

**FINDING AND ENUMERATING MIGRANTS  
IN MEXICAN ENCLAVES  
OF THE U.S. NORTHEAST:  
THE CASE OF SOUTHERN CHESTER COUNTY,  
PENNSYLVANIA**

**VICTOR GARCIA  
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
INDIANA, PENNSYLVANIA**

**AND**

**LAURA GONZALES  
CENTRO INVESTIGACIONES SOCIALES  
UNIVERSIDAD DE GUANAJUATO  
GUANAJUATO, MEXICO**

**April 1995**

**Technical representative for the Census Bureau  
Matt T. Salo**

**This paper reports the results of research undertaken by the authors. The views expressed are attributable to the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Census Bureau.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study focuses on the behavior patterns of migrants and immigrants in the Mexican enclaves of Chester county, Pennsylvania, as they relate to the attempts of the Census Bureau to enumerate them in the decennial census. These enclaves are formed by migrants from the same areas in Mexico who over the years recruit their relatives, friends and neighbors to recreate in the U.S. a community similar to what they had in Mexico. Although the earlier workers tend to settle down in the new community, many of them will still travel to visit family back in Mexico. All continue to receive and house new migrant workers, arrimados, from Mexico, so that the bulk of the present enclave population consists of young migrants, predominantly male, largely undocumented, and monolingual in Spanish. These migrants are scattered throughout the area in hidden employer-provided housing, doubled-up quarters of previous immigrants, or crammed into migrant-shared rented houses or apartments. The precarious legal and employment status of the migrants, coupled with 1) the employers' concern over being penalized for hiring "illegal aliens" and consequently losing them to immigration authorities at peak work times, 2) substandard working conditions for which the labor unions could call them to task, and 3) the landlords' concerns over violating housing codes by providing substandard housing or overcrowding, are formidable barriers to accurate coverage. On the positive side, most of these new migrants are related to the older area residents and are recruited and taken in by them, and thus become part of the local social networks. They make use of community services, share resources and information, and generally can be reached through other members of the community.

Many of these obstacles to enumeration can be overcome by making use of local people, especially the growers themselves, or persons from community service organizations, who are already familiar with the population and are trusted by its members. Growers can be used to locate and gain access to much of migrant housing; and trusted service providers, who ideally ought to be bilingual and bicultural, can be used to conduct outreach and enumeration activities, that can inform, find and persuade migrants to participate in the census. An effort should be made to use existing social, resource sharing and communication networks to reach those members of the migrant community currently kept hidden because of their uncertain legal status relative to work, housing or immigration statutes.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		
I.	PROBLEM	1
II.	MEXICAN ENCLAVES IN THE U.S. NORTHWEST	2
	A. Pennsylvania	2
	B. Southern Chester County, Pennsylvania	2
III.	REASONS FOR THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF THE MEXICAN ENCLAVES	4
	A. The SAW Program and New Sojourners	5
	B. The Mushroom Industry and Increasing Labor Needs	6
IV.	MIGRANTS AND IMMIGRANTS IN THE ENCLAVES	7
	A. Migrants	7
	1. Profiles	8
	2. Migration and Work History	9
	3. Housing and Residence Concentration	14
	B. Immigrants	16
	1. Profiles	17
	2. Migration and Work History	18
	3. Housing and Residence Concentration	18
V.	CONCLUSIONS	22
	A. Problems in the Enumeration of Migrants	22
	B. Some Suggestions for Future Enumerations	23
VI.	APPENDICES	27
	A. Methods Used in the Study	28
	1. Sample	28
	2. Data Collection	28
	B. Map and Tables	31
	1. Map of Chester County	32
	2. Tables 1 - 6	33
VII.	REFERENCES	39

**FINDING AND ENUMERATING MIGRANTS  
IN MEXICAN ENCLAVES  
OF THE U.S. NORTHEAST:  
THE CASE OF SOUTHERN CHESTER COUNTY,  
PENNSYLVANIA**

**I. PROBLEM**

This report is based on a study of Mexican migrants in southern Chester County. The aim of the study is to identify and describe the Mexican migrant population in southern Chester County in order to make recommendations that will improve the U.S. Census Bureau's future enumerations of this hard-to-reach population.<sup>1</sup>

The study also includes the Mexican immigrant population because it provides clues about the migrants. Immigrants create a sense of community for the migrants in a foreign and strange land. Migrants and immigrants of similar backgrounds and from the same region in Mexico reside in proximity to each other. They are paisanos [country men] and identify as members of a new community in the United States. Proximity to each other facilitates mutual assistance; for example, they look after each other, share resources, and provide each other with job leads and other types of information.

The objectives of the report are threefold. The first is to examine the emergence and growth of Mexican enclaves in southern Chester County. Possible explanations behind these processes will be presented, among them, the SAW Program and the labor practices of the local mushroom industry.<sup>2</sup> The second is to describe the members of these communities: a social and economic profile of the Mexicans, together with their migration, immigration, and work histories, will be provided as well. The third is to make recommendations to the U.S. Census Bureau that will be useful in counting migrants in future censuses. They will be discussed in the conclusion.

---

<sup>1</sup> The methods employed are described in Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> The Special Agricultural Workers (SAW) Program was part of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986. SAW, like the General Amnesty Program of IRCA, was enacted to "legalize" workers who entered the country illegally. Unlike amnesty, SAW was restricted to farm workers who could document that they were employed for at least 90 days in the agricultural industry from 5/1/85 to 5/1/86. Successful workers were granted permission to work in the country and to qualify for permanent immigrant status.

## II. MEXICAN ENCLAVES IN THE U.S. NORTHEAST

Mexican farm workers, migrants and immigrants, documented and undocumented, are no longer limiting themselves to farm areas in the U.S. southwest. Today, they venture to communities and work in agricultural industries found throughout the country, including the U.S. northeast. In Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey, for example, vegetable, fruit, and horticultural producers are hiring Mexican laborers in large numbers. In some industries, like the mushroom industry, Mexicans make up the majority of the work force.

### A. Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania has the second largest Latino population in the northeast [the State of New York has the greatest number of Latinos]. In 1990, Pennsylvanian Latinos were estimated at 232,000 persons; two percent of the state's 11.9 million inhabitants.<sup>3</sup> Puerto Ricans made up the majority of the Latinos, with the Mexicans, the second constituency group. Respectively, they account for 65 and 10.2 percent of the Latinos. The majority of the Puerto Ricans live in cities on the eastern side of the state, mainly in Allentown, Lancaster, Reading, and Philadelphia (Falcon 1993). Mexicans also live and work in these cities, but unlike the Puerto Ricans, many of them reside in townships and boroughs outside of metropolitan areas (Garcia 1993). They are concentrated in nine contiguous counties in southeastern Pennsylvania. The nine counties are York, Lancaster, Berks, Lehigh, Northampton, Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, and Delaware. In these counties, Mexican farm workers harvest labor-intensive crops, such as vegetables, fruits, and mushrooms.

### B. Southern Chester County, Pennsylvania

Chester County is located in the southeastern tier of Pennsylvania (see Map 1).<sup>4</sup> Officially, southern Chester County is made up of 18 municipalities: West Nottingham, East Nottingham, Upper Oxford, Lower Oxford, Penn, New London, Elk, Franklin, London Grove, West Marlboro, East

---

<sup>3</sup> Of the total Latino population, 65 percent are Puerto Ricans, 10.2 percent Mexicans, 3.3 percent Cubans, 3 percent Spaniards, 2.4 percent Colombians, 1.7 percent Dominicans, and 14.4 percent are classified as "other" Latinos. Although Latinos comprise 2 percent of the state's population, it is growing rapidly. From 1980 to 1990, they grew by 50.9 percent; whereas Pennsylvania's overall population increased by only 1 percent (Falcon, Angelo, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> Map and Tables are found in Appendix B.

Marlboro, New Garden, London Britain, Kennett, Newlin, Pocopson, Pennsbury, and Birminigham. Four boroughs and 19 townships are found in these municipalities. These communities are small; their populations are under 15,000 inhabitants. They are situated along the old Baltimore Pike, Route #1, that traverses this rural and agricultural region. Interspersed around the rolling hills are farms, mushroom houses, migrant labor camps, and horse ranches.

Originally, the boroughs were small hubs of economic activity in farm country, where farmers and rural folk would attend church, bank, and shop. The early residents either owned businesses or worked locally. At one time or another, Quakers, Italian immigrants, Italian Americans, poor whites, blacks, and Puerto Ricans moved in and set up their neighborhoods. In fact, members of these groups are still living there.

The populations of the townships and boroughs began to change over a decade ago, as professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers, from the Philadelphia and the Wilmington areas started to settle in southern Chester County. Many of them were escaping the spiraling costs of housing, high taxes, schools in trouble, and crime that were rampant in the cities and over flowing into the suburbs. The newcomers purchased homes in a relatively depressed real estate market and sent their children to local schools. However, they continue to work and play in the cities. They commute to their offices on the weekdays, and to the opera, theater, and dining establishments on the weekends.

About this time, Mexican immigrants and migrants were creating their own enclaves in Kennett Square, Oxford, Toughkenamon, Avondale, and West Grove. They began to change the demographic characteristics of the neighborhoods, from aging and Anglo to young and Mexican; and altering the culture of the area, by introducing another language, way of life, and traditional Mexican practices, like tandas [rotating credit associations] and compadrazgo [fictive kin] ties.

