	19.6	3.2	10.1	6.3	1.3	-	0.6	-	0.7	79.1
Nonagriculture	666	100.0	8.4	3.0	3.6	1.8	22.5	3.0	1.8	1.5	16.2	69.1
White collar	68	100.0	11.8	2.9	8.9	-	29.4	26.5	2.9	-	-	58.8
Skilled	82	100.0	7.3	2.4	-	4.9	9.8	-	9.8	-	-	82.9
Semiskilled	86	100.0	9.3	2.3	4.7	2.3	16.3	-	2.3	7.0	7.0	74.4
Unskilled	430	100.0	7.9	3.3	3.3	1.3	25.1	0.5	-	0.9	23.7	67.0
No usual occupation	36	†	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	†
Iowa												
Total	2,032	100.0	20.8	5.1	10.5	5.2	15.8	2.5	1.8	0.6	10.9	63.4
Agriculture	914	100.0	41.4	10.9	20.4	10.1	9.0	0.2	1.5	0.2	7.1	49.6
Farm operators	472	100.0	62.3	21.2	36.9	4.2	5.9	-	1.3	0.4	4.2	31.8
Owners	124	100.0	79.0	75.8	1.6	1.6	4.8	-	-	1.6	3.2	16.2
Tenants <sup>b</sup>	348	100.0	56.3	1.7	49.4	5.2	6.3	-	1.7	-	4.6	37.4
Farm laborers	442	100.0	19.0	-	2.7	16.3	12.2	0.5	1.8	-	9.9	68.8
Nonagriculture	1,106	100.0	4.0	0.4	2.3	1.3	21.7	4.3	2.0	0.9	14.5	74.3
White collar	142	100.0	4.2	-	1.4	2.8	35.2	25.4	2.8	-	7.0	60.6
Skilled	152	100.0	3.9	1.3	2.6	-	21.1	1.3	11.9	-	7.9	75.0
Semiskilled	120	100.0	5.0	-	3.3	1.7	18.3	-	-	8.3	10.0	76.7
Unskilled	692	100.0	3.8	0.3	2.3	1.2	19.7	1.4	-	-	18.3	76.5
No usual occupation	12	†	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	†
Kansas												
Total	2,290	100.0	31.0	5.9	18.4	6.7	11.4	1.8	1.6	1.4	6.6	57.6
Agriculture	1,248	100.0	53.2	10.0	31.8	11.4	3.5	1.0	0.2	0.2	2.1	43.3
Farm operators	728	100.0	72.5	17.0	53.0	2.5	3.3	1.1	0.3	0.3	1.6	24.2
Owners	166	100.0	79.5	73.5	4.8	1.2	3.6	2.4	-	-	1.2	16.9
Tenants <sup>b</sup>	562	100.0	70.5	0.4	67.3	2.8	3.2	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.7	26.3
Farm laborers	518	100.0	25.8	-	1.9	23.9	3.9	0.8	-	0.4	2.7	70.3
Nonagriculture	1,000	100.0	4.8	1.2	2.4	1.2	21.8	3.0	3.4	2.8	12.6	73.4
White collar	134	100.0	9.0	4.5	3.0	1.5	22.4	16.4	1.5	1.5	3.0	68.6
Skilled	180	100.0	6.7	1.1	3.4	2.2	24.4	3.3	16.7	-	4.4	68.9
Semiskilled	152	100.0	10.5	1.3	5.3	3.9	22.4	1.3	-	17.2	3.9	67.1
Unskilled	534	100.0	1.5	0.4	1.1	-	20.6	-	0.4	-	20.2	77.9
No usual occupation	44	†	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	†
Montana												
Total	1,342	100.0	60.4	33.3	26.4	0.7	3.1	0.9	0.4	0.3	1.5	36.5
Agriculture	946	100.0	85.2	46.9	37.2	1.1	0.2	-	-	-	0.2	14.6
Farm operators	838	100.0	95.0	53.0	42.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.0
Owners	472	100.0	97.5	94.1	3.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.5
Tenants <sup>b</sup>	366	100.0	91.8	-	91.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.2
Farm laborers	108	100.0	9.3	-	-	9.3	1.9	-	-	-	1.9	88.8
Nonagriculture	382	100.0	1.0	0.5	0.5	-	10.5	3.1	1.6	1.0	4.8	88.5
White collar	40	†	-	-	-	-	†	†	-	-	-	†
Skilled	66	100.0	-	-	-	-	9.1	-	9.1	-	-	90.9
Semiskilled	90	100.0	2.2	-	2.2	-	6.7	-	-	4.5	2.2	91.1
Unskilled	186	100.0	-	-	-	-	8.6	-	-	-	8.6	91.4
No usual occupation	14	†	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	†
Nebraska												
Total	1,792	100.0	31.0	5.9	14.2	10.9	16.0	2.4	1.3	1.3	11.0	53.0
Agriculture	974	100.0	51.1	10.3	24.4	16.4	4.5	0.2	-	0.4	3.9	44.4
Farm operators	544	100.0	64.3	18.0	42.3	4.0	6.2	0.4	-	0.7	5.1	29.5
Owners	142	100.0	74.6	67.6	4.2	2.8	2.8	-	-	-	2.8	22.6
Tenants <sup>b</sup>	402	100.0	60.7	0.5	55.7	4.5	7.5	0.5	-	1.0	6.0	31.8
Farm laborers	430	100.0	34.4	0.5	1.9	32.0	2.3	-	-	-	2.3	63.3
Nonagriculture	774	100.0	7.5	0.8	2.1	4.6	31.3	5.2	3.1	2.6	20.4	61.2
White collar	118	100.0	6.8	3.4	1.7	1.7	37.3	28.8	-	1.7	6.8	55.9
Skilled	140	100.0	7.2	-	2.9	4.3	27.1	1.4	15.7	-	10.0	65.7
Semiskilled	130	100.0	7.7	-	3.1	4.6	20.0	1.5	-	12.3	6.2	72.3
Unskilled	396	100.0	7.8	0.5	1.6	5.7	34.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	33.2	57.5
No usual occupation	44	†	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	†

