It is not just the size of farm involved, it is the kind of crops they produce.

Mr. THOMPSON. Are the DiGiorgios members of the Farm Bureau?

Mr. TRIGGS. I don't know. I would suppose that they are.

We are up to the farmers and the NLRB.

Most businesses follow the practice of employing an attorney or attorneys to provide counsel with respect to the many complex problems involved in their relationship with labor unions under the rules, procedures, and provisions of the Natonal Labor Relations Act.

This is indeed a complex area of law and only competent and specialized attorneys who follow the shifting policies and interpretations of NLRB and the courts are able to give sound advice with respect to these problems and relationships.

There are some farmers who would and could do likewise if they were covered by the act. But the majority of affected farmers cannot afford the costs of continuing legal consultation and would be overwhelmed by the legal problems associated with the administration of the act.

Now we have a paragraph on the impact on consumers. We include it because members of the committee have asked previous witnesses about the effect the bill would have on consumers.

No precise answer can be provided to this question because there are too many variables which would apply differently in different areas and for different commodities. The two major variables would be: (1) How much, if any, wage increases would unions be able to obtain above those that would occur anyhow? (2) Is new technology available which would enable farmers to offset increased wage costs by a reduction in the number of workers hired?

We would hope that farmers would be able to shift to consumers all of the increased costs involved. Ordinarily it is difficult for farmers to pass on increased costs to consumers. Consumer prices are not affected unless farmers are hurt badly enough by the increased costs to reduce production.

This does happen. For example, the termination of the bracero program hurt California growers of strawberries and asparagus badly enough that they reduced the acreage of these crops.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, in connection with strawberries, I have some interesting statistics. Increases of 35 to 40 cents in the hourly preharvest rate and 15 to 35 cents per 12-pound tray of strawberries at harvest time raised the 1965 field labor costs by an average of 1.7 cents a pound.

Both the seasonal average price to the producer and the average retail price rose by about the same amount or more, indicating that labor costs had in fact been passed on to the consumer.

Mr. TRIGGS. I think in this case that labor costs have been passed on, and perhaps your wives have noted that the price of strawberries and asparagus in produce markets has been higher, quite a bit higher, in the past couple of years.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Triggs, have you read, or are you familiar with the contracts recently signed between the United Farmer Workers Organizing Committee and the DiGiorgio Co.?

Mr. TRIGGS. Yes, I am.