Two communities, Kennett Square and Toughkenamon, are good examples of the new Mexican enclaves in southern Chester County. In Toughkenamon, as shown in Table 1, the "non-hispanic white" population decreased from 811 (72.99 percent of the total) to 726 people (57.03 percent of the total) from 1980 to 1990; and concurrently, as indicated in Table 2, the Mexican population increased from 88 to 354 inhabitants, an increase of 300 percent. In absolute numbers, as shown in

Table 3, the non-hispanic white population in Kennett Square only increased from 3,847 to 3,918 people, but in relative terms, it decreased from 81.6 to 75.08 percent of the total population.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, as indicated in Table 4, the Mexican population rose from 24 to 374 people during the same period, an increase of 1,450 percent.

Census data provided in these tables may provide a less than complete picture of the size of the Latino population in Chester County because a problem faced by the Census Bureau with each successive census is the differential net undercount between Whites and other racial groups. For example, according to the Census Bureau's Post Enumeration Survey (PES), a nation-wide survey designed to measure coverage in the 1990 census, the census enumerated approximately 98 percent of all people nation-wide. However, this survey also revealed that there was a differential net undercount of racial and ethnic minorities. According to the PES, the net census undercount for Latinos in the 1990 census is estimated at 5.2 percent. The corresponding rates for African-Americans is 4.8 percent, for Asian and Pacific Islanders is 3.1 percent and for American Indians is 5.0 percent (Hogan 1990).<sup>6</sup>

### **III. REASONS FOR THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF THE MEXICAN ENCLAVES**

Two major events are behind the settlement process: one of them is the SAW Program which enables "legalized" workers to sponsor the immigration of their family members. The other event is the increase in mushroom yields. The increase in production, together with year-round employment opportunities, also allows workers and their families to settle in the southern Chester County.

---

<sup>5</sup> In both of these communities, the overall increase in population was due to Mexican immigration. Overall population growth in Toughkenamon was only 12.7 percent, and given the decrease in the white population, the increase may be attributed to Mexican immigration. Overall population growth in Kennett Square was 9.63 percent, and given the small increase in the white population, the overall growth may be due to Mexican immigration. Census figures were obtained from two major sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, General Population Characteristics, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., 1982; and U.S. Bureau of the Census, General Population Characteristics, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., 1992.

<sup>6</sup> In order to better understand the reasons for the differential net undercount and other types of census errors the U.S. Census Bureau commissioned independent ethnographic studies. Although these studies do not provide valid statistical estimates they provide valuable insight into the causes of census omissions and other erroneous enumerations among ethnic and racial minorities.

### A. The SAW Program and New Sojourners

In Chester County, as many undocumented workers in the mushroom industry as possible applied for SAW status; and in some cases, workers, who did not qualify because they did not meet all of the requirements, applied and received SAW status as well.<sup>7</sup> In all, according to Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) estimates, 1,560 undocumented migrants received SAW status in Chester County (Smith n.d.:29). These recipients and others from nearby counties were assisted in the application process by community-based service providers, like La Comunidad Hispana and Catholic Charities, and local mushroom growers.<sup>8</sup> Kaolin Farms, the largest mushroom producer in the region, assisted 400 of its workers to legalize their status in the country through the SAW Program (Babbit 1993:16).

After receiving permanent residency status, SAWs are allowed by the government to sponsor their families for immigration into the country. Because of the waiting time, some SAWs are by-passing the application process and are sending for their families in Mexico without proper immigration authorization.

Prior to the SAW Program, many of the undocumented workers in the mushroom industry did not bother to immigrate, in spite of the employment opportunities. As undocumented workers, immigration was a remote option for them; they did not desire to live the remainder of their lives in constant vigilance and hiding. In addition, the undocumented workers did not want to subject their love ones to this clandestine way of life. More important, bringing their wives and children into this country under this circumstance is very expensive and extremely dangerous at the border.

---

<sup>7</sup> The SAW Program was restricted to farm workers who could document that they were employed for at least 90 days in agriculture from May 1, 1985 to May 1, 1986. Documents consisted of check stubs or letters from employers, contractors, or foremen. Informal interviews with mushroom workers in southern Chester County have revealed that some foremen and plant bosses of mushroom farms were selling letters falsely claiming that the individual, who was buying the letter, was hired for the duration specified by the SAW Program. These letters were being sold for up to \$850.

<sup>8</sup> The success of the SAW Program is questionable. During the application phase of the program, this writer was in California carrying out research on farm workers in the Santa Maria Valley. There, he learned that many workers who met the requirements did not receive SAW status because of two major obstacles. One, they could not prove that they were working in agriculture during the time specified in the SAW Program guidelines; and two, they were living in Mexico at the time of the application process and, therefore, did not apply for the program. Smith (n.d.) mentions similar obstacles in his study of IRCA and the mushroom industry in southeastern Pennsylvania.



## B. The Mushroom Industry and Increasing Labor Needs

The mushroom industry of Pennsylvania grows more mushrooms than any other state in the country. In 1992, it produced 47 percent of the country's agaricus mushroom crop.<sup>9</sup> As table five reveals, if horticulture and mushroom sales are used as indicators, since 1980, from 40 to 51 percent of the state's horticulture crops and mushrooms are grown in Chester County. Most of the local mushroom producers grow agaricus mushrooms for the "fresh market" and "processing" companies; and an undetermined number are growing specialty mushrooms, such as the shitake, porto-bello, porcino, and oyster varieties.

Moreover, although local mushroom growers claim [and correctly so] that the number of producers and square footage has declined over the years, data show that mushroom production is on the rise.<sup>10</sup> As table six shows, square footage has declined, while pounds of harvested mushrooms has increased by nearly 87 percent from 1980 to 1992.

Unlike crops grown outdoors and subjected to the whims of mother nature, mushrooms and greenhouse products are grown indoors under controlled temperature, humidity, and light conditions. This artificial growing environment allows producers to grow and harvest mushrooms every month of the year. In addition, mushroom production is labor-intensive; little or no machinery is used. Workers are employed in every phase of production, in the making of the "beds," where the mushrooms are grown, the plantings, and the harvests. The harvests are the most labor-intensive of all; a bed of mushrooms is harvested up to three or four times per planting, or "flushed," as it is said in the industry. A bed undergoes up to 4 flushes per year.

Today, Mexicans make up about 90 percent of the mushroom harvesters (Smith n.d.). Estimates on the size of the Mexican labor force in the mushroom industry of Chester County range from 2,245 to 4,000 laborers (Smith n.d.; Druly 1993). The

---

<sup>9</sup> Agaricus mushrooms are the common button variety sold in grocery stores across the country. They account for the majority of the nation's sales.

<sup>10</sup> According to the U.S. Agricultural Census, the number of mushroom farms and square feet under mushroom production have declined over the years. The number of mushroom producers decreased from 233 in 1982 to 133 in 1987, square feet under mushroom production decreased from 22,528,461 in 1982 to 14,965,246 in 1987 (U.S. Agricultural Census, 1982 and 1989).

latter includes unemployed workers who wait for job openings. In addition, community-based service providers, like the La Comunidad Hispana, estimate the number of dependents, primarily family members, to be 2,500 individuals (Druly 1993). Velasco Mondragon, a Mexican physician who recently carried out a comprehensive health survey of the Mexican migrant population in the region, claims that 7,500 migrants work in Chester and surrounding counties, namely Lancaster, Berks, Montgomery, and Delaware (1993:14).

#### IV. MIGRANTS AND IMMIGRANTS IN THE ENCLAVES

The mushroom industry in Chester County, like other agricultural enterprises, depends on a stable and "cheap" labor force. Since its start, the industry has hired workers of different nationalities, ethnic and racial backgrounds, and immigrant statuses [legal and illegal migrants and immigrants]. In regards to its foreign laborers, it has also employed both immigrants and migrants. In fact, periodically, local and immigrant workers were replaced with migrants. Today, the majority of the mushroom harvesters are migrants.

The word "migrant", especially migrant farm worker, has many definitions. The earliest ones denote an individual who moves from one farm area to another in search of agricultural employment. This worker moves about without ever settling down permanently in one location. Other definitions incorporate a time dimension, one which depicts a migrant as a worker who is in an area for a given amount of time, usually under a year. This migrant is often referred to as a "seasonal" laborer; that is, he stays and works in an area only for the duration of a harvest. Once the crops are picked, the worker moves on to another area or returns home.

Recently, researchers, including this writer, broadened the spatial and temporal dimensions of the definition. We argue that a migrant is a worker who leaves his home community for other areas to work for an indefinite amount of time, that may vary from three months to three years. The move to these communities is not permanent, only temporary; the worker returns to his home base after he has earned what he set out to make; he does not create a new permanent home in the area.

##### A. Migrants

Solo Mexican migrants [without their families] have lived and harvested mushrooms in Chester County since the mid-1960s (Smith 1992: n.d.). Today, as revealed earlier, they make up the majority of the labor force in the mushroom industry.