Table 7—CURRENT OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYABLE HEADS\* OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, BY USUAL OCCUPATION, BY STATES, JUNE 1935—Continued  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation	Total		Current Occupation									Unemployed and Seeking Work
			Agriculture				Nonagriculture					
	Number	Percent	Total	Farm Owners	Farm Tenants <sup>b</sup>	Farm Laborers	Total	White Collar	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	
North Dakota												
Total	5,608	100.0	73.7	31.9	39.6	2.2	4.4	0.9	0.7	0.7	2.1	21.9
Agriculture	4,980	100.0	89.4	38.8	48.1	2.5	0.3	0.1	*	0.1	0.1	10.3
Farm operators	4,154	100.0	95.5	42.6	52.6	0.3	0.3	0.1	*	0.1	0.1	4.2
Owners	1,802	100.0	98.2	97.8	0.4	—	0.2	0.1	0.1	—	—	1.6
Tenants <sup>b</sup>	2,352	100.0	93.5	0.3	92.7	0.5	0.4	*	—	0.2	0.2	6.1
Farm laborers	426	100.0	29.1	1.4	3.8	23.9	0.5	—	—	—	0.5	70.4
Nonagriculture	1,002	100.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	23.2	5.0	3.6	3.4	11.2	72.8
White collar	206	100.0	5.8	1.9	2.9	1.0	25.3	23.3	—	—	2.0	68.9
Skilled	244	100.0	4.1	0.8	2.5	0.8	20.5	0.8	14.7	2.5	2.5	75.4
Semiskilled	100	100.0	2.0	—	—	2.0	26.0	—	—	24.0	2.0	72.0
Unskilled	452	100.0	3.5	0.9	1.7	0.9	23.0	—	—	0.9	22.1	73.5
No usual occupation	26	†	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	†
Oklahoma												
Total	9,222	100.0	64.3	8.0	49.5	6.8	10.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	9.5	25.1
Agriculture	6,844	100.0	82.1	10.3	64.1	7.7	2.8	0.2	*	0.1	2.5	15.1
Farm operators	5,648	100.0	91.4	12.5	76.9	2.0	2.4	0.2	*	0.1	2.1	6.2
Owners	730	100.0	96.2	94.8	0.8	0.6	1.6	0.3	—	0.3	1.0	2.2
Tenants <sup>b</sup>	4,918	100.0	90.7	0.3	88.2	2.2	2.5	0.3	*	*	2.2	6.8
Farm laborers	1,196	100.0	38.5	0.2	3.5	34.8	4.7	—	—	—	4.7	56.8
Nonagriculture	2,232	100.0	13.6	1.2	8.3	4.1	35.2	1.7	1.0	0.9	31.6	51.2
White collar	194	100.0	22.7	5.2	11.3	6.2	28.9	16.5	—	1.0	11.4	48.4
Skilled	302	100.0	17.2	2.0	11.9	3.3	27.2	—	6.6	0.7	19.9	55.6
Semiskilled	284	100.0	19.0	1.4	12.0	5.6	26.1	—	0.7	5.6	19.8	54.9
Unskilled	1,452	100.0	10.6	0.4	6.5	3.7	39.5	0.4	—	—	39.1	49.9
No usual occupation	146	100.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	100.0
South Dakota												
Total	2,792	100.0	45.4	17.5	26.8	1.1	4.4	1.5	0.6	0.6	1.7	50.2
Agriculture	1,762	100.0	71.0	27.5	41.8	1.7	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	28.5
Farm operators	1,446	100.0	83.8	33.3	50.4	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	15.6
Owners	542	100.0	90.0	88.2	1.8	—	—	—	—	—	—	10.0
Tenants <sup>b</sup>	904	100.0	80.1	0.5	79.4	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	19.1
Farm laborers	316	100.0	12.0	0.6	2.5	8.9	0.6	0.6	—	—	—	87.4
Nonagriculture	792	100.0	2.3	0.5	1.8	—	14.1	4.5	2.0	1.8	5.8	83.6
White collar	164	100.0	3.7	1.2	2.5	—	25.6	21.9	—	1.2	2.5	70.7
Skilled	172	100.0	2.3	—	2.3	—	10.5	—	9.3	—	1.2	87.2
Semiskilled	98	100.0	2.0	2.0	—	—	18.4	—	—	12.3	6.1	79.6
Unskilled	358	100.0	1.7	—	1.7	—	9.5	—	—	—	9.5	88.8
No usual occupation	238	100.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	100.0

