

Farm Labor Housing in the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys

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Executive Summary

There are only two principal sources of current information about where agricultural workers reside among communities of the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys. Even more limited is detailed information about their housing conditions.

This report relies on two primary sources of information. The US Census Bureau reported detailed 2016 information about residents of Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. The 2017 Salinas-Pajaro Agricultural Worker Housing Survey (SPAWHS), reported findings from about 400 face-to-face interviews with a representative sample of current agricultural workers who were employed in this region.

The only source of primary information about housing conditions at all levels of geography – nation, state, county, city, unincorporated areas and within neighborhoods – is the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) (United States Census Bureau, 2018). The ACS is an on-going survey, gathering information year-round. The Census does not identify specific dwellings where agricultural workers live, providing only summary data for neighborhoods where such dwellings are located.

The 1-year (2016) ACS finds an annual average of 42,544 private-sector, wage and salary agricultural workers in the two-county region. By contrast, summaries of reports by employers to the California Department of Employment Development indicate annual average, agricultural worker employment for the two-county region was 61,169 during 2016, 44% higher than the Census report.

Detailed information about where agricultural workers live is available from the Census. The ACS aggregates information over longer periods than just one year to attain statistically reliable results. The 5-year (2012-16) ACS annual average found 17,000 private-sector, wage and salary, agricultural workers lived in the City of Salinas, and 4,319 in Watsonville. The earlier 5-year (2007-11) report found 12,036 such workers in Salinas and 4,343 in Watsonville.

The ACS finds the agricultural workforce in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys has increased substantially during the past five years, and the City of Salinas absorbed most of the increase of residents. Along with this growth, there is substantial evidence of significant crowding in neighborhoods where agricultural workers are able to find places to live.

The two-county region has a well-publicized shortage of affordable housing that affects agricultural workers: relatively few Census tracts account for most

dwellings that house agricultural workers. Of the region's 145 census tracts, just six tracts in Santa Cruz County house 67% of that county's agricultural workers, while thirty-one in Monterey County are home to 84% of its agricultural workers.

Crowding within dwellings is also reported by the ACS. A statistical analysis of the 113 tracts where agricultural workers reside finds positive, statistically significant associations between the proportion of agricultural workers living in each tract and measures of housing conditions: greater proportion of crowded dwellings, increased proportion of extremely crowded dwellings, greater proportion of renters vs. owners, both lower total and per-person rental expense per dwelling.

There were no statistically significant associations between the proportion of agricultural workers living in a Census tract and two measures of housing conditions: housing vacancy rates per tract, and housing affordability per tract. Agricultural worker or not, everyone in the region is affected by the shortage of affordable housing.

An analysis of Census data estimates the proportion of crowded dwellings where agriculture workers reside is 55% and the proportion living in extremely crowded dwellings is 22%. The statistical reliability of these findings is unknown, primarily because of the large disparity between Agriculture Worker employment reported by the Census and reports published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Preliminary findings from the Salinas-Pajaro Agricultural Workers Housing Survey (SPAWHS) indicate an extraordinarily large proportion of unrelated families and/or persons sharing dwellings: 54% of dwelling surveyed had unrelated occupants. The extent of crowding in the SPAWHS sample far exceeded findings based on the Census Bureau's ACS: 93% of participants in the SPAWHS lived in crowded dwellings, and 67% lived in extremely crowded dwellings.

The SPAWHS finds 11% or fewer live in a dwelling owned by the survey participant or a family member; 89% rent their dwelling, or rent a room in a dwelling, or rent space on a floor in a rented dwelling. The monthly average cash rental payments by survey participants was \$215.66 per person.

There are major disparities between the Census Bureau's ACS findings and the SPAWHS. Mines has emphasized that only targeted surveys of farmworkers can yield reasonably accurate information about their living and working conditions (Mines. 2005). The findings discussed in the present report underscores the importance of Mines' comment.

Agricultural worker affordable housing in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys

At a meeting of the 2013 Task Force on Farm Labor Housing and Transportation in California, sponsored by Karen Ross, Secretary of Food and Agriculture for the state, Sergio Sanchez, with the California Strawberry Commission, described his visits with workers in East Salinas, a low-income, mostly Hispanic neighborhood where many hired farm workers live.¹ He visited a number of homes where the rooms had lines of mattresses leaning against the walls. This arrangement of mattresses during daylight hours was necessary because it wouldn't be possible to otherwise walk through the rooms without stepping on someone's sleeping space on the floor. He described sanitation problems as "devastating" in these conditions of extremely crowded housing.

The Salinas-Pajaro Valleys are home to two state-funded Migrant Housing Centers: one in Watsonville and the other in King City. Reportedly, on the season's opening day of the Watsonville camp long lines form of those hoping to gain a home near their jobs.² These centers are limited to families and most residents are accompanied by their children. Recently, the official qualifying minimum distance of the Migrant Housing Center from a resident family's permanent home was proposed to be reduced to 50 miles, in recognition that commuting to a job from longer than such a distance would likely unnecessarily burden families with young children, and thereby possibly diminish the supply of available domestic labor.

Affordable rental housing in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys is quite limited. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's published criterion for housing affordability indicates that housing expense, such as cash rent, shall be 30% or less of household income. For a household income of \$30,000, affordability translates to not more than \$750 cash rent per month.

During the past several decades, the region has been the focus of significant efforts by non-profit developers of affordable housing, local government housing agencies, private developers, and, recently, by farm employers, to provide affordable housing for agricultural workers in the region. The California Department of Housing and Community Development reports there were 44

¹ Presentation by Sergio Sanchez on May 8, 2013, at the forum on farm worker housing and transportation, sponsored by AgInnovations, California Department of Food and Agriculture, Sacramento.

² Daniela Vargas, private communication.

rental projects operated by non-profit agencies and local government agencies in Monterey County providing a total of 2,053 units of affordable housing to local residents (see Appendix I). Many, if not most, were intended to serve agricultural worker families.

Recently, farm employers have undertaken new initiatives to provide company operated rental housing for employees. The most widely known of these, and also widely admired, is Spreckels Crossing, owned and operated by Tanimura and Antle, a large-scale vegetable grower-packer-shipper and manager of a large labor force. This housing complex offers apartment-style living on a seasonal basis to company employees, along with an attractive package of employee benefits. The development has succeeded in attracting hundreds of domestic workers eager to obtain safe, decent, and affordable housing for as little as \$125 per month cash rental in a shared, four-person bedroom, or a husband and wife can pay \$500 per month for a private bedroom. Full kitchen facilities are shared among as many as eight persons per apartment.