The migratory mushroom workers in southern Chester County are truly migrants as defined above. They are not immigrants; that is, they did not pack up the family and their belongings and resettled in a new area permanently. However, they are not the migrants that come to mind; that is, they do not follow a particular migratory stream harvesting different crops up and down the eastern seaboard. From their homes in Mexico, they travel directly to their single destination in Chester County, where they reside and work for an extended period of time, in some cases, up to five years. On their return trip to Mexico, they also do not stop and work en route.

### 1. Profiles

In terms of demographics, the Mexican migrants in southern Chester County are predominantly males. Women are also found in the migrant population, but their numbers are small.

Both men and women are in the same age groups; they are in their twenties, thirties, and forties; in the prime of their productive life. In the ethnographic sample, the ages of the male migrants ranged from 18 years of age to 60 years.

In terms of language proficiency, all of the immigrants and migrants in the ethnographic sample are monolingual Spanish-speakers. This is also the case for migrants enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. In spite of the courses and tutoring sessions, many migrants have difficulty learning English, mainly because many of them are illiterate in their native Spanish language. Those who have worked in the area for over five years or more spoke a little English, but their comprehension was very poor. In the immigrant population, children are bilingual, not their parents.

Informal interviews reveal that a majority of the migrants are from the state of Guanajuato in Mexico. In fact, all of the migrants in the ethnographic sample are from this state. They are mainly from small ranches in the municipios (politico-administrative units roughly comparable to county governments in the United States) of Moroleon, Uriangato, and Yuriria. For example, they are from Las Penas, La Barranca, La Loma, and La Ordena in Moroleon; from Monte de Juarez, La Cienega Prieta, Tierra Blanca, San Vicente, and San Isidro in Yuriria; and from El Derramadero, El Cuervo, La Lobera, El Aguacate, and La Lagunilla in Uriangato. Other migrants are from the states of Mexico, Puebla, Michoacan, Guerrero, Morelos, and Jalisco. The migrants from the state of Mexico are called Toluca [after the capital of the state], but the majority are from the municipios of Almoloya de Alquisiras, Texcaltitlan, and Tixca.

## 2. Migration and Work History

**Women and Migration.** As stated earlier, a few women migrate to southern Chester County. They do not migrate alone, they accompany male kin, usually a husband, brother, father, or cousin, or join kin already in the area. As a result, the migratory paths of women are similar to those of the men, which will be discussed in the proceeding sections. In some cases, however, the paths are more direct; they fly directly from Mexico to the Philadelphia, Newark, or Washington-Baltimore Airports, where they are met by kin and transported to Chester County.

**Women and Work.** Migrant women, like their male counterparts, also work in the mushroom industry, not as harvesters, but as packers. They earn anywhere from \$4.25 to \$4.50 an hour, and from \$250 to \$350 a week. They also work in the service sector as cleaning women or day laborers in local vegetable stores. The prevalent hourly wage in these jobs is \$4.25, however, some women working as house cleaners illegally are paid \$3.00 an hour.

**Men and Migration.** In terms of official immigration status, all of the respondents in the ethnographic sample, except one, were documented workers. This is not to say that only a small number of undocumented workers exist in the migrant population of southern Chester County. Informal interviews with workers reveal that there is a growing number of undocumented laborers in the mushroom industry. In fact, workers claim that every mushroom company in the county hires undocumented workers. The actual number, however, is not known.

Informal interviews with harvesters from four mushroom farms indicate that the size of the enterprises may determine whether or not undocumented workers are hired. The interviews revealed that growers who own small farms, those with 50 or fewer workers, employ undocumented workers. In one case, over half of the workers in a mushroom firm with 30 harvesters did not hold proper immigration documents. However, mention must be made that some of the large outfits also have undocumented workers in their labor force. A possible explanation why small growers are prone to hire undocumented workers is that they are in direct competition with large producers; and as such, they have the same production costs as their larger counterparts, but with fewer resources. To cut production costs and remain in business, they pay their workers less than what the larger producers offer their employees. Documented workers do not work for low wages, whereas their undocumented counterparts will accept them in order to remain employed.

Male migrants have tried their luck elsewhere before migrating to Chester County to work in the mushroom industry. Almost all of the respondents in the ethnographic sample reported working in other parts of the country, namely California, Texas, Illinois, and New Jersey. In all four states, they worked in agriculture and construction. In the Chicago Metropolitan area, they labored in factories and restaurants.

The majority of the informants also mentioned that, since they began working in the local mushroom industry, they do not migrate to other areas in search of work. From their homes in Mexico, they travel to southern Chester County, where their jobs at the mushroom farms are held for them during their absence. However, occasionally, some of them will venture to the Chicago area to work, where many of them have kin, especially if there is a guarantee of employment.

The migratory path of the experienced migrants to the communities of southern Chester County is direct; that is, from their home base in Mexico, they travel to the county without making any detours to other areas in order to work. When the migrants travel to and from their homes in Mexico, they do so by either air or land.

In the ethnographic sample, all of the migrants and immigrants have travelled by air and land. In the interviews, it was revealed that, because of the high costs, especially when compared with the price of a bus ticket, they fly only when time is of essence or there is an emergency back home. When they fly, migrants depart Mexico from the international airports in Mexico City and Leon-Silao [Aeropuerto de Bajio/ Airport of the Bajio]. Migrants from the southern part of the country, like the States of Puebla, Michoacan, Morelos, and Guerrero, depart from the international airport in Mexico, and those from Guanajuato, leave from the Airport of the Bajio. Due to the high costs of flying from the Airport of the Bajio, many guanajuatenses [residents of Guanajuato] still prefer flights from Mexico City. Nearly all of the flights stop in Texas before reaching their destinations in Philadelphia, Newark, or the Washington-Baltimore airports. The trip by air runs from four to five hours, including layover time in Texas.

Migrants traveling by land also do not make detours en route. They board buses in the cities close to their home town, and from there travel to the U.S.- Mexico border, but they do not enter the country at the same border point. Where they cross over into the United States depends on whether or not they are entering the country "legally" [with proper immigration documents and inspection]. If they are crossing over legally,

they enter through Laredo, Texas, and board a Greyhound bus to their final destination. If they enter illegally, they cross over anywhere along the U.S.- Mexico border. Those who make use of a coyote [smuggler] to enter the country do so through California, along the Tijuana-Chula Vista area, a major crossing zone for undocumented workers. From California, the migrants board a Greyhound bus or an airplane in San Diego or Los Angeles, and head for the northeast.

Travel time by bus, from Guanajuato to Pennsylvania, is 48 hours, two days. The trip from Yuriria or Moroleon, Guanajuato, to Laredo, Texas, is 12 hours; and from Texas to Pennsylvania, the journey is about 36 hours.

In the few cases, workers travel back and forth in their personal automobiles, especially if the vehicle is a late model and in good condition. Two or more workers journey together, alternating as drivers and sharing the costs of the trip. With two or more drivers, the migrants do not stop to rest; they drive until they reach their destination which can take up to two and a half days.

After a tour of work, when a migrant returns to his home in Mexico varies from one individual to another. They depart anytime during the year; some leave because they scheduled their stay for a specific period of time only; others depart because of an emergency back home, like an illness or death of a loved one. For the most part, however, they leave during the Christmas holiday, often staying one or two months in Mexico before returning to Chester County. In the past, before most of the mushroom houses were fitted with air conditioners, the migrants left for the summer, from late May through late September, when many of the companies closed down and stopped their production.<sup>11</sup> However, this is no longer common, because the companies now have air conditioners and produce mushrooms year-round.

**Men and Work.** The migrants mainly work in the mushroom industry of southern Chester County. In fact, all of the men in the ethnographic sample, migrants and immigrants, currently or at one time were employed in this multi-million dollar industry. They are experienced harvesters, and have

---

<sup>11</sup> Prior to the 1980s, mushrooms were truly a seasonal crop in Chester County; it was grown most of the year, except the summers. Since most of the units were not equipped with air-conditioners, the growers could not control the growing environment for proper production. The heat and humidity, which characterize the summers of the region, would destroy the crop. Until recently, producers did not see it as cost efficient to install air-conditioners; those who did not are no longer in the business.

been employed in the industry for a number of years. In the ethnographic sample, for example, the youngest migrants have migrated to the area and harvested mushrooms for at least four years; the seasoned workers, for over 10 years.

Unlike the farm worker migrants, migrants in the mushroom industry do not leave their Mexican communities to look for employment in southern Chester County. In California, migrants may go days and weeks with out work, traveling from one agricultural region to another in search of employment. Migrants in the mushroom industry learn about jobs before they depart from Mexico and immediately go to work when they arrive. They are notified of job openings by kin and friends already in the area via correspondence or telephone calls.

In fact, most migrants are guaranteed work before they leave Mexico through, what this writer has labelled, the encargo [entrusted] system of labor recruitment. Under this system, workers plan their departures and arrange for their replacements. Before they leave, they contact kin or friends back home to notify them of the pending job opening and await their arrival. Their replacements are literally entrusted with the position; they promise not to abandon it or leave until the original workers return. Upon their return, the replacements leave for their homeland or work in another job that they have lined up.

The encargo system explains why the majority of the workers in a mushroom company are related through kinship or are from the same region back in Mexico. To illustrate this point, MG Mushrooms, Inc. [pseudonym], will be used as an example. This company grows mushrooms in four production houses, and employs 19 harvesters and two bosses on an annual basis. All of the harvesters are from four communities in the Municipio of Moroleon, and all work with kin, such as brothers, in-laws, uncles and cousins.