\* Less than 0.05 percent.

† Percent not computed on a base of less than 50 cases.

<sup>a</sup> Persons 16 to 64 years of age inclusive, working or seeking work.

<sup>b</sup> Including sharecroppers.

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

## 52 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Table 8—CURRENT OCCUPATION OF WORKERS OTHER THAN HEADS IN RURAL  
RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT DROUGHT STATES, BY  
USUAL OCCUPATION, BY STATES, JUNE 1935  
(74 Sample Counties)

Usual Occupation	Total		Current Occupation		
	Number	Percent	Agriculture	Nonagri- culture	Unemployed and Seeking Work
All 8 States					
Total	12,598	100.0	45.1	9.0	45.9
Agriculture	6,358	100.0	88.0	0.6	11.4
Nonagriculture	2,408	100.0	2.8	45.2	52.0
No usual occupation	3,832	100.0	0.4	0.1	99.5
Colorado					
Total	624	100.0	34.0	13.8	52.2
Agriculture	308	100.0	68.2	1.9	29.9
Nonagriculture	174	100.0	1.1	46.0	52.9
No usual occupation	142	100.0	—	—	100.0
Iowa					
Total	698	100.0	18.3	30.4	51.3
Agriculture	168	100.0	72.6	2.4	25.0
Nonagriculture	390	100.0	1.0	52.8	46.2
No usual occupation	140	100.0	1.4	1.4	97.2
Kansas					
Total	840	100.0	27.2	22.6	50.2
Agriculture	274	100.0	81.8	—	18.2
Nonagriculture	294	100.0	—	64.6	35.4
No usual occupation	272	100.0	1.5	—	98.5
Montana					
Total	548	100.0	38.0	5.8	56.2
Agriculture	228	100.0	90.4	—	9.6
Nonagriculture	114	100.0	1.8	28.1	70.1
No usual occupation	206	100.0	—	—	100.0
Nebraska					
Total	754	100.0	34.7	19.4	45.9
Agriculture	350	100.0	74.3	4.0	21.7
Nonagriculture	248	100.0	—	52.4	47.6
No usual occupation	156	100.0	1.3	1.3	97.4
North Dakota					
Total	3,978	100.0	59.3	5.0	35.7
Agriculture	2,510	100.0	92.3	0.2	7.5
Nonagriculture	616	100.0	7.1	31.5	61.4
No usual occupation	852	100.0	—	—	100.0
Oklahoma					
Total	4,004	100.0	44.8	4.5	50.7
Agriculture	1,988	100.0	89.2	0.5	10.3
Nonagriculture	418	100.0	3.8	41.2	55.0
No usual occupation	1,598	100.0	0.3	—	99.7
South Dakota					
Total	1,152	100.0	42.2	7.3	50.5
Agriculture	532	100.0	90.6	—	9.4
Nonagriculture	154	100.0	—	54.5	45.5
No usual occupation	466	100.0	0.9	—	99.1

