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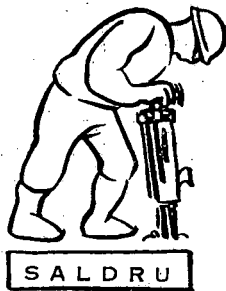
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Farm Labour in the Eastern Cape, 1950-1973

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FARM LABOUR IN THE EASTERN CAPE, 1950-1973

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1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to survey the farm labour conditions in the Eastern Cape over approximately two decades and to note some of the conditions of service and the attitudes of employers, and the changes which have occurred in employment and wages paid. The main source for the latter period, and in particular 1973, is a farm labour survey conducted in conjunction with E.A. Thomson in the Eastern Cape.

The survey relied entirely on the willingness of members of farm study groups and Farmers' Associations as well as interested individuals for its completion. Of the approximately 1020 pre-coded questionnaires which were posted to farmers throughout the Eastern Cape in June 1973, 303 were returned of which 299 were suitable for analysis.

It is necessary, therefore, in what follows to bear in mind the limitations mentioned above. In order to place the data in perspective use is made where possible of supporting data from Agricultural Censuses for the years 1950 to 1973.

2 THE EASTERN CAPE : the farm economy and labour requirements.

"The Eastern Cape" in this study is defined as the area traditionally known as the 'North-Eastern Cape', * the (Eastern Cape) 'Border' * and the 'Eastern Cape Province', *** excluding the Cape Midlands. Since the 1973 survey returns were not sufficient for an analysis by each magisterial district, they were grouped into 4 'sub-regions' each comprising several magisterial districts. The four sub-regions were designated largely on agro-economic grounds to be the 'North-Eastern Cape', 'Central', 'Border', and 'Coastal'. These sub-regions in fact comply roughly with the previous grouping, except that the 'Eastern Cape Province' is divided into two to form 'Central' and 'Coastal' and that the districts of Albany and Bathurst are included with 'Border', as shown on the accompanying map.

Two aspects which should be particularly noted are the proximity of the Region to the Transkei, Ciskei and Lesotho and the major towns within the Region. The two coastal cities of Port Elizabeth and East London have the largest concentrations of population, while the only inland towns of any size are Grahamstown, Queenstown and King Williams Town.

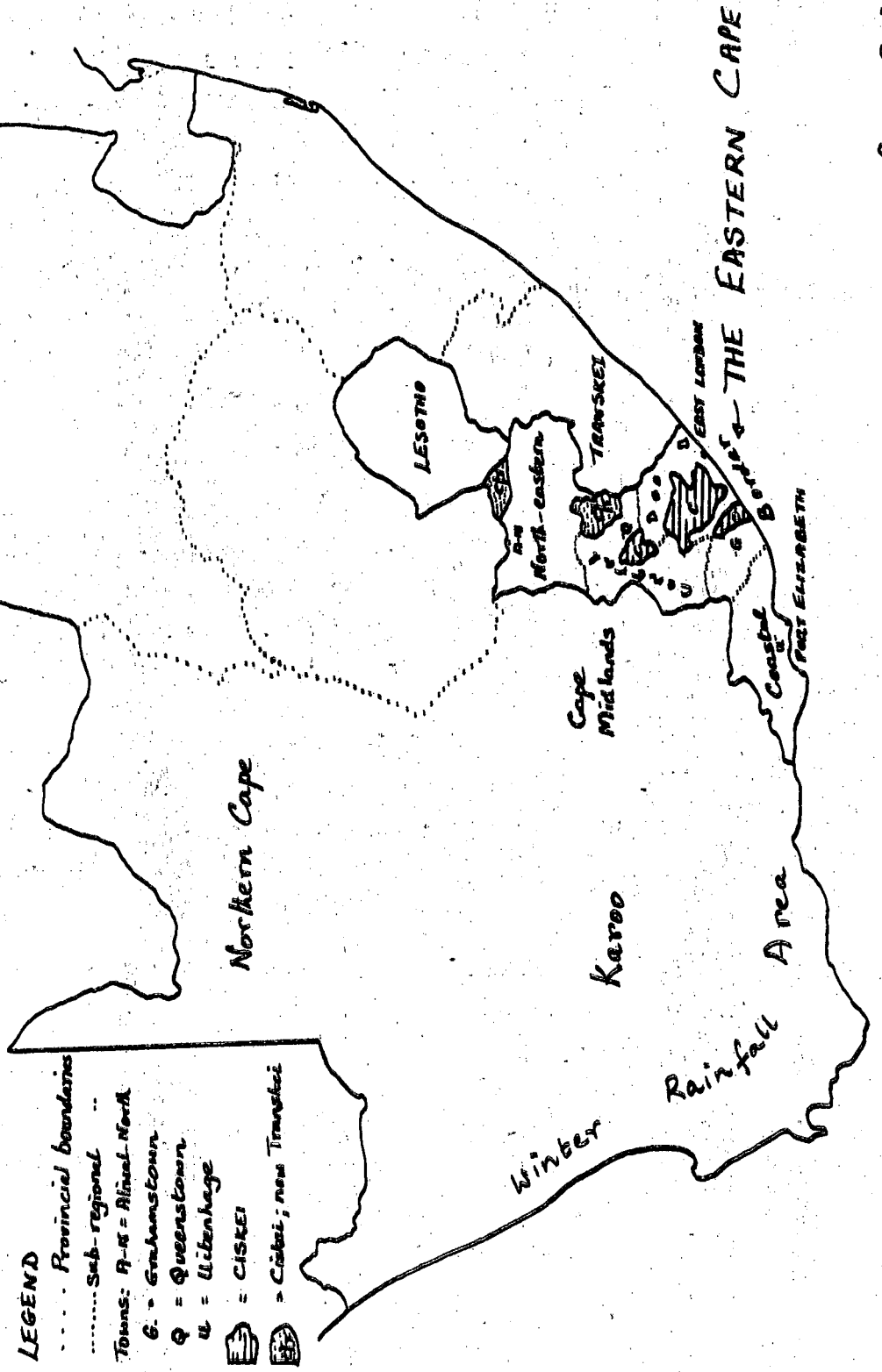
Apart from major industries in the coastal cities, industrial development of the region is relatively limited, but there is the prospect however, of further development of Border Industries notably in King Williams Town, Berlin, East London, Butterworth and Queenstown. The economy of the area is