Some workers migrate to southern Chester County without going through the encargo system of labor recruitment. The workers who do so have experience migrating to the region. Because of a pressing financial need in Mexico, they migrate on their own with the hope of finding a job opening. In many cases, these workers become arrimados [temporary household members] in the household of kin or friends until they find employment. If they have difficulty finding work in the area, they leave for another locale, usually in neighboring counties, like Lancaster, Berks, and Delaware.

In the mushroom industry, employment is available on a year round basis, and work weeks range anywhere from 20 to 80 hours. On average, however, the work weeks are from 30 to 50

hours. The hourly wage depends on seniority, and ranges from \$4.25 to \$5.25. Under the piece-rate, workers may earn the equivalent of \$20 per hour. Overall, weekly wages of the mushroom workers in the ethnographic sample ranged from \$180 to \$400.

In the ethnographic sample, the annual incomes ranged from \$8,500 to \$19,000. Migrants who only earned \$8,500 did not work the entire year, and those who earned close to \$19,000 complemented their regular duties with odd jobs at the company. Data from the ethnographic sample and informal interviews with other workers reveal that the average annual income is \$12,500.

The migrants work for what they receive. They do not seek the assistance of government programs, except for unemployment and disability benefits. In the ethnographic sample, it was discovered that migrants have sought help from community-based service providers, especially La Comunidad Hispana. In all of the cases, they sought medical services or referrals to physicians because of work-related injuries. When they were referred outside of the clinic, the workers paid for the medical service. In other cases, if the injury is serious, the grower refers the injured worker to one of his doctors. If the worker must convalesce for an extended period of time, he is out of luck. In these instances, he returns to Mexico, where his family and kin look after him.

For the most part, mushroom harvesters do not move from one job to another; they stay and work where they initially arrived. If they do, they leave one mushroom producer for another. The major reasons cited for leaving are dissatisfaction with employers or problems with fellow workers. For example, a worker may leave if he believes that he was mistreated by one of the bosses, such as not being paid correctly or worked too hard; or if he is harassed by fellow mates for not drinking alcohol or partaking in some other activity. Instead of tolerating the abuse, he leaves, but only when he has another job lined up.

Some mushroom workers are also shared among companies on a temporary basis. When one company finds itself short of labor, because of rapid crop maturation or a sudden increase in market demand, another company will assign it some of its employees. Usually, the sharing occurs within a group of mushroom producers who have standing agreements of this type of mutual assistance among them.

Mushroom workers also work at other jobs while holding their positions in the mushroom company. They work at odd jobs, when production is slow, or at the end of the work day. Most often, if they do work at odd jobs, they do so for their



employers, performing such tasks, as shoveling snow, cleaning mushroom houses, and adding nutrient agents to the mushroom soils. Some workers work outside of the company; they clean yards and horse stables, paint houses, and bag tortillas at the local tortilla factory in Toughkenomanon. However, moonlighting on a regular basis is not a common practice. Odd jobs are not always available; and in some cases, when they are at hand, many workers are too exhausted at the end of the day to take advantage of them.

Some workers leave the mushroom industry for work in construction, as day laborers, and in the service sector, as gardeners, landscapers, or stable boys in horse ranches. However, often, they too return to harvesting mushrooms.

The migrants claim that construction and service work do not provide employment on a year-round basis and that income earning opportunities in both are limited. Positions in these two industries have established work hours, usually no more than eight hours a day, five days out of the week. In the mushroom industry and greenhouses, they argue, work is at times available beyond 40 hours a week. In addition, they are given the opportunity to earn more per hour in these industries, especially when they are working under the piece-rate form of remuneration. Moreover, the workers claim that their jobs in construction and the service sector are not saved for them when they leave for Mexico, a common practice in the mushroom industry.

There is a low turn over rate among mushroom workers; they remain in the industry for many years, up to 20 years in some cases, however, not consecutively. Most of them stay for a year or two, usually returning to their homeland during the holidays. Others stay for a longer period of time, but they too will eventually return home.

### 3. Housing and Residence Concentration

**Women and Residency.** Women migrants do not reside in traditional migrant housing which, as will pointed out, is located outside of the townships and boroughs in and around mushroom houses. They live among the immigrant population, as arrimadas temporary members] in immigrant households. In most cases, they are related to the families through kinship and are recruited into the households so that they can assist with domestic chores and childcare. If they are working outside of the households, arrimadas also help out by providing the families with a few extra dollars and food.

**Men and Residency.** Men, on the other hand, mainly live in housing situated away from the townships and boroughs, on

property of the mushroom growers, near the production houses. Their location is not common knowledge in the area, however, growers and workers alike are well aware of where they are found.

In the ethnographic sample, all of the migrants resided in housing provided by their employers. This type of living arrangement was also common for the immigrants in the sample, when they too were migrating.

Mushroom workers live in grower provided housing, such as add-ons, cottages, and trailers, all of them situated on or near mushroom farms. In these units, migrants live in a dormitory living arrangement. Although they live together, they do not form a single household. Each one manages their own earnings and makes their own expenditures. In addition, each one pays rent and his share of the food costs. This practice is also common among the occupants who are related by kin ties. As dormitory mates, however, the migrants partake in co-residence and commensality. They share shelter, furnishings, and other amenities; and prepare and consume their meals as a group.

Add-ons are structures added to a side of an existing mushroom house. Basically, it is a cement structure added to an existing cement structure. There is no space between the two except for a row of cement blocks that serve as a wall. The add-on has windows and front and back entrances. From the outside, they do not resemble housing at all; they look more like an office complex or storage facility.

Inside, the add-on is divided into two basic areas: a common area, which serves as a day room, kitchen, and dinette, and a dormitory area, where the workers sleep and keep their personal belongings. In the common area, the workers watch television, cook and eat their meals, and socialize. When the weather permits, they carry out these activities outside. The dormitory area is divided into three or four rooms, each room houses up to four harvesters, all of them men. Showers and toilets are also built onto the add-ons.

Some growers house their migratory workers in cottages on their property. These units are small homes; they are comprised of a kitchen-dinette area and bedrooms. Like the add-ons, the kitchen-dinette area is also a day room, where

workers watch television and socialize. In some cases, showers and toilets are found in the cottages, and in other instances, they are located in another structure, away from the cottage. Depending on the size of the cottage, up to 15 workers are housed during the year.

If harvesters occupy the cottages, the residents are only men. In some cases, growers also house their plant managers, truck drivers, and other workers, together with their families, in these units.

Trailers and mobile homes, located close to the mushroom houses, are also used to house migratory workers. For the most part, however, they are occupied by non-harvesters and their families.

The housing types, described above, alone or grouped, are often referred to as campos, labor camps, by the migrants. The camps are found in all the municipalities of southern Chester County, except in Upper Oxford, Birmingham and London Britain. The majority of the labor camps are found in the municipalities of New Garden and Kennett Square. In the former, there are 44 camps: 28 with 1 to 14 people; seven with 15 to 29; five with 30 to 45; and four with 46 people or more. In the latter, there are 18 camps: 12 with 1 to 14 people; three with 15 to 29; two with 46 or more; and one with 30 to 45.

The municipality of London Grove follows in third place with 17 labor camps: 12 with 1 to 14 people; three with 15 to 29 people; and two with 30 to 45 people. Penn has eight labor camps with 1 to 14 people; Lower Oxford, six camps with 1 to 14; East Nottingham, four with 1 to 14; and Upper Oxford, three with 1 to 14. West Marlboro has three camps: one with 46 or more people and two with 15 to 29; and East Marlboro has three camps: two with 1 to 14 persons and one with 46 or more. Elk has two camps of 1 to 14 people; and the remainder of municipalities have one camp each with 1 to 14 people.

As of 1986, a growing number of migrants are moving into the townships and boroughs. In that year, a class action suit forced the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources to inspect all farm labor housing in the state on an annual basis. Some growers opted to close their housing units rather than opening them to state scrutiny. The displaced migrants join their immigrant counterparts in local communities, where up to 15, or more, workers move into and share one and two bedroom apartments.

## B. Immigrants

Mexican workers and their families are immigrating to southern Chester County in growing numbers. The actual numbers involved are not known.

Data from different sources, however, reveals that the immigrant population is on the rise. Besides the census

figures cited earlier, community-based service providers, like the Comunidad Hispana, have noted an increase in new Mexican families since 1990 (Druly 1993). In 1992 alone, La Comunidad Hispana witnessed an increase of 230 Mexican families in the southern Chester County (Druly 1993). The Catholic Confirmation of Christian Doctrine (CCD) census supports this observation in Kennett Square, Toughkenamon, Oxford, West Grove, and Avondale. According to the CCD Census, 364 Latino families enumerated in 1990, the vast majority of whom are Mexican, increased to 408 in 1992 (Depman 1993). Moreover, last year, the parishes baptized over 60 Latino children, many of them Mexican (Depman 1993).

Further evidence is the increasing number of Mexican children who have enrolled in Pennsylvania's Migrant Education Program in Chester County. Today, there are 948 Mexican children in the Migrant Education Program, or 83 percent of the total enrollment in the program (Migrant Education Program 1993). The majority of the students, 68 percent, are found in the Avon Grove, Kennett Consolidated, and Oxford School Districts (Migrant Education Program 1993).