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population, June 1935.

**Appendix B**

**SAMPLE COUNTIES**



APPENDIX B

45 SAMPLE COUNTIES IN 5 TYPE OF FARMING SUBREGIONS  
OF THE GREAT PLAINS AREA

<b>Northern Great Plains</b>	<b>Winter Wheat—Continued</b>
Montana	Oklahoma
Garfield	Custer
South Dakota	Harper
Custer	Kingfisher
Hand	Texas
Jackson	Carson
Meade	Floyd
Nebraska	Hansford
Sheridan	Colorado
Box Butte	Sedgwick
<b>Western Corn Belt</b>	<b>Spring Wheat</b>
Kansas	Montana
Jefferson	Chouteau
Smith	Daniels
Wabaunsee	Prairie
Nebraska	North Dakota
Hall	Burke
Hitchcock	Emmons
Pierce	Hettinger
Richardson	McHenry
Thayer	Ramsey
South Dakota	Stutsman
Brookings	South Dakota
Hutchinson	Corson
<b>Winter Wheat</b>	Edmunds
Kansas	<b>Southwestern Great Plains</b>
Barber	Colorado
Ford	Otero
Gove	Kit Carson
Pawnee	Kansas
Saline	Hamilton
Russell	
Seward	

Source: Survey of Public and Private Assistance in Rural and Town Areas.

56 RELIEF AND REHABILITATION IN THE DROUGHT AREA

12 SAMPLE COUNTIES USED TO AUGMENT 45 COUNTIES  
IN 5 TYPE OF FARMING SUBREGIONS

State	County
Colorado	Routt
Iowa	Monona Page
Kansas	Neosho
North Dakota	Richland
Oklahoma	Carter Hughes Jackson Lincoln Pushmataha Rogers
South Dakota	Grant

Source: Survey of Public and Private Assistance in Rural and Town Areas.

27 SAMPLE COUNTIES IN 3 DROUGHT STATES

Iowa	Montana	South Dakota
Appanoose	Chouteau	Brookings
Black Hawk	Daniels	Corson
Calhoun	Garfield	Custer
Emmet	Granite	Edmunds
Guthrie	Lake	Grant
Ida	Madison	Hutchinson
Mahaska	Meagher	Hand
Marshall	Prairie	Jackson
Monona		Meade
Washington		

Source: Survey of Rural Households Which Received Relief in June and Were Closed Prior to December 1, 1935.

## 74 SAMPLE COUNTIES IN 8 DROUGHT STATES

Colorado	Montana—Continued
Alamosa	Meagher
Archuleta	Frairie
Garfield	
Kiowa	Nebraska
Kit Carson	Box Butte
Routt	Hall
Sedgwick	Hitchcock
Teller	Johnson
	Morrill
	Pierce
Iowa	Richardson
Appanoose	Sheridan
Black Hawk	Thayer
Calhoun	
Emmet	North Dakota
Guthrie	Burke
Ida	Emmons
Mahaska	Hettinger
Marshall	McHenry
Monona	McKenzie
Washington	Ramsey
	Richland
	Stutsman
Kansas	
Barber	Oklahoma
Ford	Carter
Gove	Custer
Greenwood	Harper
Hamilton	Hughes
Jefferson	Jackson
Neosho	Kingfisher
Pawnee	Lincoln
Russell	Pushmataha
Saline	Rogers
Seward	
Smith	South Dakota
Wabaunsee	Brookings
	Corson
Montana	Custer
Chouteau	Edmunds
Daniels	Grant
Garfield	Hutchinson
Granite	Hand
Lake	Jackson
Madison	Meade

Source: Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population.

147401 O-37—5