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Legislation and regulation Farmworkers: An Overview of Health, Safety, and Wage Issues

Farmworkers: / Health, Safety and Wage Issues

For generations, California's onion and lettuce fields, the cotton farms of Texas' Rio Grande Valley, and the chile fields of New Mexico have provided employment for migrant farmworkers pulled north from Mexico by the lure of higher U.S. wages. Under the U.S. government's bracero program (1942-64), 3.3 million Mexican nationals were shuttled north across the border to work and bused back to Mexico when the harvest season was over. Today, changes in Mexico's agricultural sector produce much the same effect, as do clauses in U.S. labor and immigration laws designed to provide U.S. agribusiness with low-cost labor. As a result, farmworkers in 1998 continue to wrestle with the same challenges that they did in 1948—extreme poverty, isolation from the communities where they work, and political disenfranchisement.

**By Kathleen Reynolds and
George Kourous**

It is difficult to pin down with certainty the exact number of migrant farm laborers working in the U.S. today. Depending on which government agency's definition, methodology, and count you accept, their numbers range anywhere between 1 and 5 million people. The demographic characteristics of the farmworker population are hazy as well. Different surveys have found that between 70% and 94% of the group is Latino, and that anywhere between 20% and 50% are undocumented and in the U.S. illegally. Most research does concur that the majority of migrant farmworkers are male, Spanish-speaking, of limited education, and born in Mexico; but a growing number of workers are native peoples, from either Guatemala or southern Mexico. Adult farmworkers typically have completed eight or fewer years of formal education.



Farmworker housing in Hidalgo, Texas: 33 residents, no indoor plumbing.

©Alan Pogue

Shifting Borders, Similar Situations

The end of the bracero program, amnesty granted via the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), and changes in agricultural production have altered the nature of the border for many Mexican and Mexican-American farmworkers. Today, only 10% to 15% of people of Mexican origin in U.S. border states work in seasonal agriculture. Certainly, some parts of the border still employ significant numbers of farmworkers—California (particularly the San Joaquin Valley) receives 800,000 farmworkers a year, 90% of whom are immigrants. But other border areas have experienced drops in full-year or part-year farmworker populations due to the mechanization of farming, the shift of agriculture to other areas, and a generation gap in which the children of older farmworkers seek employment in other sectors. These days, for example, South Texas frequently functions as a recruiting ground, where migrants from Mexico and further south stop on their way to harvests in the Northwest and Midwest or along the East Coast.

In some respects, conditions for farmworkers have worsened in recent years—particularly in terms of wages. Agricultural economists report that over the

past twenty years, wages for farm work have declined up to 25%. According to the Farmworker Justice Fund, about 60% of migrant farmworkers have incomes under the federal poverty line, and 73% of migrant farmworkers' children live in poverty. Yet despite this poverty, farmworkers are less dependent on public assistance than other populations—due to their immigration status, the difficulties associated with serving migrant populations, language barriers, and the disinclination to use outside assistance common to disenfranchised, self-reliant communities.

The increasing use by employers of farm labor contractors—middlemen, often based in the border region, who recruit workers or teams of workers for jobs further north—is one key reason for the increase of poverty and exploitation of farmworkers. Frequently, contractors abuse workers by misrepresenting jobs and benefits, charging exorbitant "hiring fees," or taking deductions from workers' paychecks. A 1994 study by the DOL found that farmworkers employed by such intermediaries are more likely than those who aren't to be forced to pay for their equipment (45% versus 16%) and for food, rides, and/or housing (34% versus 14%).

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The poverty facing farmworkers leads to a host of other problems. Without adequate income, families and individuals must live together in crowded housing—sometimes sleeping in shifts—to afford rents that are prohibitively high. Often, workers accept housing in camps provided by their employers, frequently characterized by overcrowded trailers, garages, and sheds, as well as unsanitary conditions.