Farm employers who are able to obtain certification of the lack of local domestic labor can hire non-immigrant, temporary, foreign agricultural workers under terms of the H-2A visa program. Employers are required by law to provide housing, transportation and meals for these employees, as well as comply with the other regulations. Some employers have rented Salinas Valley motels for this purpose, or leased privately-owned dwellings, or purchased private dwellings to house the approximately 4,300 H-2A workers certified for employment in the region during FY 2017. Portions of a large abandoned warehouse in downtown King City was recently converted to dormitory-style housing for H-2A workers.

Among most Americans, the image of farm labor housing is typically a labor camp, with bunkhouses, communal washrooms and dining rooms located in a remote, rural area. But the reality in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys is very different.

The ACS survey does not specifically identify “farm laborers” or “agricultural workers.” Rather, ACS summarizes employment for all types of natural resource industries combined, namely, agriculture, forestry (including logging), fishing, hunting and mining, which together are termed AFF herein. Annual average employment in agriculture alone within the region accounts for 99.8% of the AFF

total, which indicates this to be a reasonable approximation for identifying the population of interest.³

The ACS is a continuous, on-going survey based on US Census Bureau Master Address Files. Thus, the 1-year annual average is a 12-month average of survey findings collected on a month-by-month basis. The 1-year sample size is too small to provide statistically reliable housing findings for Salinas-Pajaro Valley communities smaller than Salinas city. Some findings, such as wage and salary agricultural worker employment for Salinas city, or data at the neighborhood (census tract) level are unavailable from the 1-year ACS.

Table 1 presents ACS 1-year (2016) annual average employment information for each of Monterey County and Santa Cruz County. The principal finding is that the Census enumerated 42,544 individuals employed as agricultural workers by private businesses in the two counties combined.

TABLE 1 AGRICULTURAL WORKER EMPLOYMENT (AFF), MONTEREY AND SANTA CRUZ COUNTIES, 1-YEAR ANNUAL AVERAGE, 2016, BY TYPE OF WORKERS

Source: Census Bureau, 1-year 2016 American Community Survey

<i>Geographic unit</i>	<i>Monterey County</i>	<i>Santa Cruz County</i>	<i>Total</i>
Employee of private company AFF workers	36,142	6,402	42,544
Self-employed in own incorporated AFF business	217	32	249
Self-employed in own non-incorporated business and unpaid family AFF workers	276	137	413
<i>Total</i>	36,635	6,571	43,206

In contrast, EDD reports annual average employment of 61,169 AFF workers during 2016 in the region. Thus, the EDD report is about 44% larger than the Census ACS finding of employees of private company businesses, a difference greater than the margin of statistical uncertainty. As is discussed later in the present report, there are several factors affecting the accuracy of the ACS findings. For example, it is likely the census undercounts foreign-born and non-

³ As reported by California EDD, the five-year, annual average, private sector employment in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties in the region's forestry (including logging), fishing, hunting and mining was 63. Thus, agriculture represented 99.8% of the total of 61,169 for all five industries.

literate workers, partially accounting for this difference. A study of the 2010 Census undercount of hired farm workers in 33 hard-to-count California Census Tracts estimated the undercount to be 10% (Kissam, 2012)

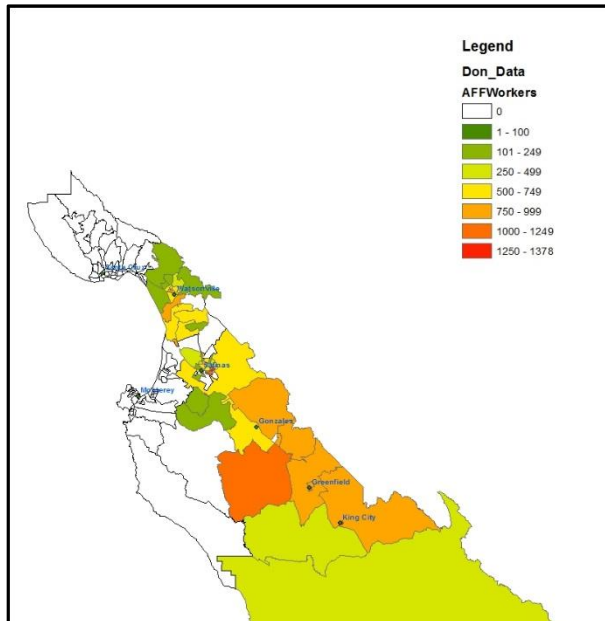


FIGURE 1 MAP SHOWING CONCENTRATION OF AFF WORKERS IN THE 2-COUNTY STUDY AREA

The most complete ACS findings at all levels of geography are reported in 5-year annual average summaries. The five-year (2012-16) ACS provides summary data at the community level of annual average employment, by industry category (United States Census Bureau, 2018). The 5-year “annual average employment” is a 60-month average of the number of persons employed in a specified industry, and also provides information about population and housing in neighborhoods (census tracts).

Table 2 presents 5-year, annual average employment findings for private-sector, wage and salary, AFF workers in six communities and the two counties.

TABLE 2 AGRICULTURAL WORKER EMPLOYMENT (AFF), PRIVATE-SECTOR WAGE & SALARY WORKERS, SALINAS-PAJARO VALLEYS, 5-YEAR ANNUAL AVERAGE, 2012-16

Source: Census Bureau, 5-year 2012-2016 American Community Survey

<i>Community</i>	<i>5-year Annual Average Employment, Private-sector AFF Wage & Salary Workers</i>
Salinas city	17,000
Watsonville city	4,319
Greenfield city	2,450
King City city	2,290
Soledad city	1,763
Gonzales city	1,022
Monterey & Santa Cruz County Total	37,311

The most surprising aspect of the ACS annual average employment findings is the vast majority of hired agricultural workers today likely reside in six of the

