

outlook and related economic information in his program, the county agent is in a better position to advise with farmers regarding what to produce, how much to produce, and how to produce it efficiently.

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FARM Home Makers Get Little Aid in Housework from Others in Family How much help does the farm woman receive in her home making? Does her husband give much time to assisting with household tasks and minding the baby? Do the children give mother a hand? Is a hired girl frequently employed to lighten the work?

A study recently made by the Bureau of Home Economics answers these questions, at least for 559 farm women who cooperated in the study. Each one of these home makers kept a careful record for a week of the time spent in different home-making jobs by every person in her household, including herself. The results make it clear that the work of the home is no longer a family affair. Almost all of it falls to the lot of the home maker herself. While these farm women spent 51¼ hours a week on the average in home-making tasks, only 9¼ hours a week were spent by all other persons in their households.

Most of this help, of course, came from members of the family—7¼ hours a week in the average home, or a little over an hour a day. Only 1 hour a week was given by hired help, and the remaining half hour came from guests in the home.

Who were the members of the family giving this slight amount of help? Just 2 hours a week were contributed by the farmer himself, 4½ hours by daughters and other women relatives in the home, and 1¼ hours a week by sons and other men relatives.

Much Variation in Help Received

These figures, however, are averages for all of the 559 households. Naturally many of these farm women received less help than 9¼ hours a week, and some received much more. One home maker, in fact, was blessed with 111 hours of help during the week, or almost 16 hours a day. But this was a most unusual household, with five children under 10 years of age and a hired girl and a hired man to come to the mother's assistance. In the great majority of cases the amount of help given the housewife was very small. Only 70 of the women received as much as 3 hours a day, and in contrast with these were 99 who had no aid whatever during the week of their records.

How much help a particular home maker received depended first of all, of course, on whether she had a hired girl. But only 29 of these housewives employed any paid help whatever, and half of these had less than 7 hours a week. Only 6 home makers, in fact, had full-time hired help.

A daughter of high-school age or over, or a sister or other woman relative living in the home, was the housewife's next best chance of assistance. Just 103 of the group had help from this source; but again the amount of time which each helper gave was small, averaging 13¼ hours a week for the women of 20 years of age or over, and only 10¼ hours a week for daughters of 15 to 19 years. For younger daughters,

the figures dropped still lower—to 6 hours for girls of 10 to 14, and to 3¼ hours for girls of 6 to 9.

The men of the household, as would be expected, made an even poorer showing. Two-thirds of the husbands lent a hand in some phase of housekeeping, but the amount of help which they gave made but a small dent in the volume of work to be done—3 hours a week on the average. The sons who helped gave still less time, even the older ones averaging less than 2½ hours a week. The little boys under 6 were the only ones to keep up with their sisters of the same age, the youngsters of each group doing their bit to the extent of about an hour and a quarter a week. In 30 cases the hired man also joined in, spending 2 hours a week on the average on household jobs.

Degree of Need Not a Big Factor

Whether the home maker needed help or not had little effect on the amount which each member of the household gave. Even when there were several small children to be cared for, the husband and the older children spent scarcely any more time than when the home maker had an easier job. It was the number of persons in the household old enough to share the work that determined how much help she received, not the quantity of work to be done, and especially it was the presence of another woman or older daughter.

Take, for example, the 24 home makers who received the largest amount of help—more than 5 hours a day. Twenty-one had the assistance of a hired girl or a daughter or other woman relative over 14, from whom most of the help came. And even in the 3 remaining households the chief helper was a young daughter. In 2 a girl of 12 gave almost all the help, and in the third a daughter of 8 gave half, while her 5 brothers and her father together contributed the other half. At the other extreme were the 99 home makers who received no help at all. For 75 the reason is clear—they had families of men and boys only. And in all but 7 of the other households the daughters were all under 10.

What is the explanation of the small amount of help which the men of the family gave—when they gave any whatever? A glance at the kind of work they did gives the answer. Their main job was carrying wood and caring for fires, and when there was water to be pumped or carried, this chore, also, usually fell on masculine shoulders. For the most part, that is, they were called upon for jobs which take very little time, even in a large household. It was the meals, the cleaning, and laundering which formed three-fourths of the work, and in these jobs it was usually only the women and girls who were expected to help. When there were no such helpers in the household, these tasks were apparently still thought of as women's work and left in the hands of the housewife herself, no matter how heavily burdened she might be.

Care of Little Ones Wholly Mother's Job

As for that other phase of home making, the care of small children, it remained almost wholly in the mother's hands, even when there were daughters or other women who might have relieved her. If she had any help from her family, she used it mainly to lessen the time which she herself spent in the housework. Only two-fifths of the 181 mothers

with children under 6 had any help in dressing and bathing and "minding" the youngsters. And even for these the assistance amounted to only $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours a week. In the 17 households where there was a baby less than a year old, however, the family made a better showing. Fourteen of the mothers had some help, and the average amount was about 6 hours a week.

As for the father's share in the care of the children, only one-fourth of those with children under 6 were credited with any assistance, and the average amount which these 44 gave was but $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours a week.

The picture of the situation in regard to help which these 559 farm homes present can not, of course, be taken as representative of all the farm homes of the country. The number is too small to justify general conclusions. But it is interesting to note that the main outlines of the picture are the same when the records from different sections are studied separately. The largest group, 248, came from California, 112 from the Middle West, 107 from New York State, 42 from the South, and 40 from Idaho, while the remaining 10 were scattered over various States. Altogether 25 States were included in the records.

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FARM Incomes Averaged \$1,840 Per Farm Yearly in Period 1924-1928

The economic data of the United States Department of Agriculture now include for the first time estimates of the agricultural income in each State. During the summer of 1929, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics completed estimates of gross income from farming and cash income from farming for each State for each of the five years, 1924 to 1928, inclusive. The estimates are published elsewhere in this volume.

The bureau has made and published⁶ estimates of the income from agricultural production for the entire United States for each year since 1919. These estimates were based on national data on production, sales, and prices. The bureau has also collected reports of incomes from 6,000 to 16,000 individual farmers scattered throughout the United States each year since 1922 and has published⁶ a compilation of the reports for the entire country and for the main geographical divisions. This information has been valuable in appraising the agricultural situation and in judging for the country as a whole the improvement or retrogression in agricultural conditions from year to year.

It has always been recognized that agricultural incomes vary markedly from State to State, from season to season, but suitable measures of the variations have not been available. Many rough indications have been used, such as crop-condition reports, prices of principal commodities, sales of mail-order houses, and even reports from local observers. These rough indicators have been useful for commercial purposes. The bureau estimates now provide means for comparing the gross agricultural income and the cash income from sales of farm products; that is, the annual results of farm operation on the revenue side, State by State, and year by year, since 1924.

⁶ Summary tables are included in the statistical section of this Yearbook. Annual reports in somewhat greater detail may be found in Crops and Markets.