Unsurprisingly then, health problems are also a concern. Infant mortality rates are a stunning 125% higher than in the general population, and the average farmworker life expectancy is 49, compared to 75 in the United States overall. Malnutrition is higher among migrant farmworkers than among any other subpopulation in the country. Four out of five farmworkers don't have employer-provided health insurance.

Pesticide poisoning, in particular, is a prevalent health risk that confronts farmworkers. Over 1.2 billion pounds of pesti-

cides are used annually in U.S. agriculture, and according to a 1995 report published by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, these toxins are responsible for more than 300,000 illnesses and 1,000 deaths in the farmworker community each year. The same study established a link between pesticide exposure and reduced male fertility, stillborn births, and severe birth defects such as neural tube defects and facial clefts (see tables on p. 3).

The intense physical demands of farm work also take their toll: agricultural workers constitute 3% of the nation's work force but account for 11% of all occupational fatalities. Child farmworkers are particularly at risk from occupational hazards—300 children die each year from agriculture-related accidents and illnesses, and over 20,000 are hurt. Some 200,000 to 800,000 children nationwide work in the fields—100,000 of them illegally, according to the National Child Labor Committee. Economic necessity, along with lax enforcement and oversight—a random survey undertaken by the Associated Press last year found three times the number of illegally employed child farmworkers reported by the DOL—keep these youth in the fields.

of society and at the bottom of the economic ladder—making them eminently affordable.

Maintaining this fluid, cheap pool of farm labor requires the support—or complicity—of government in making laws that perpetuate the migrant farmworker system. In theory, legal exemptions and government subsidies for agriculture are justified by the idea that they help small, family-owned-and-operated farms. But in reality, large, corporate agribusiness receives the most benefit: in fruit, vegetable, and horticulture, the sector where most migrants work, the largest 10% of farms (all corporate) account for 80% of total production and employment. This corporate consolidation of agriculture has led to the creation of a powerful lobby that pressures government to maintain both direct subsidies—cash payments and crop buy-outs—and indirect subsidies in the form of the weak laws that govern farm work.

A case in point is the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA). Passed in 1983, the law requires certification for farm labor contractors and written disclosure at the time of recruitment of the type and length of employment, wages, transportation, benefits, and housing. Under the law, transportation and housing provided for workers must meet specific standards.

The MSPA is better than previous laws for farmworker protection, but it still has significant flaws, including weak enforcement by the DOL's Wage and Hour Division. In 1995, the DOL investigated 2,376 farms under the MSPA, about half the number of inspections it conducted in 1985. The DOL claims that limited resources—the agency has fewer than a thousand inspectors for the entire country—and bureaucratic gridlock make further enforcement difficult. But violations ranging from unfit housing to illegal contractors were found in 63% of the 1995 inspections, which farmworker advocates say is nowhere near the total number of farms that regularly break laws.

The MSPA also exempts businesses with few workers, which often means that large employers circumvent the law by listing the earnings of all family members under the name of the head of household on their payrolls, thus reducing their official employee count. This practice contributes to low wages and renders other family members ineligible for Social Security benefits, unemployment, and

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Importing "Third World" Labor Earns First World Profits

U.S. farmers and farming corporations are well familiar with the benefits associated with employing a "third world" labor pool—a practice that is rapidly becoming standard corporate operating procedure in the new global economy. The need for the cross-border flow of field workers was established during the labor shortages of World War II and later enshrined in the post-war boom years when U.S. salary expectations grew and the nation's economy shifted in new directions. More recently, the reorganization of Mexico's *ejido* system and the export-oriented mechanization of the country's agricultural sector (brought on by the PRI's embrace of neoliberal reform and free trade economics), coupled with post-1982 economic instability, have reinforced the historical pattern of northern migration. Today, agribusiness continues to profit from the use of low-maintenance migrant laborers, whose ethnicity, citizenship status, educational background, and nomadic lifestyle keep them at the fringe

(when available) worker's compensation. The MSPA also exempts employers from having to follow certain provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) as well as minimum wage and overtime laws.

