For Release Tuesday morning
August 18, 1936

Williams Reports 80,501 Destitute Farmers Employed by WPA in Western Drought Area.

With week-end showers bringing little relief to crops of the west and mid-west, Works Progress Administration officials were throwing their machinery into high gear today in an effort to meet the mounting job needs of drought-stricken farmers.

Assistant Administrator Howard O. Hunter, in charge of Works Progress Administration drought operations in thirteen west and mid-west states, reported to Deputy Administrator Aubrey Williams that WPA employment of drought victims had reached 80,501.

Three states are now reporting their WPA drought employment in five figures, he said. North Dakota has crossed the 25,000 mark, South Dakota is nearing 18,000 and Missouri has approximately 10,000 on jobs.

Iowa, a more recent addition to the "emergency" drought area, reported 5,420 needy farmers assigned to projects with nearly as many actually at work.

Kansas, Nebraska, Montana and Kentucky reported from 5,000 to 6,000 at work, while Colorado, Minnesota and Wyoming reported figures ranging from 2,000 to 3,000.

In announcing today's figures, Mr. Hunter said all indications point to at least 100,000 drought victims being on Works Progress Administration jobs by
the first of next week when the President is scheduled to start his personal inspection tour of the drought area.

Reports that WPA would cease providing aid to drought victims when present quotas totaling 121,500 were reached was denied by Mr. Hunter.

"Quotas authorized for the various states are purely tentative," he declared. "Only those actually in need will be aided but WPA will continue to extend assistance to those in distress so long as the need exists, no matter how high it goes. If it develops that present quotas are not sufficient to meet the needs of all drought victims, they can be adjusted from time to time depending upon changing conditions."