FACTS ABOUT TEXAS FARM WORKERS
(Compiled from material published in the Texas Observer, February 8, 1978)*

INCOME
—Texas Minimum Wage Act stipulates $1.40 per hour for farm workers.
—Annual per-capita income amounts to $2,919.00.
—Median family income (family of 6) is $3,990 per year.
—78% of farm worker families in Texas have incomes below the federal poverty level.

EMPLOYMENT & THE EMPLOYER
—There is work in the Rio Grande Valley only 5 months each year. (Thousands of Texas farm workers migrate out-of-state in order to make a living.)
—Most farm workers must seek work through a labor contractor.
—The shorthanded hoe, el cortito, is still in widespread use.
—The Texas Workers Compensation Act still excludes farm workers.
—60% of Texas citrus is held by absentee landlords.
—Mosallasco, a wholly owned subsidiary of Royal Crown Cola, has annual sales of $25 million.
—Griffin & Brand, Inc., dominates the vegetable market, with $34 million in annual sales. It markets under the G & B and Trophy labels and grows, packs, freezes, ships and markets its fresh and frozen vegetables. G & B has a London sales office and operates in 4 other states plus extensive holdings in Mexico.

EDUCATION
—86% of farm worker children do not complete high school.
—70% of adult farm workers have less than 4 years of school.

HOUSING
—Most farm workers live in unincorporated rural communities known as colonias, which lack water, sewer and gas lines and paved streets.
—One-third of the Rio Grande Valley colonias have no water at all; water is hauled in from nearby irrigation canals or golf course sprinklers. There are no public sewer systems; after heavy rains many colonias stand in water for days.

HEALTH
—TB mortality rates are 250% higher than national average.
—Strep throat — 300% higher than for wealthier Texans.**
—Hepatitis — 110% higher than for wealthier Texans.**
—Scarlet Fever — 300% higher than for wealthier Texans.**

*Data is for Hidalgo County, home base for 77,000 farm workers.
**Data from a study by the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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