Similarly, no federal law on workers' compensation protects farmworkers (14 states, including New Mexico, provide no benefits at all for farmworkers injured on the job), while much of the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is not extended to agricultural work. The FLSA requires that fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds be allowed to work only outside of school hours; for agricultural jobs, however, their hours are unlimited, and with DOL permission, children as young as ten are allowed to work in the fields. Again, enforcement concerns exist—the Associated Press investigation mentioned above found that the DOL consistently failed to find and protect the most vulnerable child laborers and had a policy of fining farmers less than other businesses for labor law violations.

In like manner, despite the current national climate of anti-immigrant sentiment and restrictive immigration legislation, U.S. policy makes exceptions in the case of foreign guestworkers. The H-2A program, for example, admits nonimmigrant workers for specific agricultural jobs that normally last less than a year, and the program falls outside of all national immigration quotas, family reunification schemes, and other immigration regulations. Currently, the agribusiness lobby is making a strong effort to reduce the already limited protections the program grants workers and to expand the number of guestworkers permitted into the country as a part of the program.

Farming corporations claim they desperately need the guestworker program due to labor shortages, and the DOL approves an astounding 99% of all H-2A applications. But numerous studies, including a 1997 report by the U.S. General Accounting Office, have found surpluses in farm labor in California, where claims of shortages are particularly loud and lobbying efforts particularly strong, as many as 300,000 farmworkers have been unemployed in the last five years.

Despite these facts—and against the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Agricultural Workers, the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, and Secretary of Labor Alexis Hermann—agribusiness has effectively lobbied for a

Health Problems Reported by California Farmworkers

<u>Symptom</u>	<u>% Reporting Problem</u>
Blurry Vision	38.6
Headache	22.7
Backache	20.5
Ear Infection	20.5
Chest Pain	18.2
Coughing	15.9
Swollen Joints	13.6
Digestive Problems	13.6
Nervousness	13.6
Rashes	11.4

Source: Miguel Pérez, Reuben Garza, and Helda Pinzón, "Northern California Hispanic Farm Workers Health Status: A Case Study," *Migration World* vol. 26, no. 1-2, 1998.

revised, expanded version of H-2A called H-2C. On July 24, the Senate passed the guestworker expansion bill as an amendment to the appropriation bill for the Commerce, State, and Justice departments by a vote of 68-31. H-2C would weaken wage, recruitment, working condition, housing, and law enforcement protections for guestworkers; further, employers would not be required to recruit workers in the domestic marketplace before filing guestworker applications.

Farmworker advocates oppose both H-2A and H-2C. Testifying at a hearing on guestworker legislation, Richard Estrada, Commissioner of the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, said the proposed

programs resemble slavery in that workers are not free to sell their labor on the open market but are instead brought to the U.S. to work for only one employer. Economically, they would worsen working conditions and drive down wages by cheapening the cost of labor and providing a large pool of workers who are unable to unionize.

As a result of regulatory shortcomings and the economic and political pressures that work to maintain the farm work system, union organizing of agricultural workers has always been a struggle. The lack of a legally recognized right to organize and bargain collectively—farmwork-

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Sources of Medical Treatment Reported by California Farmworkers

<u>Source of Treatment</u>	<u>% Reporting Regular Use</u>
Family Member	43.2
Friend	18.2
Self Treatment	15.9
Curandero/Herbalist	11.3
Migrant Health Clinic	11
Doctor's Office	9
Emergency Room	7.5
Crew Leader	6.8

Source: Miguel Pérez, Reuben Garza, and Helda Pinzón, "Northern California Hispanic Farm Workers Health Status: A Case Study," *Migration World* vol. 26, no. 1-2, 1998.

continued from page 3

ers are among the few groups of workers excluded from the National Labor Relations Act—further undermines their position. Farmworker unions saw their heyday years ago with the UFW's successful organizing campaigns and its boycott of California's grape industry. The economic and political trends described here, as well as the increasing use of farm labor contractors (who maintain workers in small, isolated, tightly controlled crews) have led to a sharp decline in farmworker union activity over the past twenty years. In the mid-1970s, the UFW had 80,000 members; by 1994, they were down to 20,000.