* Albert, Aliwal-North, Barkly East, Elliott, Indwe, Lady Grey, Maclear, Molteno and Wodehouse.

** Cathcart, Stutterheim, East London, Peddie, King Williams Town and Queenstown.

*** Albany, Bathurst, Adelaide, Bedford, Fort Beaufort, Sterkstroom, Stockenstrom, Victoria East, Tarka and Alexandria, Hankey, Humansdorp, Kirkwood, Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage.

MAP of SOUTH AFRICA showing
THE EASTERN CAPE & its sub-regions



therefore dependant to a large extent on its farmland both white and black, the Ciskei being contained within the borders of "The Eastern Cape". Black agriculture is mainly of a subsistence nature and hired employment is still very limited. Inevitably then, the employers of farm labour are almost exclusively whites on the farms of whites. This study is limited to labour employed on the farms of whites.

The agricultural economy of the Eastern Cape is extremely diversified, although in all areas livestock farming plays an important part. In the North-Eastern Cape the most important farming lines are woolled sheep, beef cattle and crops such as maize and wheat to a varying degree. The Border area has woolled sheep, beef cattle, dairy cattle and pineapples. The Central area has relatively few cash crops except for citrus in the Kat River Valley and in addition to beef and sheep throughout, the region has a large concentration of Angora goats in the South as well as mutton sheep (mainly Dorper) and some Boergoats. Finally, the main farming lines in the 'coastal' sub-region are chicory, pineapples, citrus, and dairy cattle. Labour requirements vary between farming enterprises as well as the necessary skills which are essential. Livestock farming in general is far less demanding in its labour requirements than crop farming in general. But it is necessary to make a distinction within both livestock and crops. In this respect, dairying requires a relatively large regular and reliable labour force. Crops such as chicory, pineapples and citrus require large amounts of labour at particular times of the year especially at planting and harvesting time. Mechanisation has taken place on an increasing scale in recent years in both the crop and livestock branches of farming in the region.

3 THE LABOUR FORCE

The total number of farm employees in the Eastern Cape in August 1973 was 48 687 of which 90% were Blacks with the remaining 2 % Whites and 8 % Coloureds. This contrasts with most of the remainder of the Cape Province where Coloureds are in the majority.* The following table gives an indication of the size of the labour force in the Eastern Cape in relation to the Cape Province and South Africa as a whole.

Table 1: No of regular farm labourers in the Eastern Cape, Cape Province and South Africa, 1973.

Race group	Eastern Cape	Cape Province - Eastern Cape	Cape Province	South Africa	E. Cape as % C.P.
Whites	908	4 679	5 587	11 799	16,3
Coloureds	3 700	86 616	90 316	92 850	4,1
Asiatics	4	27	31	3 626	12,9
Blacks	44 075	50 992	95 067	618 493	46,4
TOTAL	48 687	142 314	191 001	726 768	25,5

Source: Agricultural Census, 1973

It will be noted from the table that although the Eastern Cape employs about one quarter of the total regular farm labour in the Cape Province, 46% of Black farm employees in the Cape Province are in the Eastern Cape.

