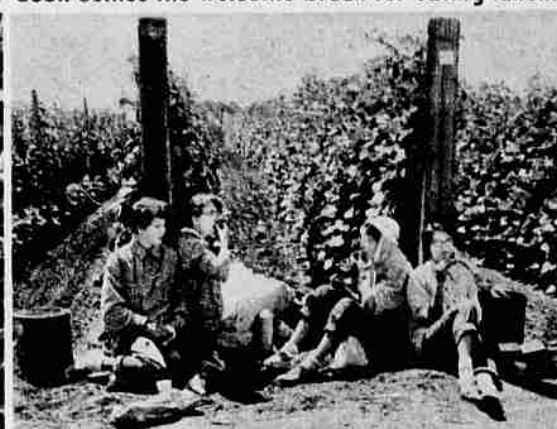


Bright and early, the kids line up for the bus. Time passes quickly when you're picking beans. Soon comes the welcome break for eating lunch.



Mud is fun, and good for the feet, 'tis said.



For Teen-Agers, It's the Berries!

by Mrs. Andrew Baker

A "mother" to 70 youths tells how they earn and learn in the fields of Oregon.



Weighing-in is a time for reckoning—to learn who is the champion picker, and thus makes the most money, too.

IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY in Oregon, strawberry and bean growers offer a good opportunity for teen-agers to pick up extra money during the Summer. My job is to organize a "platoon" for two growers each year. I have about 70 teen-agers, ranging from 11 to 16, working with me, and we have a grand time together. Our day starts at 6 a.m. The grower supplies the transportation (usually an old school bus) and we pick the youngsters up at stops near their homes. Forty-five minutes later, they are hard at work in the fields, and with a break for lunch, they usually work through until four, except on real hot days, when they knock off at two. During the day, I go out in the fields to check their output, and at weighing-in time I'm there to help. On the way home, the bus ride is boisterous fun, with singing and laughing, and a couple of hours later most of the gang are down at the local swimming pool. These youngsters earn from 6 to 15 dollars a day. The girls use their earnings mostly for party dresses, and the boys like to buy old cars that they can fix up. They do their work with real zest, and at the same time they're developing a sense of responsibility that will be an asset to them in their mature years. They are a great reassurance to me when I read of juvenile problems. They will be leaders in the community in a few years, and I'm not afraid to speculate about how well they will do.