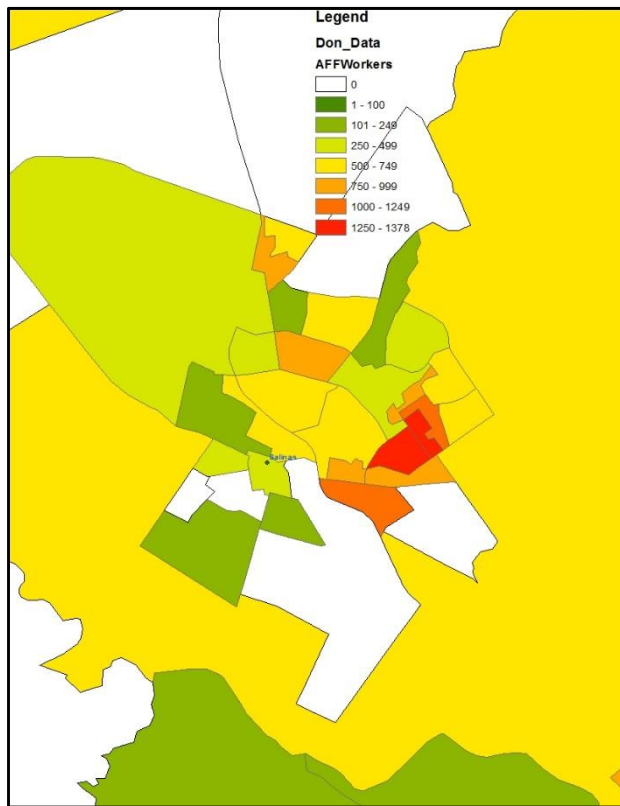


FIGURE 2 MAP SHOWING CONCENTRATION OF AFF WORKERS IN THE CITY OF SALINAS

region's incorporated cities. All six are centrally located within the heart of the region's cropland. Together, these six cities account for a full three-fourths share of the region's reported 5-year average agricultural worker employment.

There are many advantages to residing in those cities: close proximity to crop fields and/or salad plants; lower rents as compared with the region's coastal communities; and, possibly, facing less discrimination in accessing housing. For foreign-born workers, there will also be greater cultural cohesion in these cities with others who migrated from the same village or *municipio*.

The reported total of agricultural workers residing in Salinas city during 2012-16 was more than 5,000 greater than the corresponding total for the preceding five-year period reported by the census (2007-11), which was a total of 12,036 employees of AFF private-sector businesses. This growth amounts to +42% during the five-year interval between those two periods.

By contrast, the employment total for Watsonville in 2012-16, 4,319, was essentially unchanged as compared with the level in 2007-11, 4,343. Nevertheless, more than two-thirds of Santa Cruz County's private-sector, wage and salary agricultural workers lived in Watsonville.

Apart for these six cities, the next largest concentration of private-sector, wage and salary, agricultural workers in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys was located in Castroville, an unincorporated Census Designated Place. The five-year (2012-16), annual average reported agricultural worker employment in Castroville was 976.

A separate measure of recent growth of AFF employment in the region can be identified from a comparison of the ACS 5-year (2012-16) and 1-year (2016) findings. As indicated in Table 2, the 5-year (2012-16) ACS annual average, employment by for-profit AFF businesses was 37,311.⁴ The ACS 1-year (2016) total described in Table 1 is 42,544, larger by about 5,000 above the 5-year (2012-16) total reported in Table 2, suggesting the labor force likely increased rapidly during this 5-year period. In a separate report, it was found that during this decade, EDD findings indicate annual average AFF employment in the region increased by 24% (Villarejo D. , 2018).

As previously discussed in the comparison of 1-year (2016) findings between ACS and EDD, the EDD findings of AFF employment greatly exceed the ACS findings by a statistically significant amount. The EDD five-year (2012-16) annual average employment for the AFF industries in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys during 2012-16 was 59,376.⁵ This latter figure is larger than the independently determined ACS five-year (2012-16) finding by about 22,065, roughly 59% larger, far greater than the likely uncertainty of the ACS survey finding (+/-9%).

In part, the rapid increase in the reported number of AFF workers residing in Salinas reflects the growth of annual average agricultural employment in the region. But it also is an indication that Salinas has become the major bedroom community for agricultural workers for the entire region.

The large numerical disparity between the Census ACS and the EDD employment findings cited above does not reflect the very much greater number of individuals who reportedly had agricultural jobs in the region during 2016, some of which were of relatively short duration. A separate report finds there were an estimated 91,423 persons who had agricultural jobs in the region during 2016 (Villarejo D. , 2018). The large seasonal variation in reported employment from a low of about 32,000 in January to a high of about 81,000 in July implies that the ACS average annual figure likely does not reflect the considerable number of temporary or seasonal agricultural workers who reside in the region.

A second factor not reflected in either the ACS estimate of the number of agricultural workers residing in the region, or, for that matter, in the accurate

⁴ This total refers to wage and salary employees of private companies. Not included are employees of private not-for-profit companies, or employees of local, state and federal governments.

⁵ Ibid.

EDD enumeration of employment, is that an unknown portion of those residing within the region, and employed by firms based there, may be working in adjacent counties for at least part of the duration of their farm employment. As was demonstrated in a separate report, San Benito County agriculture is clearly fully integrated with the region's farms and, especially, its agricultural services industry, not to mention the agriculture of other counties which are adjacent to the region (Villarejo D. , 2018)

Agricultural workers are densely congregated in relatively few neighborhoods in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys

The most recent (2016) ACS summary of county-wide, housing findings are available for each of Monterey County, Santa Cruz County, and Salinas city. There are 145 census tracts in the two counties. Of these, most have only a very few, if any, private sector, wage and salary, agricultural workers as residents. By contrast, most of the region's agricultural workers live in neighborhoods which are densely populated by similar workers.

Just six census tracts account for 67% of the Pajaro Valley's resident agricultural workers, averaging 672 agricultural workers per tract. In the Salinas Valley region, thirty-one census tracts accounted for 84% of the Salinas Valley's resident agricultural workers, averaging 855 such workers per tract; in each of just seven Salinas Valley census tracts, an absolute majority of resident workers were employed in the region's agriculture, averaging 1,105 workers per tract.⁶ One of these seven is Census Tract 5.01, known locally as East Salinas.

Absent the ability to identify specific dwellings in Census data where agricultural workers reside, it proved necessary to examine the demographic and employment profile of census tracts, seeking to characterize the neighborhood housing profile where such workers reside. The present report included analysis of data for the 113 census tracts in the two counties in which the 5-year (2012-16) ACS finds agricultural workers were among the residents of each tract. These tracts account for virtually all of the reported total number of agricultural workers in the entire region.⁷

⁶ The comparable annual average, civilian, non-institutionalized employed persons age 16 and older per census tract was 1,963 in Monterey County and 2,493 in Santa Cruz County.