In the townships and boroughs, the presence of the immigrants is not always visible. They are not concentrated in a particular part of town, but are found scattered wherever they can find housing. In apartment complexes and neighborhoods, Mexican residents, particularly children, can be seen running around, speaking only Spanish. However, signs of the growing Mexican population are found in the region as whole. Mexican children sit in the classrooms in local schools. Mexican delicatessens, video and tape shops specializing in Mexican movies and music, and tortilla factories are located along the roads leading to and from the townships and boroughs. In addition, Mexican food products, including imported goods, can be found in local grocery stores.

## 1. Profiles

Immigrants primarily differ from migrants in that they find themselves in southern Chester County with their families; not alone, like the migrants. This distinction between the two adds other dimensions to the differences between migrants and immigrants. One is that the ratio of men to women is not as high as in the migrant population. Another difference is that the immigrant population is younger than the migrants. While the adult immigrants are in their twenties, thirties, and forties, immigrant children are infants or of grammar school age. Since there are more immigrant children than immigrant adults, the immigrant population as a whole is younger than the migrants.

There are some single Mexican immigrants, men and women, in the county. However, for the most part, they are only single until they manage to bring their family to this country.

Like the immigrants, the majority of the migrants are from Guanajuato, Mexico. They too are primarily from small ranches in the municipios of Moroleon, Uriangato, and Yuriria. The oldest immigrants, the first arrivals, are from Guanajuato, Puebla, an Michoacan; the most recent arrivals from Jalisco and Morelos.

## 2. Immigration and Work History

All of the immigrants, except for their children, were migrants before they settled. As such, their migration history and patterns are similar to those of today's migrants. They, too, ventured to and worked in California, Texas, and Illinois before settling in the townships and boroughs of southern Chester County. Although they are immigrants, they continue to visit their kin in Mexico periodically, but because of the high cost involved, not as often as they wish.

Like the migrants, the immigrants depend on the mushroom industry for their livelihood. In the immigrant households, the men harvest mushrooms for a living. Some of them have tried their luck in other jobs, but like the migrants, returned because employment elsewhere is not as gainful as in the mushroom industry.

Other household members, many of them women, are employed in the service sector. They work as cashiers, food handlers, and as general laborers in retail businesses. However, service work is temporary and, as such, not available year-round. Many of the employers do not employ workers for more than nine months out of the year in order to keep from providing benefits. In addition, the minimum hourly wage, \$4.25, is the going rate in nearly all of the positions. Moreover, these jobs are not always available to immigrant Mexican workers. The local service industry generates new jobs every year, but laborers with a high school education and English proficiency out compete foreign workers for the limited job openings.

## 3. Housing and Residence Concentrations

The most common living arrangement among the immigrants is an extended household. Nuclear families share their homes with kinsmen: they take in and shelter close relatives, like a parent, sibling, uncle or aunt, cousin, or compadre or comadre [fictive kin\co-parents]. In many cases, the kinsmen are migrants, who work in the area without their families.

In the ethnographic sample, all of the immigrants shared their homes with migrants.

There is a shortage of affordable single and multi-family housing for rent or purchase in the townships and boroughs in southern Chester County. The median home price was \$149,000 in 1990 (Chester County 1992). Today, mortgages run from \$1,000 to \$4,500 a month for one or two bedroom house, more money than what a mushroom worker earns in a month. The median rent was \$496 in 1990 (Chester County 1992). Today, the rents range from \$475 to \$575 in Kennett Square.

The problems are further aggravated by the concentration of immigrants in low-paying jobs in the mushroom and service industries. In these industries, the average annual income of the day laborers is \$12,500 with no benefits, except for the state unemployment and disability assistance. This income level places them at a true disadvantage in a community, like Kennett Square, where the annual average family income is over three times as much, up to \$40,000.

In spite of the housing shortage, Mexican enclaves have emerged in five communities of southern Chester County: Avondale, Kennett Square, Oxford, Toughkenamon, and West Grove. In these townships and boroughs, Mexican immigrants have been settling down since the early 1980s. However, they are not concentrated in one given location; they are scattered throughout different housing developments, mainly apartments. Some live in trailers and homes outside of the communities. In short, the immigrants live where they can find affordable housing, which in many cases is in impoverished and dangerous residential areas.

Nonetheless, there is a strong sense of community among the residents in these areas because many of them have lived in close proximity to each other for a number of years. In addition, kinship ties among some of the households contribute to this strong bond. Neighbors know each other by name, and socially interact on a regular basis. The adults visit one another, and the children frolic in and around the units together. Neighbors also look after each other. They watch over their homes during absences; and they keep an eye on each other's children, at times baby-sitting for each other. In addition, neighbors genuinely care for one another. They give each other gifts, usually food, and loans; run errands; and, when illness strikes, they comfort and care for the sick.

The dwellings in the residential areas are dilapidated and, in many cases, unsafe. For example, electrical wiring is in need of replacement or repairs; sewage backups are common; and roach and rodent infestations are rampant. In addition,

law abiding and hard working folk share these areas with drug dealers and other criminals who live, hide, and work [selling drugs and fencing stolen goods] there. More disturbing is that this riffraff preys on the working people of the area, burglarizing their homes, assaulting them, and attempting to sell their children drugs.

Besides unsafe housing, Mexican immigrants find themselves with limited living space. Most of the rentals in the community are one and two bedroom apartments or duplexes, and it is not unusual for families of six to eight members to live in such units. These overcrowded conditions are not only inhumane, but they also lead to other problems, such as stress, anxiety, and depression. The shortage of housing also creates another problem. Immigrants, many of them families with children, share their shelter with kin and friends, further aggravating the shortage of space. In many cases, up to 15 people share a two bedroom apartment; the men in one room, and women and children in another.

A brief description of an apartment, where Mexican immigrants and migrants have lived for some years, will give the reader a better idea of their living conditions. The Center Square Apartments in Kennett Square, also known locally as Villa Cuernos, will be employed here for this.<sup>12</sup>

Before the arrival of the Mexicans, the units at the Center Square Apartments were mostly rented by Puerto Ricans, who have subsequently moved out of the community. The apartment complex is comprised of four brick buildings, each one has 12 units, totalling 48 apartments. However, after a major fire, one of the buildings has been condemned. In the exterior, there is evidence of dilapidation; doors are off the hinges; window and door frames are in need of painting, and the walls are dirty and covered with graffiti. The lawns are abandoned and littered with trash and empty beer cans and bottles, and the parking lots are lined with abandoned automobiles. Inside, there is a stench of urine and vomit in the dark stairwells, and marijuana aroma escaping from some of the units. In addition, the apartment units are in need of repairs; for example, walls need to be patched and painted and plumbing fixtures require repairs, if not replacement.

The units are primarily occupied by immigrant Mexican families, nuclear families that share their home with kin,

---

<sup>12</sup> The apartments were nicknamed "Villa Cuernos," by the Mexicans, because in the early 1980s, when they were beginning to rent units, some of the men became involved with some of the Puerto Rican women tenants. The women became romantically involved with the Mexicans, or as a rural saying in Mexico goes, "les ponian los Cuernos a sus esposos" [they deceived their husbands].

and migrants, mainly single men. In many cases, up to 15 men rent a single unit. In addition, drug dealers and addicts, some of whom live there, sell and consume cocaine, crack, and heroin on the grounds of the apartment complex. Addicts from surrounding towns venture to this complex to buy drugs and fence stolen goods. These characters and their illegal activities make it extremely dangerous for the children to play outside, and men are at risk of assault, and women of rape.

In the day, the families roam freely in and outside of the apartment buildings. However, at night, it is another story; drug dealers and other criminals control the grounds. They prey on the residents and their visitors; play their music loud into the early hours of the morning; and fire their guns at will. At times, they get into gun fights, firing into the units where families with children hide in the back rooms until the shooting is over. Last year alone, there were two homicides at the apartments.

There are many more units, like the Center Square Apartments, in the communities of southern Chester County. In the years to come, they will continue to provide housing to Mexican immigrants and migrants.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

In southern Chester County, Pennsylvania, the Mexican population is relatively new. Twenty years ago, Mexicans were not immigrating into the area, they were only migrating and staying temporarily. Today, however, many of these migrants are settling down with their families in the boroughs and townships. Some are also opening businesses of their own and growing mushrooms as independent producers. These new residents and their children, like their European predecessors, are creating enclaves, where immigrants and migrants alike can seek solace, housing, and employment in the decades that follow.

If California is used as a barometer, the enclaves will not disappear in the near future. Perhaps the only way they would vanish altogether is if the mushroom industry goes under; however, the chances of closing down are slim. A decade ago, the industry went through an economic crises, and as a result, it restructured itself. Inefficient producers were pushed out, and the efficient remained in business. Today, the industry is competitive; and it continues to implement recent innovations in the industry that will allow it to stay around.



Again, if California is any indicator, more and more immigrants and migrants will find their way to Chester County. Given the housing shortage, growers will continue to provide housing, if they want to keep their skilled and experience labor force in the area.

#### A. Problems in the Enumeration of Migrants

In southern Chester County, the migrant population is a challenge for the U.S. Census Bureau. Two major obstacles make members of this population difficult to count: (i) grower provided housing and (ii) arrimados.