* Blacks outnumber Coloureds by varying degrees in the Eastern part of the Cape Midlands (i.e. the area adjacent to the study area) and in the North-eastern part of the Northern Cape, i.e. adjacent to the Transvaal and Orange Free State).

The farm labour force in addition consists of casual or seasonal employees, but here it is not possible to have anywhere near as accurate an indication of the extent of the labour force. Firstly, the Agricultural Census is taken as at a particular date or month of the year and secondly, no indication is given of the period of employment. These defects are possibly not as serious when information is compared on a country-wide basis from year to year as when a comparison between one area and another within South Africa are sought. In the former case, weather conditions at the time of the census may have quite a marked influence, although provided data for a few years is compared with that for the same time period, country-wide information should give a good indication of the extent of the casual labour force. Within South Africa comparisons suffer from the severe defect that amount of casual labour employed in the month of August may be a poor indication of average annual employment.* All that can be said then, is that in the month of August, 44 886 casual labourers were employed of whom 41 870 or 93,3% were Blacks. Even given the reservations expressed above it is quite apparent that casual labour is a very important part of the total farm work force. Indications from the Agricultural Census of 1965 are that the casual labourers in that year were employed for roughly two-thirds of the available working days (that is 15 of 22 or 23) during August.

Whereas the regular labour force consists of about 88% males, the casual labour force has a larger representation of female labour, viz. 52% females (Agric. census, 1969). Generally, the casual labour force consists of family members of regular male labourers and may include a number of teenagers amongst the males, although most of the women are the wives and/or grown daughters of the household head.

* In the Western Cape fruit industry, for example, employment of casual labour in August would severely understate the annual average (Beyers, 1971).

The total number of regular farm employees in the Eastern Cape has decreased since the mid 1950's as shown in table 2 below:

Table: 2 Number of regular farm employees and tractors in the Eastern Cape, selected years 1950-1973.

Year	Total	Whites	Coloureds & Asians	Blacks	Tractors
1950 ⁺	77 547	1 042	76 505		4 122
1957	67 467	991	4 655	61 821	7 876
1965	61 971	1 209	4 564	56 198	9 834
1973	48 687	908	3 704	44 075	11 192

Note: ⁺ 1950 total includes approximately 15 000 to 17 000 domestic servants

Source: Agricultural Censuses.

The actual number of regular farm employees in 1950 was probably in the region of 61 000 assuming that there were between 15 000 and 17 000 domestic servants; in 1957 there were 17 163. Over the 16 year period 1957 to 1973 while total labour decreased by 28% the number of tractors increased from 7 876 to 11 192 or by 42%. The same tendency is shown in all the sub-regions of the Eastern Cape except for the coastal sub-region which showed an increase in number of regular labourers from 12 688 in 1957 to 15 111 in 1965, but decreasing again in 1973 to 13 413. This is due in large part to the larger area devoted to cash crops and the expansion of fresh milk production. More recently fresh milk production has been mechanised to an increasing extent as labour has been lost to the towns.

4 FARM WAGES

Typically the wages paid to farm labour is made up of payments in cash, rations of foodstuffs (and sometimes other commodities such as tobacco), milk and meat in varying quantities, clothing and an annual bonus. Invariably housing is provided free of charge as well as fuel and water. In addition some farm labourers are allowed free grazing rights and a piece of arable land for the cultivation of his own crops. Thus, an accurate reflection of the total average wage is rather more difficult to arrive at than in industry. The Agricultural Census usually simply provides information on the cash wages paid and the value of rations. Occasionally an estimate is given in the Agricultural Census of the value of grazing rights and arable land for employee cultivation. Prior to the 1949/50 Agricultural Census, information on a magisterial district basis with respect to employment and wages is not available and it was only from 1952 that data has been given for Coloureds and Asiatics, and Blacks separately. Since both the absolute number and the proportion of non-Blacks is small in the Eastern Cape, this is of no great consequence. (Asiatics and Coloureds were not separated until the 1960 census).

In the following table the total wages paid to farm labour in the Eastern Cape is presented for selected years from 1949/50 to 1972/73.