⁷ The 113 tracts account for 37,267 of the total number of agricultural workers in the region, which was 37,311 as reported in Table 2. The two totals differ by 44 agricultural workers, or 0.1%.

From this analysis, the present report finds likely associations between the percentages of agricultural workers resident in these 113 census tracts with particular housing characteristics. The specific characteristics for which statistically significant associations were found pertained to owner vs. renter, crowding (measured by persons per room) and amount of cash rental expense. However, there were no statistically significant associations found for cash rental expense affordability or for vacancy rates in renter occupied dwellings.

- First, there is a statistically robust correlation between the proportion of agricultural workers per tract and crowded dwellings, measured by the number of persons per room, excluding bathrooms, equal to 1.01 per room, or greater (Pearson coefficient equal to 0.834). Perfect, 100%, correlation corresponds to a Pearson coefficient equal to 1.000, while no correlation whatsoever corresponds to a coefficient equal to 0.000.
- Second, the present report also finds a statistically robust correlation between percent agricultural workers and extremely crowded dwellings, equal to 1.51 persons per room or greater (Pearson coefficient equal to 0.754). Though not as strong as the correlation found for crowded dwellings, this is a robust finding: where more agricultural workers reside, there was a greater prevalence of extremely crowded dwellings.
- Third, there is a statistically significant correlation between the proportion of rental dwellings and the percent of agricultural workers per tract (Pearson coefficient equal to 0.400). Proportionately fewer owner-occupied dwellings are located in census tracts with a greater percentage of agricultural workers.
- Fourth, there is a statistically significant *negative* correlation between the median cash rental expense and the percent of agricultural workers in the tract per dwelling (Pearson coefficient equal to -0.539).⁸ Significantly lower cash rentals are found in tracts with larger proportions of agricultural workers. The degree of statistically significant *negative* association is greater on the rental cost per person basis (-0.707).
- Fifth, there is *no statistically significant* association of rental vacancy rates in these census tracts with an increased proportion of agricultural workers (Pearson coefficient equal to -0.098). This indicates that the rental vacancy rates in the 113 census tracts examined were typically low throughout but might possibly be slightly lower in a few tracts with a large proportion of agricultural workers.

⁸ A negative Pearson coefficient corresponds to an inverse correlation: A is negatively associated with B, e.g., high cash rental is negatively associated with poverty status.

The measure of crowding for the 113 census tracts where agricultural workers reside refers to all rental units in the tract, not just those dwellings where agricultural workers were living. In order to estimate the extent of crowding in only those dwellings occupied by agricultural workers, the present report examined the variation of increased crowding per tract with the increase of the percentage of agricultural workers living in the tract. Extrapolation of this variation of crowding with increased percent of agricultural workers resident made it possible to estimate the likely extent of crowding in the *hypothetical* census tract in which all residents were agricultural workers (see Appendix II).

The principal findings of the above analysis are an estimated 55% of agricultural workers in the region reside in crowded dwellings and 22% reside in extremely crowded dwelling (Table 3). These Census findings indicate extreme crowding is prevalent in more than one-fifth of dwellings in which agricultural workers reside.

TABLE 3 PERSONS PER ROOM, DWELLINGS IN 113 SELECT CENSUS TRACTS (MORE THAN 100 AGRICULTURAL WORKERS PER TRACT) VS. SALINAS CITY, MONTEREY AND SANTA CRUZ COUNTIES, 5-YEAR ANNUAL AVERAGE, 2012-16

Source: Census Bureau, 5-year (2012-16) American Community Survey

<i>Persons per room</i>	<i>Dwellings in 113 Select Census Tracts in the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys</i>
Less than 1.00	45%
1.01 or more (crowded)	55%
1.51 or more (extremely crowded)	22%

The 2017 SPAWHS farmworker survey finds extremely crowded dwellings

The Salinas-Pajaro Agricultural Worker Housing Survey (SPAWHS)⁹, conducted among about 400 current agricultural workers during 2017, finds 54% of dwellings included persons unrelated to the participant's household. This is highest proportion of non-family residents ever found in surveys among California farmworkers.

⁹ Rick Mines, director of the SPAWHS survey, kindly provided preliminary data for the present report, which are presented in full https://donvillarejo.github.io/Fulltext/Farmworker-Housing-Study-and-Action-Plan-for-Salinas-Valley-and-Pajaro-Valley_2018-June.pdf

The SPAWHS findings regarding crowding demonstrate far greater degrees of crowding than found in census tract data for the region. These findings are summarized in the Figure 3.

