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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Wage and Hour Division
Washington, D. C.

TURKEY PROCESSORS ADVISED

Texas Turkey processors were advised today that they should comply with the Wage and Hour Act insofar as the minimum hourly wage is concerned, although the seasonal nature of turkey picking may exempt them from the maximum hours provision of the Act.

In response to an inquiry from a Texas turkey grower, Merle D. Vincent, Chief of the Hearings and Exemptions Section of the Wage and Hour Division of the U. S. Department of Labor, suggested that, if the employers contend that the turkey pickers are inexperienced, they would be within their rights in applying for an exemption for these workers during a learning period.

"It would seem to me," Mr. Vincent wrote, "that turkey picking is presumably to be classified as 'handling, slaughtering, or dressing poultry or livestock'; if so, you are automatically exempt from the maximum hours provision of the Act for a period or periods of not more than 14 work weeks per year, pursuant to Section 7 (c). In order that there may be no confusion, I wish to repeat that this does not apply to the minimum wage provisions."

Because of the short time before the Thanksgiving season — the buying season has already opened at Gonzales and Cuero, Texas, two of the largest turkey centers — it will not be possible to arrange for the necessary regulations and hearings for the industry to make possible exemptions for learners in this rush period, Mr. Vincent explained. He assured the turkey growers that every possible consideration would be given any appropriate applications for such exemptions.

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