Table: 3 Total cash wages per annum of regular farm labour in the Eastern Cape, selected years 1950-1973. (Rm)

Year	Total	Whites	Coloureds & Asians	Blacks
1949/50 ⁺	2,68	0,36	— 2,32 —	
1956/57	4,22	0,86	0,47	2,89
1964/65	5,71	1,36	0,57	3,78
1972/73	8,66	2,15	0,86	5,65

Note: ⁺ 1949/50 includes wages paid to domestic servants

Source: Agricultural Censuses; Abstract of Agricultural Statistics, 1976

Total cash wages increased from R4,22m in 1956/57 to R8,66m in 1972/73 which is slightly more than a doubling in 16 years; wages paid to Whites increased by 2,5 times. Black wages doubled while those paid to Coloureds and Asians increased 1,8 times.

Comparable data for payment in kind is available only for the latter two years, viz. 1964/65 and 1972/73, since in earlier years both

regular farm and domestic employees were included in one figure. The following table shows total payments in kind in the Eastern Cape.

Table: 4 Total annual payments in kind to regular farm labour in the Eastern Cape, selected years 1950-1973 (Rm).

Year	Total	Whites	Coloureds & Asians	Blacks
1949/50 ⁺	1,86	0,09	— 1,77 —	
1956/57 ⁺	2,83	0,13	0,17	2,53
1964/65	2,23	0,11	0,10	2,02
1972/73	3,71	0,10	0,18	3,43

Notes: ⁺ 1949/50 and 1956/57 includes payments in kind to domestic servants

Source: Agricultural Censuses

From the table it will be noted that payments in kind increased by 66% between 1964/65 and 1972/73 while total cash wages over the same period increased by 52%. Almost the entire amount was due to the increase in payments in kind by 59% to Black farm labourers, although the increase was lower than that of cash wages.

Average cash wages per regular farm labourer per annum are presented in the table below:

Table: 5 Average annual cash wages of regular farm labour in the Eastern Cape, selected years 1950-1973 (R)

Year	Whites	Coloureds & Asians	Blacks	C.P.I.
1949/50 ⁺	342	— 30 —		69,4
1956/57	871	102	47	92,9
1964/65	1 127	124	67	110,1
1972/73	2 370	233	128	155,6

Notes: ⁺ 1949/50 average wages of regular labour and domestic servants
C.P.I. = consumer price index 1958/59 - 60/61 = 100

Source: Agricultural Censuses; Abstract of Agricultural Statistics, 1976

Average cash wages of farm labourers have increased more rapidly than the consumer price index over both the entire period from 1949/50 to 1972/73

and between any two of the selected years. Average cash wages of Coloureds, Asians and Blacks combined amounted to R30 per annum in 1949/50. By 1972/73 Black wages had increased to R128 per annum - an approximately fourfold increase compared to a 60% increase in the consumer price index. Wages paid to Whites increased much more rapidly, viz. by 6,9 times.

Average annual payments in kind, however, show a different picture. Payments in kind to Blacks trebled, to Coloureds and Asians approximately doubled while that to Whites increased only 1,3 times as shown below:

Table: 6 Average annual payments in kind to farm labourers in the Eastern Cape, selected years 1950 - 1973 (R).

Year	Whites	Coloureds & Asians	Blacks	C.P.I.
1949/50 ⁺	88	23		69,4
1956/57 ⁺	128	30	33	92,9
1964/65	88	23	36	110,1
1972/73	113	49	78	155,6

Notes: ⁺ 1949/50 and 1956/57 are averages for regular farm labour and domestic servants. The inclusion of the latter would tend to depress the average.

Source: Agricultural Censuses; Abstract of Agricultural Statistics, 1976.

The high figure of R128 in payments in kind to Whites in 1956/57 is somewhat puzzling at first glance, but when the same information is examined on a sub-regional basis it is seen that the increase is confined to the Central and North-eastern Cape. In the Border and Coastal sub-regions payments in kind to Whites actually decreased or remained almost constant for the years 1950, 1957 and 1965. This is illustrated in the table below:

Table: 7 Average annual payments in kind to regular White farm employees, selected years 1950-1973 by sub-region (R)

Year	North-Eastern	Central	Border	Coastal	E. Cape	Wool price c/kg
1949/50 ⁺	111	112	98	52	88	88
1956/57 ⁺	217	264	93	51	128	114
1964/65	160	140	84	53	88	80
1972/73	210	195	109	72	113	165 est.

Note: ⁺ 1949/50 and 1956/57 average for farm labour and domestic servants.

Source: Agricultural Censuses; Abstract of Agricultural Statistics, 1976

Both the North-eastern and Central sub-regions as we saw earlier are wool producing areas and this fact would seem to account for the 'high' payments in kind in 1956/57. This contention is illustrated by comparison of payments in kind to the prices received for Merino wool in cents/kg in table 7 above. As employers prospered so payments in kind were more generous.