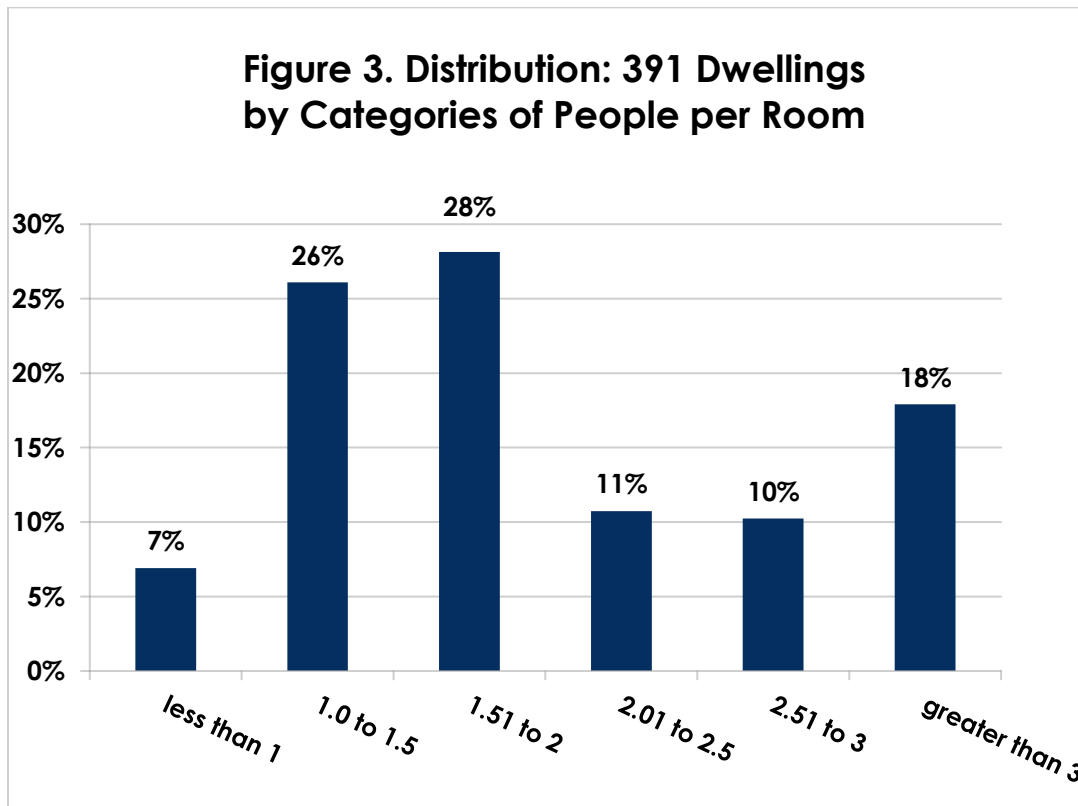


FIGURE 3 DISTRIBUTION: 391 DWELLINGS BY CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE PER ROOM

The findings presented in Figure 3 are extraordinary. Whereas census findings for Salinas city indicated 82% of dwellings were not crowded (had 1.00 or fewer persons per room), the direct evidence of the SPAWHS indicates that in 2017, only 7% of agricultural workers in the Salinas-Pajaro region lived in households that were not crowded.

The SPAWHS found 67% of dwellings occupied by agricultural workers had 1.51 or more persons per room, indicating severe crowding. Even more striking, the SPAWHS found 18% of agricultural worker dwellings had more than 3.01 persons per room. The Census does not even present data for this category because the prevalence of this level of crowding in census data is vanishingly small.

The major factor in the extent of crowding is the degree to which unrelated persons share dwellings with families or householders. In one case, the SPAWHS found 40 persons sharing a dwelling, most of whom were not related to the

family of the participant in the survey. The SPAWHS found 337 participants were renters and only 42 participants were residing in the family's owned dwelling. Eleven of the latter had complex arrangements for the trailers where they lived. Just 8.4% of SPAWHS participants were paying a mortgage and the other 91.5% were renters.

Rental expenses are difficult to measure among agricultural workers because a dwelling may contain multiple individual households. In research on agricultural worker demographics, it has become customary to define a household, apart from the physical structure of a dwelling, by identifying individuals or family groups who share the expenses among themselves for food, rent and other necessities. Typically, as in the Salinas-Pajaro region, a family in a household will take in others as "sub-renters." These renters pay the family a fee for use of a room, or --in some cases, use of a portion of a floor for sleeping-- but they have separate responsibility for their own food and other necessities. In some cases, a non-resident landlord will charge a rental fee to each of several householders who share the dwelling.

For this reason, measures of rental or mortgage expense are usually measured on a per-person basis. Table 4 presents findings from the SPAWHS of the per person rental and mortgage expense.

TABLE 4 CASH RENTAL EXPENSE, PER PERSONS, MONTEREY AND SANTA CRUZ COUNTIES, 378 DWELLINGS.

SOURCE: SPAWHS, 2017

<i>Type of Expense (monthly)</i>	<i>Average expense per person</i>	<i>Number of Observations</i>
Rent	\$215.66	346
Mortgage	\$329.79	32

The previously discussed analysis of financial data for 113 census tracts in which agricultural workers were among the residents found a strong negative correlation between the per-person cash median rental expense and percent of agricultural worker residing in the tract's dwellings. Roughly one-fifth of the 113 tracts had a reported per person median rental in close agreement with the average per person rental expense reported by the SPAWHS in Table 4.

The SPAWHS also identified the type of dwelling in which participants resided (Figure 4). Most agricultural workers (69%) lived in a house or apartment structure; nearly one-fifth (19%) rented a single room in a house or apartment.

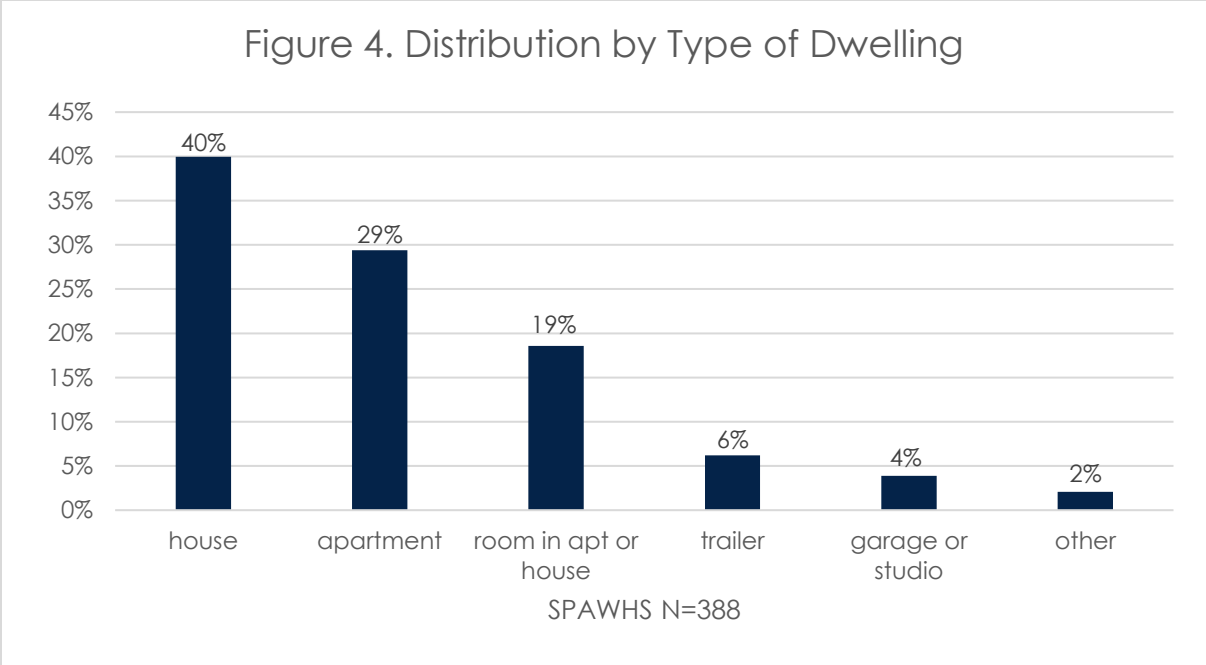


FIGURE 4 DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE OF DWELLING

The living arrangements in dwellings where SPAWHS participants reside is presented in Figure 5. Most dwellings are shared with unrelated persons.