Efforts to Improve Farmworker Conditions

But the UFW continues working, experiencing a resurgence in the past two years with its latest campaign: organizing California's strawberry pickers for better wages and conditions. New strategies—convincing supermarkets to approach strawberry growers about working conditions and targeting the entire industry rather than particular growers—have met with some success. The UFW's ranks have climbed to 25,000, and 6,000 out of 32,000 markets nationwide have signed on to the campaign. But grower resistance to organizing in the strawberry fields has been fierce.

In late July, for example, workers at Coastal Berry in Watsonville voted 532-410 in favor of the Coastal Berry Farmworkers Committee (CBFC), denounced by UFW representatives as a pro-grower front group financed by some of the state's biggest berry producers. According to UFW representatives, not all ballots were counted and foremen threatened to fire workers who didn't sign the election petition. In some instances, the opposition has been less subtle: on July 1, around 150 CBFC supporters assaulted

pro-UFW workers in the fields, and one key CBFC organizer was arrested for felony assault.

Other unions have met with similar mixtures of harassment and victory. The El Paso-based Sin Fronteras Organizing Project, for example, has for years played a key role in organizing agricultural laborers in New Mexico and Texas. And other cross-border organizing efforts—like the Toledo, Ohio-based Farm Labor Organizing Committee's (FLOC) campaign with Mexican tomato workers—have been successful as well: higher wages in Mexico remove much of the incentive for agribusiness to move there, thus diminishing a common management threat to U.S. union efforts.

Advocacy groups take a different tack in their attempts to improve farm work conditions. Lawsuits and legislative work are frequent tools. For example, California Rural Legal Aid (CRLA) and Texas Rural Legal Aid (TRLA) represent farmworkers who live or were recruited in their states in litigation against employers and farm labor contractors. Cases often involve the failure to disclose contract information or breaches of contract regarding housing, transportation, and wages. Both the CRLA and TRLA win the bulk of their cases, but both also recognize that changes in the laws, not just challenges to them, are needed. In Washington, DC, the Farmworker Justice Fund and the Migrant Legal Action Program also represent farmworkers on the national level, lobbying for better working and living conditions and fighting against programs like H-2C.

Other organizations address the social service needs of migrant farmworkers at the grassroots level, providing them education, housing, and health information. Migrant Health Promotion, based in Monroe, Michigan, runs an innovative Camp Health Aide Program (CHAP), which trains migrant farmworkers in basic health education, first aid, advocacy techniques, camp sanitation, and information

gathering. Each year, CHAP trains more than 150 aides who then provide preventive care, emotional support, and emergency health care in migrant farmworker communities. The program operates in nine Midwestern states, and offers a similar version in the winter months in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

A major function of CHAP is to refer farmworkers to local health clinics, many of which are government-funded. The federal government, in fact, operates an extensive social service network for migrant workers. During the 1960s, with public attention focused on the plight of farmworkers and with state and local governments reluctant to get involved, the national government inaugurated today's main migrant-specific assistance programs. In the 1970s and 1980s, the number of programs increased dramatically. There are now 12 federal migrant aid programs; the largest four are the Migrant Health Program, Migrant Education Program, Migrant Head Start, and Title IV, Section 402 of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), which provides job training for farmworkers seeking to leave the fields. These programs make farmworkers among the most visibly serviced group in the nation, but figures suggest that these programs (funded at \$600 million a year) aren't reaching all those eligible. Federally funded migrant health clinics, for example, reach less than 15% of the farmworker population.

