

extraneous advantages, such as large mineral deposits; and, of course, (5) that the farm size be significantly divergent.

The two communities chosen for this investigation were Arvin (Kern County), as a large-scale farming community, and Dinuba (Tulare County), for the community surrounded by farms of moderate size.¹

Certain vital statistical information was being collected for other purposes for the agricultural areas of Madera, Kern, and Tulare Counties, and therefore it was desirable to select a community from within that area. Furthermore, this includes most of the "project area" of the Central Valley project, and it seemed desirable to remain within the geographic region in which this development was to take place. It was important to have communities of sufficient size to support social and economic institutions yet not so large that the totality of these could not be grasped in the limited time available for field study. In practice this meant a community of not under 2,500 and not over 10,000 population. It was also desirable to have communities which farmer and laborer both utilized; where institutions served both these segments of the population, since both groups are an essential part of farm production in the area. Finally, the towns should be of sufficient age so that they have had the opportunity for the development of social and economic institutions.

Table 1 shows the communities of Madera, Kern, and Tulare Counties from which a choice was made. The figures are based upon estimated boundaries around each community, but indicate the relationship in population, land use, and size of farms. (Boundaries were more accurately drawn for the two communities studied, and agricultural and population figures do not conform exactly to these rougher approximations which were used at the time of selection.) The towns are in order of average acre-equivalent farm size.² Communities near the opposite poles were selected though extremes were not sought.

In practice, the strictures were not easy to apply, especially the stricture that the communities be similar. In the first place, as everyone acquainted with California agriculture knows, there is a wide diversity of crops, soils, and water conditions, and it is impossible to find communities identical in these respects. Yet it was possible to get general similarity with respect to quality of soil, major agriculture production, and the influence of nonagricultural resources.

Details of the agriculture are presented in a later section, where a thorough analysis of the characteristics of farming and types of production is made. A few significant comparisons will show the validity and limitations of the selection. In both communities a variety of crops, and very similar crops, were grown. The Dinuba area, however, is far more highly specialized than the Arvin one, with over two-thirds of the total value of production in fruit and grapes, chiefly the latter. Cotton and vegetables are more plentiful in Arvin than in Dinuba though they are grown in both communities. Forage crops and livestock were very nearly the same in the two areas. The total

¹ It is more economic to use the expression "large farm community" and "small farm community," and these will be used in the discussions that follow. A clear picture of the actual situation with regard to size is presented in a subsequent section and the terms will thus be recognized as having comparative rather than absolute value. The term "small farm" as used here may better be considered a family-sized commercial farm, and must not be confused either with part-time or subsistence farms.

² This adaptation of the standard acre has been worked out on the basis of data available. (See Methodology in appendix B.)