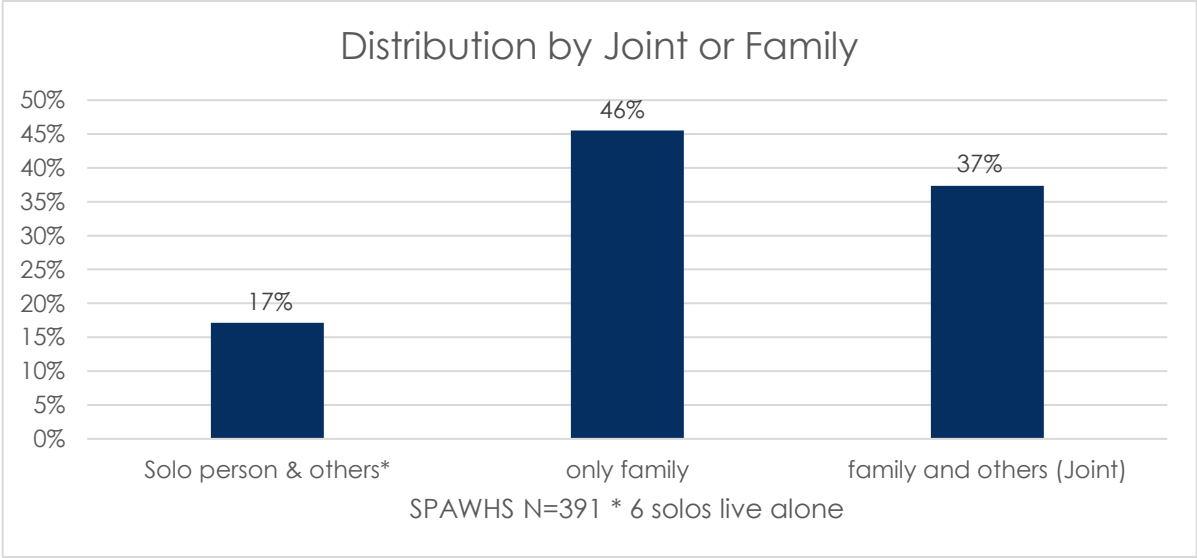


FIGURE 5 DISTRIBUTION BY JOINT OR FAMILY

Discussion

The most significant development for housing hired farm workers in California during the past several decades is the very great increase in their reliance on unsubsidized, private-market, off-farm housing, especially in cities within agricultural regions of the state (Villarejo D. , 2014). But their housing conditions likely have not improved. Widespread sharing of dwellings among unrelated persons is commonplace (Villarejo D. , 2011).

This is a major shift in the responsibility, and the cost, for their housing from employers and government agencies to the workers themselves. Employers have sharply curtailed their on-farm housing: only 3.9% of farm employers participating in the 2015 annual survey of wages and benefits indicated they provided housing for seasonal employees; the 1986 survey of farm employers, the first to separately report benefits for seasonal employees, found 20.6% of employers said they provided housing for seasonal workers (Wage and Benefit Survey, 1986; 2015). The proportion of employers who provided housing for permanent, year-round workers was greater in 2015 than in 1986, but the number of employers providing housing also declined during this 29-year interval.

Consistent with the findings of a decline in housing provided by farm employers were reports of a very substantial decrease in the number of registered employer-run farm labor camps in the state. From a high of an estimated 5,000 such camps at the end of the Bracero program on December 31, 1964, fewer than 800 remained by 2000 (Villarejo D, 2009).¹⁰ But registered camps have not been surveyed in recent years, so the total may even be smaller. In counties with a large agricultural workforce, County health officials are responsible for inspections, but in other counties, state officials are responsible for registration and inspection.

At the same time, there has been only a marginal increase in the number of subsidized, farm labor housing units developed by either government agencies or non-profit groups. Generally, housing developed by these groups is of good quality. USDA's Rural Housing Service Farm Labor Housing program faces a continuing demand for farm labor housing, but the state's total of such units is

¹⁰ Manuel Mejia, California Department of Housing and Community Development, indicated farmer-operated labor camps in the state fell to 800 in 1989 from 1,504 in 1987, a result of enforcement of new regulations.

just 5,579 [United States. GAO. 2011]. USDA funding is quite limited, supporting only a handful of new projects in the past couple of years (USGAO, 2011).

Philanthropy, notably The California Endowment, made a \$30 million commitment to improve the health of farm laborers through better housing twelve years ago, but ended its 10-year-long program focused on farm worker health. Grants by this foundation to support new housing projects were required to seek to improve healthful living as well as access to health care services.

The ACS findings indicate a substantial increase in the number of agricultural workers residing in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys in the past several years, notably adding an estimated 5,000 such workers who reside in Salinas city. But the ACS also consistently finds substantially lower numbers of employees than are reported by employers and published by EDD.

There are two factors to consider in interpreting this apparent discrepancy.

- First, the Census Bureau has difficulty reaching foreign-born and workers with little schooling.
- Second, while the Census Bureau considers “households” or “families” to be the occupants of dwellings; among agricultural workers it is commonplace for unrelated persons, or households, to share dwellings with families or unaccompanied individuals.

The Census Bureau faces a difficult challenge: how to find and enumerate persons who are not part of its own definitions of either “families” or “households.” Among agricultural workers living in the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys there may even be an incentive not to cooperate with the ACS because renters or other occupants may be living there in violation of local housing codes.

For agriculture, with large seasonal variations in employment, “annual average employment” understates the actual number of persons employed in a given year, let alone the effect of new workers entering farm jobs for the first time, and others departing. The ACS may also under-count some of the smallest communities as well as hard-to-reach populations.

Nevertheless, it proved possible to construct an analysis of Census summary findings to obtain estimates of crowding, and associations of agricultural worker residential density with factors of importance in characterizing housing costs and conditions. This analysis of ACS data indicated a greater degree of crowding in dwellings where agricultural workers reside, as well as a much greater reliance

on rental housing among agricultural workers than is typical for the populations of either Salinas city specifically, or for the two counties in general.

At the same time, the rental housing vacancy rates in neighborhoods where agricultural workers resided were not significantly lower than vacancy rates in the cities of the region. The lack of affordable housing may, in fact, reflect the lack of increase of the region's housing stock commensurate with the sharply rising demand for agricultural labor.

The most notable findings of the present report are from the SPAWHS, the in-person survey of about 400 agricultural workers. Most significantly, the survey found extremely higher degrees of crowding than those reported by the Census Bureau, largely the result of the unexpectedly wide prevalence of shared dwellings among unrelated persons.