**Grower Provided Housing.** Unlike California and other states, where limited government-sponsored housing is provided, migrants in southern Chester County are not concentrated in areas where they are easily accessible. As pointed out, they are scattered in labor camps over several municipalities, hidden from public view in the countryside. The migrants in the camps do not have street addresses, like the average citizen, except for the domicile of the company where they are employed. However, they are not permitted to use their employers' address, instead they receive their correspondence at P.O. boxes in local post offices. In some cases, up to 20 migrants share a box, because of the shortage of P.O. boxes. The locations of the camps are not public knowledge; many local residents do not know that they exist. Growers want to keep it that way. They are suspicious of strangers on their property for a variety of reasons; some of them fear unscheduled state inspections of their housing and others are afraid of immigration authorities. As noted earlier, in spite of the SAW Program, growers continue to hire undocumented workers. And more recently, with the short-lived labor strike at Koalin Farms, growers are fearful of labor organizers. They want to keep the unions out of the industry.

**Arrimados.** As housing becomes scarce, more and more Mexican migrants are becoming arrimados in the homes of immigrant kin and friends. Just as in California, Immigrant households, among farm workers, take on an extended form, comprised of members other than the immediate family. In California, additional members were added to the households in order to overcome a shortage of housing and economic hardships. In southern Chester County, this practice is occurring for similar reasons. The rents are too high, and the utility bills in the winter are out of this world. By coming together in a home, regular householders and arrimados share a shelter, its furnishings and amenities, and the costs of maintaining it. They divide the rent and the cost of utility bills, such as electricity, gas, water, and garbage.

In California, especially at the site, where the researchers conducted earlier ethnographic research, arrimados were difficult to discover and enumerate using standard census forms. Two reasons were behind the difficulty: one is that arrimados are mobile, moving from one household to another; and the other is that, intentionally, arrimados were not recorded on the census forms (Garcia, 1992).

In regards to the first, mobility, arrimados often move from one household to another in the community. In some cases, they also join households in surrounding neighborhoods and towns. Arrimados move because of better living arrangements in other locales, such as more living space, fewer domestic chores, or a cheaper rent contribution. Arrimados also relocate because of arguments and disagreements that arise with the householders. When they leave, arrimados move into a home of a kin member or friend, usually a countryman from the same hometown back in Mexico.

In terms of the second reason for the enumeration omissions, intentional omissions on census forms, arrimados were not recorded in the forms by the householders because the household was receiving public assistance, mainly Assistance to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and Food Stamps. In these instances, the householders concealed household members who were not part of the immediate family because additional household members may jeopardize the family's eligibility for government aid. The income and assets of these members are taken into consideration in determining whether or not the family qualifies for specific programs.

Some researchers suspect that these practices, observed in the arrimado population in California, have the potential of keeping the Census Bureau from counting migrants who are arrimados in Chester County, further skewing a sound enumeration of the migrant population. Arrimados in the county are equally as mobile, moving from one home to another. Arrimados are also concealed, not so much because of the same reasons observed in California, but because of the fear that arrimados who are not on the rental lease will be detected and reported to landlords or the local housing authorities.

#### B. Some Suggestions for Future Enumerations

The potential obstacles for a sound enumeration of the migrant population can be overcome. What follows are some suggestions.

**Grower Provided Housing.** Staff of the local community-based service providers, like La Comunidad Hispana and Catholic Charities, know the location of migrant housing in and out of townships and boroughs. In the next decennial census, these individuals should be consulted. They know the location of the camps; have contact with most of the migrants; and have good rapport with them. Without doubt, their assistance will guarantee a more accurate enumeration of the migrant population in southern Chester County.

The staff of the local service providers may be of assistance in the following three ways:

One, they can provide the Census Bureau with a listing of all the labor camps that they are familiar with in southern Chester County. In addition, they can give the Census Bureau directions to the camps, especially to those located away from main roads.

Two, months prior to Census Day, the staff can inform the migrants, many of them clients, of the importance of being enumerated in the decennial census. The migrants should be made aware that reliable migrant population figures are in their best interest; such information will enable social service and health providers to argue for and obtain needed resources. Staff members can inform them of this fact as the migrants come in to seek help; and the staff, especially their outreach personnel, can make trips to the labor camps to make formal presentations on the subject.

Three, staff, with the financial assistance of the Census Bureau, can recruit and train a team of special enumerators whose sole objective is to go out and count the residents of the labor camps. In ideal situations, the outreach personnel should be the enumerators because they are known and trusted by the migrants.

Another major group that must be contacted for their help in future enumerations are the mushroom growers. Without their assistance, an accurate enumeration of the migrant population in southern Chester County is not possible. The growers could assist in the following manner:

One, growers can provide the Census Bureau with a listing of their labor camps. In addition, they can provide the Census Bureau with directions to the camps. Two, months prior to Census Day, growers, supervisors, and foremen can encourage the migrants to be counted in the decennial census. The Census Bureau should print posters and literature encouraging "migrant"

participation and informing migrants that they, too, should be enumerated. In California, this writer was surprised to discover that many of the migrants believed that, since they were not U.S. citizens, they were not to be enumerated. The growers, with the assistance of Census Bureau material, could help dispel this and other myths on the subject, such as the Census Bureau providing other government agencies, like the Immigration and Naturalization Service, with names, addresses, and other data collected by the census.

Three, growers can give census enumerators access to their labor camps, when the laborers are not working, so that work will not be interrupted. If approached correctly, growers are willing to give agencies access to their property. They allow staff members of La Comunidad Hispana and the Pennsylvania Migrant Education Program to visit the camps. Recently, they also permitted a Mexican physician to carry out a major health survey of the migrant workers in the mushroom industry. They allowed the doctor onto the property and gave him permission to interview their workers.

Questions may arise as to whether growers will cooperate in having their migratory workers enumerated by outsiders. As mentioned above, they have collaborated in other endeavors in the past. In addition, growers, like the workers, must be reassured that census information is highly confidential. It will not be shared with others. Undoubtedly, there will be growers who will remain skeptical and reluctant to help, especially if they have a large number of undocumented workers on their payroll. These producers should be approached through the American Mushroom Institute, a grower association based in Kennett Square, and fellow growers who are willing to assist in the enumeration effort. Reluctant growers may change their minds if approached and convinced by their influential and willing peers.

**Arrimados.** Arrimados can only be detected and counted using enumerators. The Census Bureau should invest resources in training and sending enumerators to apartment complexes and neighborhoods, where Mexicans reside in large numbers, with the sole purpose of enumerating arrimados.

In order to guarantee success in counting arrimados, the enumerators should possess the following knowledge and skills:

1. The enumerator should know what an arrimado is and which households are likely to have them. In fact, while knocking on doors and making inquiries, the enumerator

should inform the householder that arrimados are to be included in the census count; and reassure him that enumeration information is highly confidential; in particular, that it will not be shared with landlords or any others, including other government agencies.

2. The enumerator should know the enumeration sites and their residents. In particular, knowing the daily schedule of the families is of great help; he will know when is the best time to stop by and make inquiries. Ideally, the enumerator should be someone from the community; an individual who is known locally and trusted. Such a person will know the families in the neighborhoods, and will have a general idea as to whether or not arrimados live in the homes.

3. The enumerator should be bilingual and bicultural. Such a person will have a better chance of communicating with and understanding the residents at the enumeration site. In turn, they would not be as intimidated as they would be by someone who did not speak Spanish nor understood their way of life. In addition, many of the Mexican immigrants and migrants are distrustful of outsiders, fearing that they may be government agents or housing inspectors. A bilingual and bicultural enumerator, especially if he is from the community, may lay this fear to rest.

4. Finally, when at all possible, traditional anthropological field methods should be employed in enumerating the arrimados. As I noted in my report on an alternative enumeration of farm workers in California:

... these field tools [field methods] are also of use in discovering who lives in a household and what is the kinship relationship in the household. The field methods successfully provided first-hand information on this subject. In addition, when used in conjunction, participant observation, informal interviews, and genealogical constructs not only provided data, they also permitted the verification of the information. Each data set obtained through one field method serves to cross-check the information collected through another (Garcia 1992).

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A: METHODS USED IN THE STUDY**

Sample  
Data Collection

### **APPENDIX B: MAP AND TABLES**

Map of Chester county  
Tables 1 - 6

## VI. APPENDIX A: METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

Data for this report were collected over a seven month period, from September, 1993 to March, 1994, using traditional ethnographic methods. In late August, 1993, the principal investigator and research associate moved into Kennett Square, and commenced the study. Preliminary visits to the area were made in March, 1991, and November, 1993, to make contacts and gather field information.

The data collection was carried out by the principal investigator (PI) and research associate (RA). The two researchers are bilingual and bicultural. In fact, the PI is of Mexican descent and a son of Mexican immigrants, and the RA is a native of Mexico. Together, the two of them also conducted an alternative enumeration study, focusing on immigrant and migratory farm workers in California, for the Census Bureau in 1990. It was one of several studies conducted under the auspices of the Ethnographic Evaluation of the Behavioral Causes of Undercount Project.