Although government programs targeted to migrants may in fact play an important role in improving the well-being of workers, they also act as just one more subsidy for agribusiness. When the relevant legislation fails to give employers any incentive to pay workers living wages, provide decent housing, and ensure safe working conditions, federal migrant programs assume the responsibilities (and costs) that these legislative and regulatory shortcomings have created. ■

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Farmworkers

The following list of publications and contacts is part of INCITRA's ongoing effort to make useful information and networking contacts available to borderlands residents and policy-makers. This directory is an organic work-in-progress. Please advise us of any necessary additions or corrections. They will be added to our database and used in future publications.

Readers looking for a comprehensive source of information regarding the situation of farmworkers on and off the border will want to start with the recently published *With These Hands: The Hidden World of Migrant Farmworkers Today*, by Daniel Rothenberg. *Working Poor: Farmworkers in the United States*, by David Craig Griffith, is another recommended read.

On the internet, the Sin Fronteras Organizing Project website offers a wealth of information regarding farmworkers in the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez area, as well as historical background on the bracero program and links to other sites. Those interested in staying up-to-date on the ongoing guestworker debate should check the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation's National Clearinghouse on Guestworker Legislation.

In terms of contacts, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation and Texas Rural Legal Aid are both active at the grassroots and regional level; groups working at the national level or in Washington, DC on federal farmworker policy include the Farmworker Justice Fund, the Migrant Legal Action Program, and the Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural. The UFW remains an active player in organizing farmworkers both on the border and in other regions; the El Paso-based Sin Fronteras Organizing Project is a veteran borderlands farmworker group with an emphasis on grassroots-level organizing and community involvement.

For information regarding contacts or to acquire listed information, contact INCITRA-USA at (505) 388-0208.

Contacts

Alcario Samudio

Westlaco, TX

Voice: (956) 968-6574 or 1-800-369-0574

Provides legal services for farmworkers on issues of labor rights, income and wages, workers' compensation, occupational health and safety, housing, and labor contracting. It also provides some community education and a variety of publications.

Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs

1611 North Kent Street, Suite 910

Arlington, VA 22209

Voice: (703) 528-4141

Fax: (703) 528-4145

Email: afop@afop.org

Website: <http://www.afop.org>

National federation of organizations serving farmworkers by providing information, education, support, advocacy, job training, and representation at the national level.

California Institute for Rural Studies (CIRS)

Box 2143

Davis, CA 95617

Voice: (530) 756-6555

Fax: (530) 756-7429

Email: cirsmail@cirsinc.org

Website: <http://www.cirsinc.org>

CIRS conducts research, taking an integrated approach to issues affecting rural communities, economies, and environments, with a primary focus on agricultural labor markets, labor law, farm health and safety, and pesticide use.

California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (CRLAF)

2424 K Street, 1st Floor

Sacramento CA, 95816

Voice: (916) 446-7904

Website: <http://www.crlaf.org/>

CRLAF has projects related to migrant farmworkers, including a low-income housing project, a rural health advocacy institute, a border initiatives project, and a pesticide and worker safety project. The group provides legal assistance and has a national clearinghouse on recent guestworker legislation.

Campo Obrero

Quinta Mayor 222

Ciudad Juárez, CHIH.

Voice: (16) 25-76-16

Fax: (16) 30-24-10

Councils campesinos and workers about labor rights issues. Working closely with campesinos in Villa Humada, the group facilitates legal assistance for workers on an individual basis.

INCITRA

Information for Citizen Transboundary Action on the Environment
Información Ciudadana Transfronteriza

INCITRA is a binational effort sponsored by the Interhemispheric Resource Center (IRC) in Silver City, NM, and La Red Fronteriza de Salud y Ambiente (RFSA) in Hermosillo, Sonora. INCITRA-USA aims to promote sustainable development in the borderlands by serving as a clearinghouse for information and resources. INCITRA research can provide you with the specific information you want, based on your needs, according to your requests. Call and put INCITRA to work for you.