The highest average occupancy per room found in a previous survey of a farmworker population was 1.75, reported by the authors of indigenous farmworker survey.¹¹ An earlier farmworker survey found an average of 1.78 persons per room used for sleeping.¹² Migrant workers from villages in Mexico and Central America where indigenous languages are spoken face major challenges obtaining employment and housing in the U.S. (Zabin C, 1993).

The SPAWHS also finds occupancy of rental dwellings is extremely high as compared with occupant ownership. Just 11% or less of participants in the survey lived in a dwelling owned by them or a resident family member.

Both factors may result in a low housing expense for individual agricultural workers, but at a high personal cost, such as lack of privacy and the discomfort with the condition of bathrooms that must be shared with many other persons.

Finally, a comparison of the relative proportions SPAWHS participants among specific communities with similar findings of the Census ACS five-year (2012-16), indicated very close general agreement, indicating SPAWHS reliability. These results are indicated in Figure 6.

For Salinas and Watsonville, the proportions are in especially close agreement. The only community for which the proportions are not similarly close is Chualar,

¹¹ <http://www.indigenousfarmworkers.org/housing.shtml>

¹² The California Agricultural Workers Health Survey (CAWHS) found an average of 1.78 persons per room used for sleeping during 1999-2000.

which has a much smaller total population for which the Census is notably less reliable.

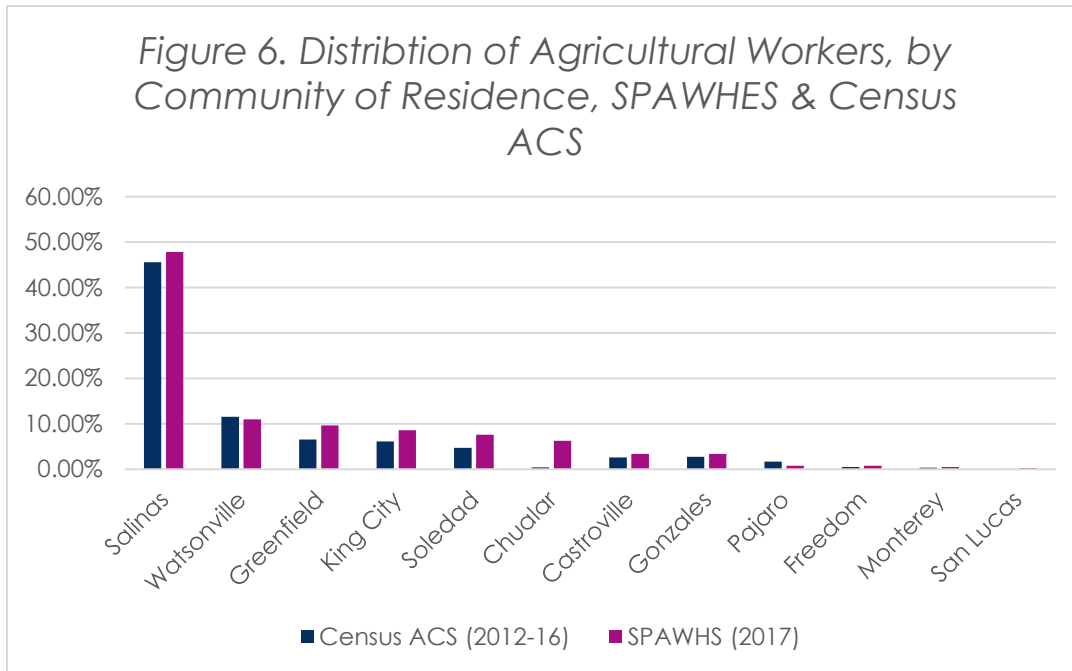


FIGURE 6 DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS, BY COMMUNITY

Finally, the movement of rural workers to urban centers is a global phenomenon.¹³ The search for jobs and amenities often lacking in rural areas are strong enticements. Among agricultural workers in California - some 95% or more are foreign-born - urban spaces often have a “critical mass” of folks who speak the same language and share their culture. Access to high-speed internet connectivity is far superior in most urban areas than in many rural spaces, even in California.

There are major disparities between the Census Bureau’s ACS findings and the SPAWHES which raise serious questions about knowledge concerning farm labor housing and the conditions in which many workers live. Mines has emphasized that only targeted surveys of farmworkers can yield reasonably accurate information about their living and working conditions (Mines. 2005). The findings discussed in the present report underscores the importance of Mines’ comment.

¹³ See <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/12/17/chapter-2-migrant-destinations/>

Appendix I. Affordable Rental Projects in Monterey County,
California Department of Housing and Community Development,
May 31, 2016.

Project Name	City	Total Units	City	Sponsor
Acacia House	Salinas	6	Salinas	Interim, Inc.
Benito St Affordable Hsng	Soledad	70	Soledad	Housing Authority of the County of Monterey
California St Hsng	Salinas	8	Salinas	Interim, Inc.
Camphora Apts	Soledad	44	Soledad	South County Housing Corporation
Canyon Creek Townhomes	Gonzales	36	Gonzales	CHISPA
Casa de Paloma	Salinas	6	Salinas	Interim, Inc.
Casa de Perla	Monterey	6	Monterey	Interim, Inc.
Chular Farm Labor Ctr	Chualar	29	Chualar	Housing Authority of the County of Monterey
Cynara Ct	Castroville	58	Castroville	MidPen Housing Corp.
Estrella Apts.	Monterey	8	Monterey	City of monterey
Geil Street	Castroville	11	Castroville	MidPen Housing Corp.
Jardines de Boronda	Salinas	30	Salinas	South County Housing Corporation
Kings Station	King City	57	King City	Pacific West Communities
La Buena Esperanza (King City Farm Labor Hsng)	King City	40	King City	La Buena Esperanza Cooperative
Lakeview Towers	Salinas	50	Salinas	Housing Authority of the County of Monterey
Las Casas de Madera	Salinas	75	Salinas	Las Casas de Madera Co-Op
Las Jicamas Apts	Soledad	46	Soledad	Soledad Local Development Corporation
Lincoln Square	Pajaro	19	Pajaro	Pajaro Valley Housing Corp.
Loma El Paraiso	Salinas	43	Salinas	CHISPA

