



At certain peak labor periods, such as planting and harvest, the whole family helps in the field and additional workers may be hired. As the fields are often far from the village, the women usually bring the noon day meal.

This phenomenon is explained in part by the farmers' awareness of land quality. To be fair to all when the ejidos were organized, the farmers frequently decided that each ejidatario should have a piece of each of the two or three qualities of land, instead of a single block of land. A similar procedure is often followed by private owners in leaving land to their children.

The Family and the Home

The family provides both the management of the resources used in agricultural production and most of the labor used on the farm. Where labor is hired, it is usually for short periods of peak activity, such as at harvest time when there may, in fact, be a shortage of labor in the region. Much of this hired labor is offset by members of the family working off the farm at other periods when labor needs on the farm are low.

About 77 percent of the farm operators have some ability to read and write, as shown in the following data from the 1967 survey.

Schooling	Percent of Farm Operators
Never attended school:	
Illiterate	22.7
Self-taught, literate	4.3
Attended school for:	
1 year	10.0
2 years	17.1
3 years	22.3
4 years	9.6
5 years	4.4
6 years	8.0
More than 6 years	1.6
Average years of schooling:	
All farmers	2.4
Farmers who attended school	3.2

The impression is that at least half of those with some degree of literacy read and write with considerably difficulty. The percentage of farmers with 3 years or more of schooling, 45.9, is perhaps a reasonable estimate of those that are functionally literate.

It is customary in the area for farmers to live together in villages. Homes are usually (76 percent) made of sun-baked adobe bricks. The floors are frequently of brick, cement, or tile, but 36 percent are of dirt. The dwellings are small as indicated in the next table (1967 survey).

Rooms (other than Kitchen) in the Farm Home	Percent
One which is also the kitchen	1.2
One room	43.8
Two rooms	32.3
Three rooms	14.7
Four rooms	5.2
Five or more rooms	2.8

Though most of these families live humbly, many have some of the minimum comforts associated with modern living as can be seen in the following table (1967 survey).

Living Comforts	Percent
Have electric lights	62.9
Have radio	59.8
Have a sewing machine	45.0
Cook with gas, electricity, or fuel oil	28.7
Have piped water in home or street	13.1
Have television	8.0
Have drainage	6.0
Have refrigerator	1.6