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The Interhemispheric Resource Center is a non-profit research and policy institute. Funding for INCITRA-USA is provided by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

Centro de Apoyo al Trabajado Migrante, A.C.

Ave. Prolongación Zaragoza #6

Col. Jabonera

Mexicali, B.C. 21100

México

Voice: (65) 53-48-82

Provides medical aid and education about human rights to returned (and/or deported) migrant farmworkers in Mexicali.

Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena

Cuauhtemoc s/n (Esq. Carret. Juxtla-Putla)

Santiago Juchitahuaca, OAX.

Voice/Fax: (955) 404-30

Email: fiob@laneta.apc.org

Seeks to provide legal representation in accord with U.S. and Mexican laws and to develop programs for social well-being.

Farmworker Health Services, Inc.

1234 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite C1017

Washington, DC 20005

Contact: Field Operations Administrator

Voice: (202) 347-7377

Fax: (202) 347-6385

The FHS provides professional and clinical health personnel in the fields of medicine, nursing, nutrition, transportation, health education, and social work to migrant health centers on the East Coast. Health professionals spend 70% of their time in the field doing outreach and health education.

Farmworker Justice Fund (FJF)

1111 19th St. NW, Suite 1000

Washington, DC 20036

Contact: Bruce Goldstein

Voice: (202) 776-1757

Fax: (202) 776-1792

FJF is a national advocacy group that deals with wage discrimination, working conditions, occupational health and safety, pesticide use, advocacy, litigation, and public education.

Frente Indígena Oaxaqueño Binacional (FIOB)

Box 183

Livingston, CA 95334

Contact: Rufino Domínguez Santos, c/o Leoncio Vásquez

Voice/Fax: (209) 394-4287

Email: rufino@igc.apc.org

Website: <http://www.laneta.acp.org/fiob>

FIOB is a nongovernmental organization that works closely with indigenous organizations, communities, and individuals from the Mixteca, Zapotec, and Trique regions in Oaxaca.

Migrant Clinicians Network, Inc. (MCN)

Box 164285

Austin, TX 78716

Contact: Karen Mountain

Voice: (512) 327-2017

Fax: (512) 327-0719

Email: mcn@onr.com

Website: <http://www.migrantclinician.org>

MCN provides mechanisms for networking among health care providers in migrant health centers. It also encourages continuity of care, uniformity in clinical procedures and protocols, enhanced provider retention and collaboration, and migrant-specific recruitment and orientation.

Migrant Head Start

Administration for Children and Families/Head Start Bureau

Box 1182

Washington, DC 20013

Contact: Maria T. Candamil

Voice: (202) 205-8572

Provides Head Start services for children of eligible migrant farmworkers across the country and offers technical assistance to Migrant Head Start grantees and delegate agencies.

Migrant Health Promotion (MHP)

502 West Elm Ave.

Monroe, MI 48162

Contact: Susan Illene Ringer, development director

Voice: (734) 243-0711

Fax: (734) 243-0435

Email: mhp@tdi.net

MHP runs a nationally recognized Camp Health Aide Program, which trains migrant workers throughout the Midwest and the colonies of Texas to do preventative care and health promotion in the migrant labor camps. The MHP also publishes a directory of health services for migrant farmworkers in the Midwest.

Migrant Legal Action Program, Inc. (MLAP)

Box 53308

Washington, DC 20009

Contact: Roger C. Rosenthal

Voice: (202) 462-7744

Fax: (202) 462-7914

Email: HN1645@handsnet.org

MLAP is an advocacy center providing representation to migrant and seasonal farmworkers. MLAP's publications include *Field Memo* and *Migrant Education News*, as well as manuals on legal rights and living and working conditions.