Los Abuelitos Sr Apts	Salinas	25	Salinas	CHISPA
Lupine Gardens Apts	Salinas	21	Salinas	Interim, Inc.
Manzanita Place	Marina	66	Marina	MidPen Housing Corp.
Marina Manor	Marina	39	Marina	CHISPA
Market St Townhomes	Soledad	60	Soledad	CHISPA
Nuevo Amanecer Apts (Salinas Rd)	Pajaro	63	Pajaro	South County Housing Corporation
Pacific Meadows Sr.	Carmel	200	Carmel	Pacific Meadows Housing LP
Orchard Gabilan	Soledad	84	Soledad	Orchard Gabilan Asst., CA LP
Pueblo del Mar (17th Regiment)	Marina	46	Marina	Monterey County Housing, Inc.
Pueblo del Mar (Kwajalein Ct)	Marina	10	Marina	Monterey County Housing, Inc.
Rippling River Sr. Apys.	Carmel	76	Carmel	Rippling Affordable Housing CA LP
Rockrose Gardens	Marina	21	Marina	Rockrose Housing Corp.
Salinas Farm Labor Ctr	Salinas	57	Salinas	Monterey County Housing Authority
Sandy Shores	Marina	28	Marina	Interim, Inc.
Sea Garden Apts (Axtell Street)	Castroville	59	Castroville	CHISPA
Sunflower Gardens (Casas del Sol)	Salinas	18	Salinas	Interim, Inc.
Tynan Village Apts	Salinas	171	Salinas	Monterey County Housing Authority
University Village Apts	Marina	108	Marina	South County Housing Corporation
Villa San Miguel	King City	50	King City	CHISPA
Villa Santa Clara	Greenfield	30	Greenfield	CHISPA
Vineyard Green Townhomes	Greenfield	40	Greenfield	CHISPA
Vista de la Terraza	Salinas	40	Salinas	CHISPA
Vista Point	Pacific Grove	49	Pacific Grove	South County Housing Corporation
Walnut Place Townhomes	Greenfield	40	Greenfield	CHISPA

Wesley Oaks	Salinas	10	Salinas	CHISPA
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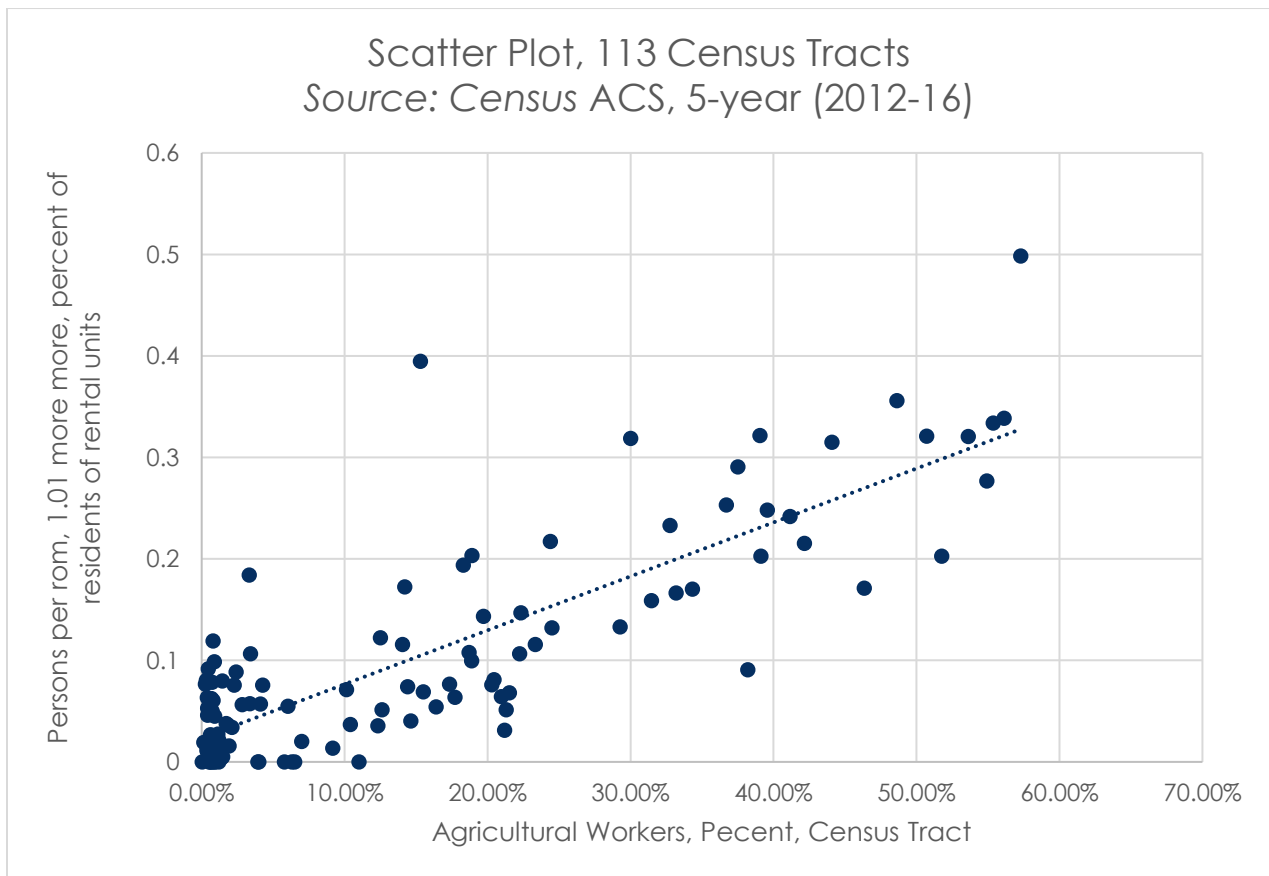
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Appendix II. Estimate of Crowded Farmer Housing Dwellings from Census/ACS, 5-year (2012-16)

Scatter-plot of the proportion of rental units with Persons per room, 1.01 or more, within 113 individual Census Tracts of the Salinas-Pajaro Valleys in which agricultural workers were among the residents, versus percent of agricultural workers per tract.

A straight-line fit to the data (dotted trendline) yields an estimate of the proportion of rental units with 1.01 persons per room or more for the extrapolated value of 100 percent agricultural workers within a Census Tract. Regression analysis (least-squares) find the proportion to be 55.4%.

A similar analysis of the proportion of rental units with 1.51 Persons per room, or more, in 113 individual Census Tracts, versus percent of agricultural workers per tract, finds, again by extrapolation, the share is 22.3% of rental units.



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