A further point which should be noted is the proportion of total payments which constitute payments in kind. In the case of Blacks 62% of total payments was cash while for Whites cash wages constituted 95% of the total earnings in 1972/73. The proportion of cash paid has increased especially for Whites - in 1956/57 cash constituted 87%; the cash component for Blacks showed a slight increase, from 59 to 62% over the same period. The Coastal sub-region which paid the highest wages to Blacks (R104 vs R80 in 1957 and R240 vs R206 in 1973) also paid the largest proportion in cash, namely 81 and 83% respectively. Average annual payments in cash and kind for the Eastern Cape are shown below:

Table: 8 Average annual wages in cash and kind of regular farm labour in the Eastern Cape, 1950 - 1973 (R)

Year	Whites	Coloureds & Asians	Blacks	All races
1949/50 ⁺	430	53		59
1956/57	999	132	80	96
1964/65	1 215	147	103	128
1972/73	2 531	282	206	254

Note: ⁺ includes domestic servants

Source: Agricultural Censuses

Results from the survey of farm labour in the Eastern Cape in 1973 gives some indication of the range of cash wages paid. Of the 299 respondents 15% paid R5 or less per month, 45% between R6 and R10, and 20% each between R11 and R15 and R16 and R30. (This information is also illustrated in the accompanying chart.)

The total remuneration to Black and Coloured farm employees in the Eastern Cape and each of the four sub-regions is shown in table 9.

Table: 9 Total annual remuneration of permanent labour on 299 farms in the Eastern Cape, 1973 (R.c)

Item	N-E	Central	Border	Coastal	E. Cape
Cash	101.28	115.08	103.20	216.00	128.04
Rations	134.04	156.96	139.44	83.88	136.44
Bonus	11.05	12.29	14.36	18.78	13.73
Clothing	16.89	15.09	13.90	13.33	15.02
Medical	15.06	15.16	15.70	13.84	14.98
Tax	1.15	2.81	3.14	1.56	2.10
Sub-total (1)	279.47	317.39	289.74	347.39	310.31
Housing	58.08	56.52	51.60	57.12	55.92
Livestock	173.27	145.16	143.87	59.97	136.75
Land	45.14	51.06	64.75	108.78	64.38
sub-total (2)	276.49	252.74	260.22	225.87	257.05
TOTAL	555.96	570.13	549.96	573.26	567.36

Source: calculated from Survey 1973 by E.A. Thomson and G.G. Antrobus.

As seen above the average total remuneration is calculated to be R567 per annum which is rather more than double the total as calculated from the Agricultural Census for 1972/73. The latter, however, specifically excludes items such as housing, grazing and ploughing rights and various other sundry items. The equivalent figures for the Survey and the Census are as follows:

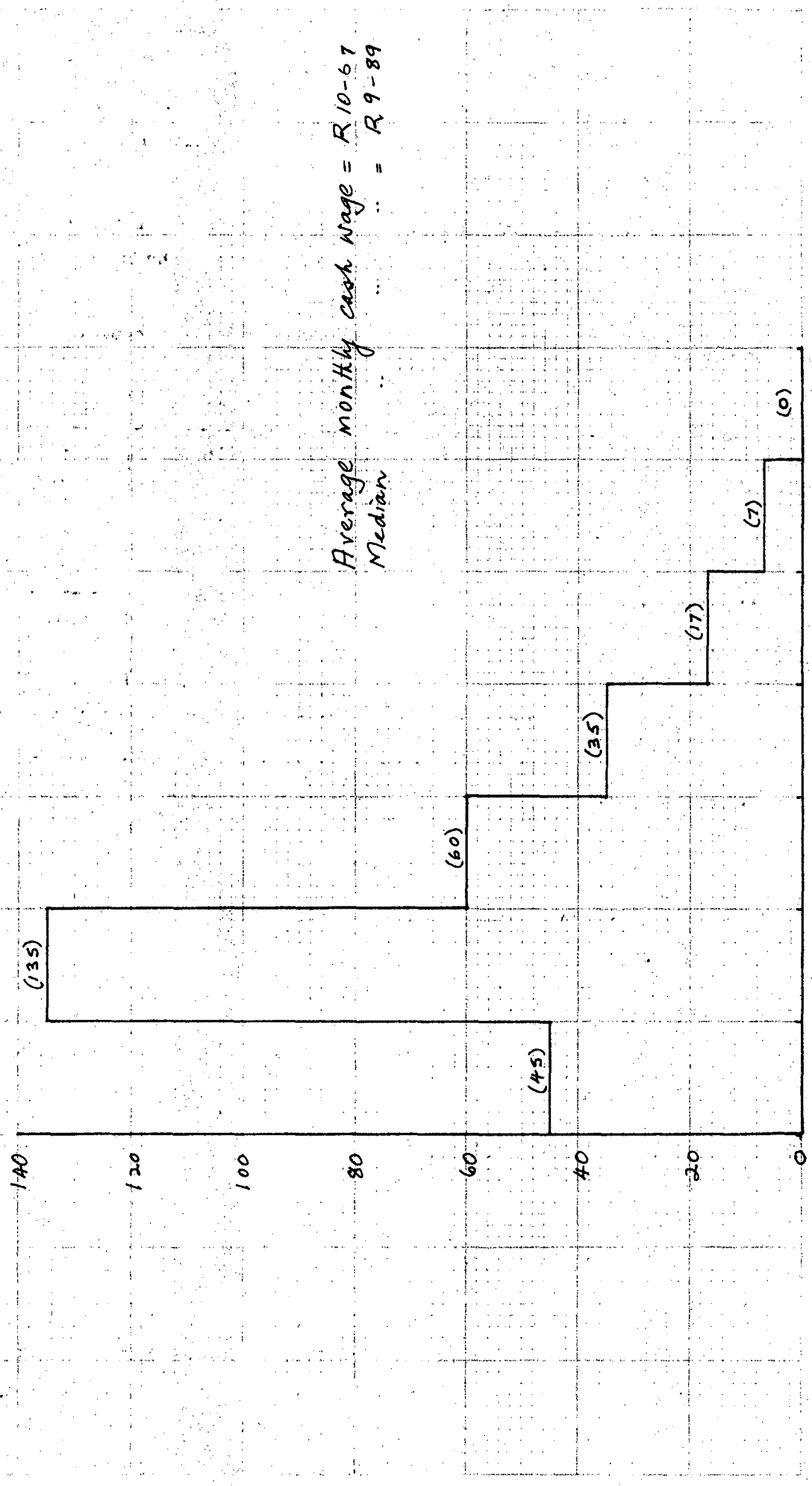
<u>Agricultural Census 1972/73</u>		<u>Survey 1973</u>	
Cash	136	Cash	128
Kind	78	Kind (rations & clothing)	151
TOTAL	R204	TOTAL	R279

While cash wages differ by only 6%, payments in kind differ by nearly 75%. In total cash and kind for the survey are some 30% higher than the Census for the same year. This upward bias is undoubtedly due chiefly to the small sample (4% of Eastern Cape farms). The respondents

MONTHLY CASH WAGES: permanent labour, 1973

299 farms in the Eastern Cape

Number of farms



Average monthly cash wage = R 10-67
 Median = R 9-89

Cash wages (R/month)

1 742 ha farms were in excess of double the average size (787 ha) which is another indication of upward bias. The results are nevertheless both interesting and useful as much of the type of information gathered is not readily available even on the limited scale of the survey.

The items in the above table have been divided into two categories, namely cash expenses and expenses on which a value can be placed with relative ease, and non-marketable benefits such as housing, grazing and ploughing rights. The latter three items were estimated as follows:

- (i) Housing: well constructed houses R5/month
huts (mostly mud and thatch) R3-82/month

The former was taken as approximately the same as the average for the cost of housing for Blacks in the major Eastern Cape urban centres, namely R5-73; the latter as two-thirds of R5-73

- (ii) Grazing rights - the value of grazing per head was taken to be :

cattle	R33
sheep	R5
pigs	R1
horses	R33

- (iii) Ploughing rights - the value per hectare per annum was taken to be R37.

The values placed on these items were those arrived at during a seminar on "Farm Labour in the Eastern Cape" at Rhodes University on 17/18 September 1973 at which representatives of the two local Agricultural Unions, Farmers' Associations and Economic Study Groups throughout the Eastern Cape were present. The values can no doubt be questioned, but they can at least be regarded as the considered opinions of leading farmers in the Region.

On the above basis the monthly cash wage can be regarded as constituting only about one-fifth to one quarter of total remuneration with rations making up another quarter; housing, grazing and land rights 45%; and sundry items such as annual cash bonus, clothing, medical and tax amounting to 8%. Farmers also considered that an additional amount should be included for fuel and water (R2/month) and transport supplied by the farmer (R2.50/month). The survey, however, did not cater adequately for these items and they were thus excluded.