### A. Sample

In all, 50 Mexican immigrants and migrants were studied using the field methods described in the proceeding sections. Out of this number, 25 were selected for the final ethnographic sample. They were picked because, on the basis of the researchers' knowledge about the local immigrant and migrant populations, it was determined that they are representative of others in the communities of southern Chester County. A little over half, thirteen of the informants, are immigrants, and until recently, they too were migrants. The remainder are currently migratory mushroom workers.

### B. Data Collection

During the preliminary field visits, the principal investigator held informal interviews with a few mushroom growers and the county agricultural extension officer. These interviews were exploratory, seeking background information on production and work in the mushroom industry. In addition, a review of the industry's literature, namely Mushroom News, provided data on production firms operating in the county, mushroom varieties, and production phases and practices.

The two researchers commenced the in situ phase of the study by introducing themselves and the research project to community-based organizations, like La Comunidad Hispana, churches, and the Comite de Apoyo para Trabajadores Agricolas (CATA), the local labor union. In addition to the introductions, they volunteered their time to various programs,

such as English as a Second Language (ESL) and catechism courses, to develop rapport with Mexican immigrants and migrants living in the boroughs and townships in southern Chester County. The researchers also tutored some of the students in the ESL courses in their homes in Kennett Square.

Community work aside, the researchers periodically visited the Mexican enclaves in Kennett Square, Toughkenamon, Avondale, and West Grove. During the trips, casual strolls were taken through the neighborhoods to make observations of the local activity. Residents of the enclaves, who were befriended during the researchers' community work, were visited during the trips. They in turn introduced the investigators to relatives or friends in the area. Overtime, they became key informants who provided valuable knowledge about their neighborhoods.

After preliminary inquiries, 25 of the informants were selected for the ethnographic sample. They were periodically interviewed during the six months of the in situ study. Strong rapport and trust was developed with the informants, visiting them at least once a week and joining them to celebrate special events, such as birthdays and get-togethers. When possible, they were invited to the home of the researchers for coffee or dinner. At times, they would stop by on their own, especially when they were in need of help, wanting an English language letter translated, a ride to a local community, and help with their income tax forms.

Unstructured and open-ended interviews were employed to collect data. All of the interviews were conducted in Spanish. They took place in "natural" settings: conversing over dinner or over a cup a coffee or while accompanying them to the market. At the beginning non-threatening questions about their families and employment in the area were asked; later, once trust was established, more personal questions were asked about their immigration and citizenship status, living arrangements, and wages and incomes. The information was recorded in a note book; and toward the end of the study, some interviews were tape and video recorded.

During the interviews, limited genealogical constructs of the respondents were drawn up. Immediate family, such as parents, brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, were considered; along with uncles and aunts, and grandparents to determine the migration and immigration history of the family. The genealogical constructs were helpful in determining the number of family members, and its composition by age, gender, and relationship. They were also very useful for discovering where family members were born and where they are currently residing in United States or Mexico; and in finding out who in the family migrates to the United States; where, when and



how frequently, and also the reasons for their migration. Moreover, the genealogical constructs facilitated the collection and recording of kinship and demographic data, and made kinship inquiries interesting to the respondents. In some instances, the respondents requested that we map their entire genealogies for them to keep as a record of their families.

Observations were also made during home visits to collect information on the housing and living arrangements of the migrant and immigrant populations. Homes were visited periodically to verify observations made in previous visits and information collected from interviews. During the visits, living conditions were noticed and recorded in notes. In addition, care was taken to see and to talk to as many household members as possible to see who was living in the house or apartment. Changes in household composition and size were noted and recorded. Particular attention was paid to changes that resulted from the arrival of new household members; the departure of household members to Mexico or other areas of the United States; and the arrival and departure of arrimados.

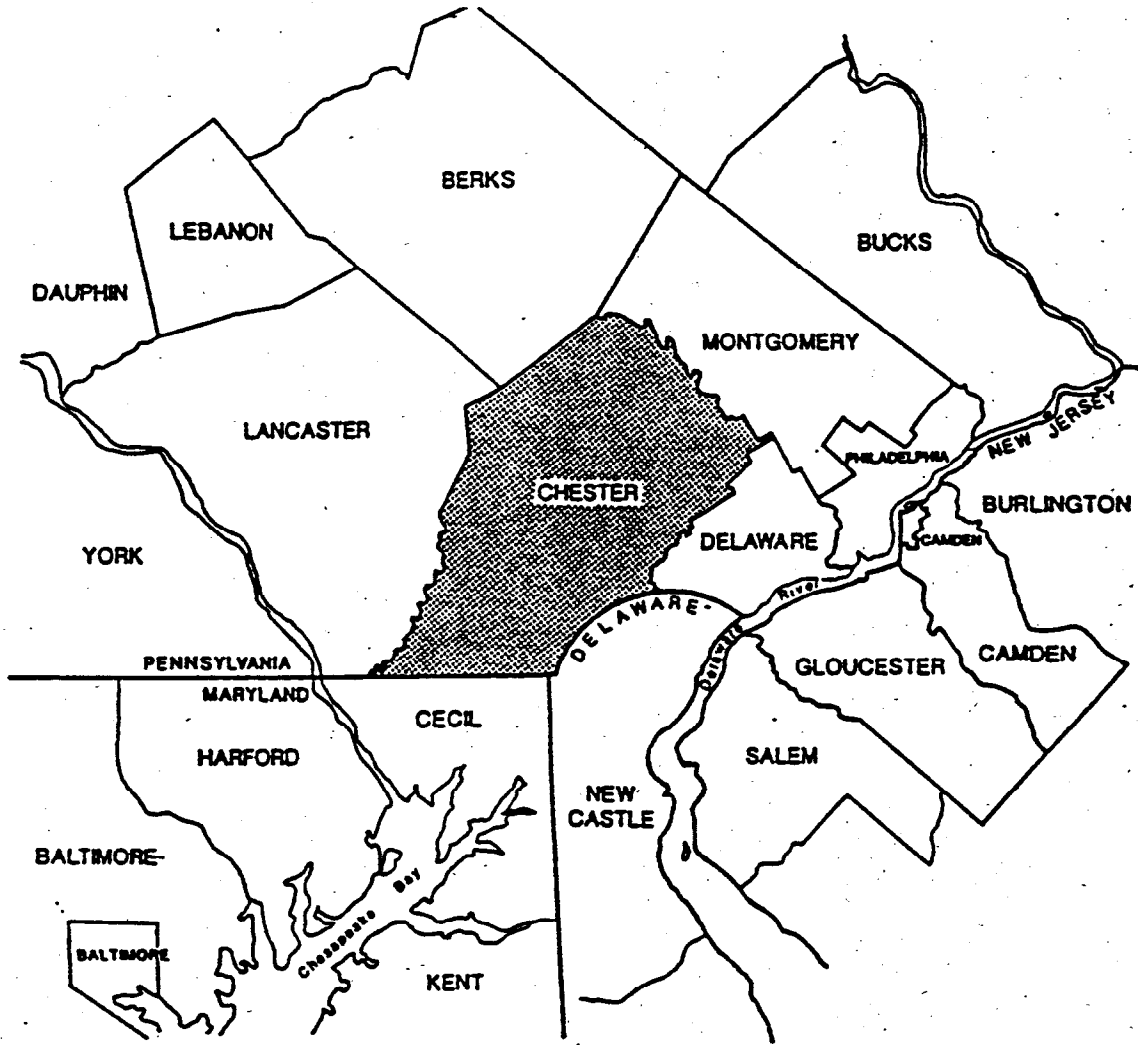
Community-based service providers and local leaders, who know and have rapport with Mexican immigrants and migrants, were questioned as well. Staff of La Comunidad Hispana, Catholic Charities, Pennsylvania Migrant Education Program, and local representative of CATA were interviewed, using unstructured and open-ended questions.

Information on the migrant population was obtained also through collaborative work with a major health project in the area, titled "Accesibilidad a Los Servicios de Salud Para Agricultores Migrantes en Pennsylvania, EUA: Un Abordaje de Evaluacion Rapida." During the study period, a Mexican medical doctor, Hector Eduardo Velasco Mondragon, was examining the health conditions of the migrant population and attempting to determine their use of medical services. He located and recorded residence clusters of the migrants in southern Chester County, and interviewed and examined a selected number of the migrants. The PA and RA joined him in some of his tours to the living camps, and exchanged data on different subjects.

Data on the Mexican enclaves of southern Chester County were also collected conversing with as many of the community residents about the influx of Mexicans into the neighborhoods, regardless of ethnicity or national origin. More systematic data were collected daily from English and Spanish language newspaper articles, news broadcasts, and public announcements aired in English and Spanish language radio and television programs. Chester County censuses, records, maps, and planning studies were consulted as well.

VI. APPENDIX B.

MAP AND TABLES



Source: Chester County  
Planning Depart.

