

Wage and Hour Division, Labor

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minimum wage and overtime pay provisions of the Act for certain employees employed in "agriculture," as so defined. Section 13(b)(12) provides an overtime exemption for any employee employed in agriculture. As appears more fully in subpart A of this part 780, interpretations in this bulletin with respect to the provisions of the Act discussed are official interpretations upon which reliance may be placed and which will guide the Secretary of Labor and the Administrator in the performance of their duties under the Act.

§ 780.101 Matters discussed in this subpart.

Section 3(f) defines "agriculture" as this term is used in the Act. Those principles and rules which govern the interpretation of the meaning and application of the Act's definition of "agriculture" in section 3(f) and of the terms used in it are set forth in this subpart B. Included is a discussion of the application of the definition in section 3(f) to the employees of farmers' cooperative associations. In addition, the official interpretations of section 3(f) of the Act and the terms which appear in it are to be taken into consideration in determining the meaning intended by the use of like terms in particular related exemptions which are provided by the Act.

§ 780.102 Pay requirements for agricultural employees.

Section 6(a)(5) of the Act provides that any employee employed in agriculture must be paid at least \$1.30 an hour beginning February 1, 1969. However, there are certain exemptions provided in the Act for agricultural workers, as previously mentioned. (See §§ 780.3 and 780.4.)

§ 780.103 "Agriculture" as defined by the Act.

Section 3(f) of the Act defines "agriculture" as follows:

"Agriculture" includes farming in all its branches and among other things includes the cultivation and tillage of the soil, dairying, the production, cultivation, growing, and harvesting of any agricultural or horticultural commodities (including commodities defined as agricultural commodities in section 15(g) of the Agricultural Marketing

Act, as amended), the raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals, or poultry, and any practices (including any forestry or lumbering operations) performed by a farmer or on a farm as an incident to or in conjunction with such farming operations, including preparation for market, delivery to storage or to market or to carriers for transportation to market.

§ 780.104 How modern specialization affects the scope of agriculture.

The effect of modern specialization on agriculture has been discussed by the U.S. Supreme Court as follows:

Whether a particular type of activity is agricultural depends, in large measure, upon the way in which that activity is organized in a particular society. The determination cannot be made in the abstract. In less advanced societies the agricultural function includes many types of activity which, in others, are not agricultural. The fashioning of tools, the provision of fertilizer, the processing of the product, to mention only a few examples, are functions which, in some societies, are performed on the farm by farmers as part of their normal agricultural routine. Economic progress, however, is characterized by a progressive division of labor and separation of function. Tools are made by a tool manufacturer, who specializes in that kind of work and supplies them to the farmer. The compost heap is replaced by factory produced fertilizers. Power is derived from electricity and gasoline rather than supplied by the farmer's mules. Wheat is ground at the mill. In this way functions which are necessary to the total economic process of supplying an agricultural produce become, in the process of economic development and specialization, separate and independent productive functions operated in conjunction with the agricultural function but no longer a part of it. Thus the question as to whether a particular type of activity is agricultural is not determined by the necessity of the activity to agriculture nor by the physical similarity of the activity to that done by farmers in other situations. The question is whether the activity in the particular case is carried on as part of the agricultural function or is separately organized as an independent productive activity. The farmhand who cares for the farmer's mules or prepares his fertilizer is engaged in agriculture. But the maintenance man in a powerplant and the packer in a fertilizer factory are not employed in agriculture, even if their activity is necessary to farmers and replaces work previously done by farmers. The production of power and the manufacture of fertilizer are independent productive functions, not agriculture (see *Farmers Reservoir Co. v.*

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McComb, 337 U.S. 755 cf. *Maneja v. Waialua*, 349 U.S. 254).

§ 780.105 “Primary” and “secondary” agriculture under section 3(f).

(a) Section 3(f) of the Act contains a very comprehensive definition of the term “agriculture.” The definition has two distinct branches (see *Farmers Reservoir Co. v. McComb*, 337 U.S. 755). One has relation to the primary meaning of agriculture; the other gives to the term a somewhat broader secondary meaning for purposes of the Act (*NLRB v. O'La Sugar Co.*, 242 F. 2d 714).

(b) First, there is the primary meaning. This includes farming in all its branches. Listed as being included “among other things” in the primary meaning are certain specific farming operations such as cultivation and tillage of the soil, dairying the production, cultivation, growing and harvesting of any agricultural or horticultural commodities and the raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals or poultry. If an employee is employed in any of these activities, he is engaged in agriculture regardless of whether he is employed by a farmer or on a farm. (*Farmers Reservoir Co. v. McComb*, supra; *Holtville Alfalfa Mills v. Wyatt*, 230 F. 2d 398.)

(c) Then there is the secondary meaning of the term. The second branch includes operations other than those which fall within the primary meaning of the term. It includes any practices, whether or not they are themselves farming practices, which are performed either by a farmer or on a farm as an incident to or in conjunction with “such” farming operations (*Farmers Reservoir Co. v. McComb*, supra; *NLRB v. O'La Sugar Co.*, 242 F. 2d 714; *Maneja v. Waialua*, 349 U.S. 254).

(d) Employment not within the scope of either the primary or the secondary meaning of “agriculture” as defined in section 3(f) is not employment in agriculture. In other words, employees not employed in farming or by a farmer or on a farm are not employed in agriculture.

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EXEMPTION FOR “PRIMARY” AGRICULTURE GENERALLY

§ 780.106 Employment in “primary” agriculture is farming regardless of why or where work is performed.

When an employee is engaged in direct farming operations included in the primary definition of “agriculture,” the purpose of the employer in performing the operations is immaterial. For example, where an employer owns a factory and a farm and operates the farm only for experimental purposes in connection with the factory, those employees who devote all their time during a particular workweek to the direct farming operations, such as the growing and harvesting of agricultural commodities, are considered as employed in agriculture. It is also immaterial whether the agricultural or horticultural commodities are grown in enclosed houses, as in greenhouses or mushroom cellars, or in an open field. Similarly, the mere fact that production takes place in a city or on industrial premises, such as in hatcheries, rather than in the country or on premises possessing the normal characteristics of a farm makes no difference (see *Jordan v. Stark Brothers Nurseries*, 45 F. Supp. 769; *Miller Hatcheries v. Boyer*, 131 F. 2d 283; *Damutz v. Pinchbeck*, 158 F. 2d 882).

FARMING IN ALL ITS BRANCHES

§ 780.107 Scope of the statutory term.

The language “farming in all its branches” includes all activities, whether listed in the definition or not, which constitute farming or a branch thereof under the facts and circumstances.

§ 780.108 Listed activities.

Section 3(f), in defining the practices included as “agriculture” in its statutory secondary meaning, refers to the activities specifically listed in the earlier portion of the definition (the “primary” meaning) as “farming” operations. They may therefore be considered as illustrative of “farming in all its branches” as used in the definition.