WPA Makes Preparation to Take Care of 75 Per Cent of Farm Population in Dakotas.

Works Progress Administration officials in charge of drought operations reported today to Deputy Administrator Aubrey Williams that regardless of favorable changes in weather conditions approximately 75 per cent of the total farm population of North and South Dakota will need relief assistance by late fall.

The report was received by Mr. Williams from Assistant Administrator Howard O. Hunter and WPA Field Representative Howard Drew, who conferred over the weekend in Chicago following a survey of the drought areas of the two states.

"This means that about 60,000 farm families in each state are heading toward destitution because of drought devastation," Mr. Drew reported. "At least 120,000 farmers in the two states will need help by late fall or early winter, either in form of WPA jobs or loans and grants for feed and seed from other Federal agencies."

Approximately 22,000 drought victims are already at work on WPA projects --mostly water conservation-- in North Dakota and about 18,000 in South Dakota. These figures will be increased to about 25,000 in each state in the next few days.

"North and South Dakota are the only two States so far to have their full list of counties designated to the 'emergency' drought area by the United States
Department of Agriculture," Mr. Drew said. "I have just completed a county­by-county tour of both States and conditions are far worse than in 1934. Both cash and feed crops are completely gone except in a few isolated areas and water shortages, particularly in the western parts, are serious."

The WPA program in the two States is designed to restore water supplies and raise the sub-surface water level by building of dams. Similar projects completed under previous government relief programs have saved livestock in some areas, but many more dams will have to be constructed to counteract recession of underground water.

Meanwhile, Mr. Hunter announced that earlier predictions that 75,000 drought victims would be at work in the 13 states under his jurisdiction by next Tuesday are already realized. Reports today show this figure is already reached and that another 5,000 would be assigned by Tuesday and Wednesday.

---000---