The most remarkable feature of the table is the small variation between the sub-regions. The Coastal sub-region for example, which has by far the highest cash wages (R216 p.a.) and most generous ploughing rights (2.9 ha), also has the lowest rations (R84 p.a.) and smallest grazing rights (R60 p.a.). The range between highest and lowest sub-region in cash items is only 20% and the range in all items is less than 5%.

5 LABOUR CONDITIONS

In this section and the next the 1973 labour survey forms the basis of our discussion and the earlier observations about sample bias should therefore be kept clearly in mind.

Housing:

The 1973 survey found that 71% of labourers cottages in the Eastern Cape were built by the farmer. Labourer-built cottages, however, are still in the majority (50%) in the Border; 80% of which are mud huts with thatch roofs. Running water is available on 33% of the farms, usually within 100 metres from the houses, and seldom more than 500 metres. No toilets are available on 91 to 93% of farms except in the Coastal Region where on nearly half (47%) of the farms toilets are provided. Where toilets are provided these are almost exclusively communal, although 10% of all farms in the Coastal area have toilets in some or all houses. The non provision of toilets is normally on the grounds that they would not be used.

Schooling:

94% of respondents indicated that schooling was available - in 22% of the cases, on the farm itself, but for about 40% of the farms the nearest school is in excess of 3km, particularly in the North-eastern Cape and Central area.

Table 10: Availability of schools and distance from farm, by sub-region in the Eastern Cape, 1973

	North-eastern	Central	Border	Coastal	E. Cape
On the farm	15,6	30,0	28,8	16,7	22,4
Off farm: - 3km	27,1	25,7	34,2	41,7	31,4
3km +	43,8	41,4	37,0	38,3	40,5
No schools	13,5	2,9	0,0	3,3	5,7

It will be noted from the table that no school is available on 13,5% of farms in the North-eastern Cape.

Only a few schools (6.6%) cater for pupils beyond Standard Six and most schools go up to Standards Four to Six (60,2%). Farmers estimated that school attendance of children up to the age of sixteen to be 80%.

In this respect distance from the nearest school appears to be the most important factor determining the proportion of school attendance.

Of 73 farms visited by Margaret Roberts in 1957 only 4 had schools (i.e. 5,5%), 33 had a school within 3 miles (4,8km), for 19 the nearest school was in excess of 3 miles and no school within reasonable distance was available for workers' children on 17 farms. Of the 28 Albany/Bathurst respondents in 1973 11 had a school on their farm, 9 farms were within 3km while 8 were in excess of 3km. This is one area in which there is little doubt of the great progress that has been made.

Recreational facilities

Recreational facilities such as a soccer field were available on 28% of farms. This seems to be dependent to a large extent on the proximity of a school.

Leave conditions

Annual leave is granted to farm labourers on 65% of farms for a period of One to 2 weeks, 18% give no leave, 15% give more than 2 weeks leave, while 2% did not respond to the question.

Pensioners

One of the interesting questions with regard to farm labour is what happens to retired labourers. Farmers responded as follows:

Table 11: Provision for old staff in the Eastern Cape, 1973

		%	Number
No old staff		36,8%	110
Old staff: residence only	11,0		33
L &/or G	17,4		52
Only rations	14,1		42
Rations plus	18,7	61,2	56
No response		2,0	6
TOTAL		100,0	299

L = land

G = grazing

Thus it is apparent that most farmers who allow old staff to live on the farm allow either grazing and/or ploughing rights with no rations or allow these rights in addition to giving rations. The farmer in effect gives his labourers a 'pension in kind' which is in addition to any State pension.

6 LABOUR PROBLEMS

In response to the question "Do you have any problems ... with your labour?" 71% of farmers answered in the affirmative, 5% answered in the negative while the remaining 24% did not respond to the question. Here again regional differences are evident as shown below:

Region	% reporting problems	% no problems	% no response
North-eastern	75	6	19
Central	56	7	37
Border	81	4	15
Coastal	70	3	27
Eastern Cape	71	5	24

Unfortunately the large number not reporting casts some doubt on attempts at quantifying the extent of any particular problem, but nevertheless the major problems emerged quite clearly from the rest. The problem of "lack of responsibility" was cited most frequently, viz. by 25% of farmers who reported some 'problem' with their labour.

"Drinking", especially at weekends was reported as being a serious problem by 22%, while problems with the workers family either with respect to 'hangers-on' or 'illegitimacy' was mentioned by 21%.

Typical comments on the problems mentioned above are:

"Lack of ambition to improve themselves, and complete lack of a sense of responsibility" (Albany). In some cases the comments were qualified: "Although individuals respond well to responsibility in their jobs, they do not want to be responsible for the work of others working under them". (Albany).