**Table 1: Ethnic Population Size in 1980 and 1990,  
Toughkenamon, Pennsylvania**

Year	Blacks	Hispanics	Non-Hispanic Whites	Other	Total Population
1980	93/08.38%	207/18.63%	811/72.99%	--	1,111/100%
1990	43/03.38%	500/39.28%	726/57.03%	4/.31%	1,273/100%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census, General Population Characteristics, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., 1982; General Population Characteristics Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C. 1992

**Table 2: Hispanic Population Size in 1980 and 1990,  
Toughkenamon, Pennsylvania**

Year	Mexican Origin	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Other	Total Hispanic Population
1980	88/42.5%	112/54.1%	--	7/03.4%	207/100%
1990	354/70.8%	136/27.2%	3/0.6%	7/1.4%	500/100%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census, General Population Characteristics, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., 1982; General Population Characteristics Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C. 1992

**Table 3: Ethnic Population Size in 1980 and 1990,  
Kennett Square, Pennsylvania**

Year	Blacks	Hispanics	Non-Hispanic Whites	Other	Total Population
1980	632/13.4%	234/5.0%	3,847/81.6%	--	4,715/100%
1990	600/11.4%	662/12.6%	3,918/75.08%	38/0.92%	5,218/100%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census, General Population Characteristics, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., 1982; General Population Characteristics Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C. 1992

**Table 4: Hispanic Population Size in 1980 and 1990,  
Kennett Square, Pennsylvania**

Year	Mexican Origin	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Other	Total Hispanic Population
1980	24/10.3%	192/82%	7/3%	11/4.7%	234/100%
1990	374/56.4%	238/36%	--	50/7.6%	662/100%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census, General Population Characteristics, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., 1982; General Population Characteristics Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C. 1992

**Table 5: CASH RECEIPTS FROM SALE OF HORTICULTURE AND MUSHROOM PRODUCTS IN PENNSYLVANIA AND CHESTER COUNTY FROM 1980 - 1992\***

YEAR	CASH RECEIPTS IN PENNSYLVANIA	CASH RECEIPTS IN CHESTER COUNTY	CHESTER COUNTY AS A PERCENTAGE OF PENNSYLVANIA
1980	\$278,681,000	\$132,769,000	47.64
1981	\$285,280,000	\$119,120,000	41.75
1982	\$303,346,000	\$133,221,000	43.91
1983	\$298,758,000	\$125,064,000	41.86
1984	\$452,601,000	\$183,314,000	40.00
1985	\$467,228,000	\$192,435,000	41.18
1986	\$466,641,000	\$188,432,000	40.38
1987	\$471,989,000	\$190,289,000	40.31
1988	\$491,380,000	\$157,985,000	32.15
1989	\$505,955,000	\$150,887,000	50.59
1990	\$548,316,000	\$172,665,000	51.00
1991	\$335,765,000	\$171,259,000	51.00
1992	NOT AVAILABLE	--	--

SOURCE: PENNSYLVANIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTIC SERVICES, STATISTICAL SUMMARIES & PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ANNUAL REPORTS, 1980 - 1992 ISSUES.

\* Horticultural production consists of flowers, nursery products and sod.



**Table 6: PRODUCTION OF AGARICUS MUSHROOMS IN PENNSYLVANIA,  
FROM 1980 - 1992**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>SQUARE FEET UNDER MUSHROOM PRODUCTION</b>	<b>POUNDS OF HARVESTED MUSHROOMS</b>	<b>POUNDS OF HARVESTED MUSHROOMS PER SQUARE FOOT</b>
1980	72,984,000	213,709,000	2.98
1981	72,033,000	237,463,000	3.29
1982	75,360,000	273,048,000	3.62
1983	68,620,000	246,582,000	3.59
1984	74,289,000	279,654,000	3.76
1985	68,524,000	275,196,000	4.01
1986	60,210,000	256,160,000	4.25
1987	61,759,000	281,376,000	4.55
1988	60,462,000	284,783,000	4.71
1989	60,042,000	294,070,000	4.89
1990	64,909,000	332,449,000	5.12
1991	65,506,000	351,204,000	5.36
1992	62,847,000	350,270,000	5.57

SOURCE: PENNSYLVANIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTIC SERVICES, STATISTICAL SUMMARIES & PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ANNUAL REPORTS, 1980 - 1992 ISSUES.

## VII. REFERENCES

- Babbitt, Karen  
 1993 Kaolin Worker Writes to Local Press: Don't Believe What You Read in the Newspaper [Except This]. Mushroom News 41(6) [June].
- Barber, Chris  
 1993 The Ball Begins to Roll for Affordable Housing. The Kennett Paper: Southeastern Chester County's Community Newspaper. July 1-7. [Weekly Paper].
- Brownrigg, Leslie A.  
 1992 Personal Communication, April.
- Brownrigg, Leslie A. & Elizabeth A. Martin  
 1992 Proposed Study Plan for the Ethnographic Evaluation of the Behavioral Causes of Undercount. Paper prepared for the Census Advisory Committee of the American Statistical Association and the Census Advisory Committee on Population Statistics at the Joint Advisory Committee Meeting, April 13-14. Washington, D.C: U.S. Bureau of the Census
- Colon, Israel  
 1993 "The State of Latino Affairs:" An Overview of Selected Pennsylvania Latino Communities. A report prepared for the Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs, presented at the Encounter of the Cultures Conference, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, October 14-15.
- County of Chester  
 1992 Chester County Profile 1992. West Chester, PA: Chester County Planning Commission, Government Services.
- Depel, Frank  
 1993 Presentation Report of Mision Santa Maria, Madre de Dios, Avondale, Pennsylvania, January 19.
- 1993 Personal Communication, November.
- Druly, Shela  
 1993 Managed Health Care Reform Testimony to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, Health Care Reform Hearings, West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania, October 9.
- 1993 Personal Communication, November.
- Falcon, Angelo  
 1993 Latinos in Pennsylvania in the 1990s: A Socioeconomic Profile. A report prepared for the Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs, presented at the Encounter of the Cultures Conference, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, October 14-15.

- Fitz, Patrick J.  
1993 Improving Harvester Productivity & Product Quality. Mushroom News 41(6) [June].
- Garcia, Victor  
1992 Results from an Alternative Enumeration in a Mexican and Mexican American Farm Worker Community in California: Ethnographic Evaluation of the Behavioral Causes of Undercount. Report #12, Ethnographic Evaluation of the 1990 Decennial Census Report Series, Center for Survey Methods Research. Washington, D.C: Bureau of the Census.  
1993 The Emergence and Growth of Mexican Enclaves in Eastern Pennsylvania and Central California: A Comparative Analysis, Proposed Plan of Research, Ford Foundation Postdoctorate for Minorities.
- Heppel, Monica L. & Sandra L. Amendola (Eds.)  
1992 Immigration Reform and Perishable Crop Agriculture: Compliance or Circumvention? Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, and Washington, D.C: Center for Immigration Studies.
- Hogan, Howard  
"The 1990 Post-Enumeration Survey: Operations and Results." Paper presented at the 1991 Annual Meeting of the American Statistical Association, Atlanta, Georgia, August 19-22.
- Mahler, Sarah  
1993 Alternative Enumeration of Undocumented Salvadorians of Long Island. Report #26, Ethnographic Evaluation of the 1990 Decennial Census Report Series, Center for Survey Methods Research. Washington, D.C: Bureau of the Census.
- Migrant Education Program  
1993 Chester County Statistics, July and August.
- Montoya, Martin  
1993 Ethnographic Evaluation of the Behavioral Causes of Undercount: Woodburn, Oregon. Report #25, Ethnographic Evaluation of the 1990 Decennial Census Report Series, Center for Survey Methods Research. Washington, D.C: Bureau of the Census.
- Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistic Services  
1980- Statistical Summaries & Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture,  
1992 Annual Reports.
- Rodriguez, Nestor P. & Jacqueline S. Hagan  
1991 Investigating Census Coverage and Content Among the Undocumented: An Ethnographic Study of Latino Immigrant Tenants in Houston. Report #3, Ethnographic Evaluation of the 1990 Decennial Census Report Series, Center for Survey Methods Research. Washington, D.C: Bureau of the Census.

Smith, Robert

- 1992 "Case Study 1: The Mushroom Industry in Chester County, Pennsylvania" in Heppel, Monica L. & Sandra L. Amendola, Immigration Reform and Perishable Crop Agriculture: Compliance or Circumvention? Lanham, Md: University Press of America, and Washington, D.C: Center for Immigration Studies.

Center for Immigration Studies.

- n.d. The Social Structure of Accumulation, Immigration Pathways and IRCA: The Construction of Labor Markets in the Pennsylvania Mushroom Industry. Manuscript.

Velasco, Alfredo

- 1992 Ethnographic Evaluation of Behavioral Causes Undercount in the Community of Sherman Heights, California. Report #22, Ethnographic Evaluation of the 1990 Decennial Census Report Series, Center for Survey Methods Research. Washington, D.C: Bureau of the Census.

Velasco Mondragon, Hector Eduardo (et. al.)

- 1993 Accesibilidad a Los Servicios de Salud Para Agricultores Migrantes Mexicanos en Pennsylvania, EUA: Un Abordaje de Evaluacion Rapida. Personal Communication, September & October.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

- 1981 1978 Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Geographical Area Series, Part 38, Pennsylvania, State and County Data. Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- 1984 1982 Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Geographical Area Series, Part 38, Pennsylvania, State and County Data. Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- 1989 1987 Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Geographical Area Series, Part 38, Pennsylvania, State and County Data. Washington, D.C: Department of Agriculture.

U.S. Bureau of the Census

- 1982 General Population Characteristics, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C: U.S. Bureau of the Census.
- 1992 General Population Characteristics, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C: U.S. Bureau of the Census.