On the question of drink a Dordrecht farmer had the following lament:

"Van Saterdag more begin hy drink. Sondag is hy geheel-en-al uitgeskakel, Maandag is hy so pap dat hy soms Dinsdag siek lê. Hier wil ek sê dat tensy die staat en kerk ingryp om die bantoe op die dronkenskap gebied te red, voorsien ek oor nie langer as vyf jaar dat ons boere sonder bantoe arbeid sal moet klaarkom."

The family of the worker evoked comments such as:

"They breed too prolifically" (Barkly-East); "Large number of dependants, unmarried mothers" (Stockenström);

"Poverty by some families due to extremely large number of dependants - children and otherwise" (Alexandria).

Another problem in this respect with which farmers have to cope is family members of off-farm workers, e.g. "... (they) leave their wives and families with their parents on the farm (who) we have to care for in cases of illness, etc. The quediens and their friends and the young men from town return for weekends and use my farm as a holiday resort" (King Williams Town).

One very interesting comment came from a Queenstown farmer of the much criticised re-settlement camps who found he no longer had problems with old staff: "Old boys no longer want to retire on government pension on (the) farm but prefer to go to SADA, also deformed/crippled boys won't accept light work but go to SADA instead."

The next four problems mentioned most frequently were:

19% : labour moves away from the farms, especially the young and qualified workers

16% : labour is of poor quality with respect to age, education and intelligence.

15% : supervision is required continuously

9% : wage competition, unacceptance of differential wages, etc.

The frequency of reporting a problem is influenced by the farming area and the type of farming. Thus intensive dairy and crop farmers in the Coastal area reported 'poor quality labour' as their most frequent problem followed by 'drink'. Although listed separately 'lack of responsibility', 'continuous supervision' and 'low productivity' are closely associated. These problems may also be associated though with the farmers life-style and the necessity of being better informed than in the past. An Albany farmer remarked as follows: "Laziness when not under supervision is also a problem. Especially with all the meetings we now attend, i.e. Farmers' Days, Farmers' Association meetings,

Study Groups, Hunt Club meetings, Woolgrowers (Association), Mohair growers (Association) and the various co-op meetings, etc."

On the subject of wages, farmers complained that workers are enticed away by employers such as Divisional Councils who pay higher wages but do not provide housing for the worker's family who remain on the farms. Others complained that workers find great difficulty in accepting the payment of differential wages to the more skilled workers.

Finally, 4 to 5% of farmers mentioned 'labour shortage', 'lack of ambition/initiative', 'low productivity' and 'untrustworthiness' as problems.

But, while farmers complain about a lack of responsibility, the need for constant supervision, etc. 23% of farmers said that they give no in-work training and 43% had no bonus/work incentive schemes. It is quite obvious that this problem needs to be looked at from both sides. A farmer from Kirkwood put it as follows:

"Motivation from both sides is vital and difficult to achieve. It requires mutual education and responsibility. There is a big stumbling-block for the increase in the labourer's responsibility for his work. Increased responsibility requires delegation of power by the farmer and most find it difficult to transfer responsibility in any meaningful way. He therefore prefers low-grade, low-paid labourers. Better quality labour involves better pay, training and consultation."

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In summary our examination has shown that employment on farms in the Eastern Cape decreased from the mid-fifties except in the Coastal area around Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage where employment only began decreasing about ten years later. Total cash wages to Whites increased more rapidly than those to Blacks, although payments in kind to Blacks rose faster than for the other race groups. Over the period 1956/57 to 1972/73 payments in cash and kind to all farm labourers rose from R96 to R254 per annum, with the ratio between the race groups (Blacks:Coloureds:Whites) being almost constant at approximately 1 1,5 12. Estimates from a survey of 299 farms in the Eastern Cape in 1973 showed that items other than cash and rations to be in excess of half the total earnings of farm labour.

A brief review of labour conditions showed that schooling was available to worker's children on most farms, except in the North-eastern Cape where 13,5% of respondents reported that no school was available. The majority of farmers give a period of leave of between one and two weeks per annum although 18% give no leave at all. A rather large proportion of farmers said that they experienced labour problems of one kind or another. The most frequently reported problems were a 'lack of responsibility', 'drinking' and problems with the workers family.

In conclusion it can be said that farmers in the Eastern Cape will continue to lose labour in the face of competition from Commerce and Industry. With the inevitable concomitant increase in mechanisation, farm labourers will require more formal and in-service training, higher wages and better working conditions. Many of the so-called problems with farm labour could well be traced to inadequate training and poor employer-employee communications.

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