National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc. (NCFH)

1515 Capital of Texas Hwy. South, Suite 220

Austin, TX 78746

Contact: E. Roberta Ryder, executive director

Voice: (512) 328-7682

Fax: (512) 328-8559

Email: ryder@ncfh.org

Website: <http://www.ncfh.org>

NCFH's mission is to improve the health of farmworker families through the application of human, technical, and information resources. The group's Call for Health project has a toll-free, English/Spanish telephone line providing information for migrant and seasonal farmworkers. NCFH's Traveling Lay Advisor Project provides breast and cervical cancer detection and control programs to farmworkers in the Midwest. Its Rehabilitation of Farmworkers with Disabilities program seeks to improve rehabilitation services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Finally, the NCFH tracks migrants through many midwestern states and Texas.

Organización en California de Líderes Campesinas, Inc.

611 South Rebecca Street

Pomona, CA 91766

Contact: Mimi Trevino

Voice: (909) 865-7776

Fax: (909) 865-8779

Email: Lideres1@juno.com

Lideres Campesinas represents leading farmworker women working to build leadership and activism among other farmworker women to give themselves a more effective and unified voice. The group is involved in a variety of campaigns, including a domestic violence/sexual assault program, a pesticide/worker sanitation program, a HIV/AIDS training and education program, and an economic development program. Other programs deal with issues such as breast cancer, housing, child care, and sexual harassment in the workplace. There are also programs to specifically emphasize indigenous women from Mexico.

Proyecto Campesino/Farm Labor Program

American Friends Service Committee

Pacific Mountain Regional Office

111 NW Third Ave.

Visalia, CA 93291

Contact: Pablo Espinoza, director

Voice/Fax: (209) 733-2360

Works with migrant and resident farm laborers in the Central Valley region of California. Projects include: union organizing drives; literacy instruction; information and referrals on labor, health, and legal issues; assisting in labor complaints; sexual harassment; environmental racism; and a radio program that provides information to tens of thousands of farmworkers.

RAPAM

Amado Nervo 22,

Col. San Juanito

56101 Texcoco, Edo. de Mex.

México

Contact: Fernando Bejarano

Voice/Fax: (59) 54-77-44

Email: rapam@laneta.apc.org

RAPAM is the Mexican-member contact of the U.S.-based Pesticide Action Network.

Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural

110 Maryland Ave. NE, Suite 101

Washington DC, 20002

Contact: Lorette Picciano

Voice: (202) 544-9611

Fax: (202) 544-9613

Email: ruralco@aol.com

Website: <http://www2.cibola.net/~sinfront/rcpage.html>

An alliance of over 90 groups in the U.S. and Mexico who collaborate to advance social justice and sustainable development in rural areas. The group aims to mobilize small farmers, farmworkers, and organizations in response to recent guest-worker legislation. Other work includes seeking federal action to provide equitable resources to minority and Indian farmers and just conditions for farmworkers, ending discrimination in USDA services, attending congressional hearings, meeting with USDA officials, organizing listening sessions across the country with USDA officials, and monitoring USDA actions.

Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC)

2125 19th Street, Suite 203

Sacramento, CA 95818

Voice: (916) 447-2854

Fax: (916) 447-2878

Email: wfrench@rcac.org

Website: <http://www.rcac.org/index.htm>

Provides technical assistance and training to community-based organizations, growers, and rural government agencies for the purpose of creating and maintaining farmworker housing stock in 10 states. RCAC provides services to over 80 organizations that own, manage, and develop farmworker housing and has participated in a number of regional and national conferences on housing development, management, and financing.

Sin Fronteras/Unión de Trabajadores Agrícolas Fronterizas

210 E. Ninth St.

El Paso, TX 79901

Contact: Carlos Marentes, director

Voice: (915) 532-0921

Fax: (915) 532-4822

Email: sinfront@cibola.net

Website: <http://www.farmworkers.org>

Provides information and resources on occupational health and safety to migrant farmworkers in the El Paso/Ciudad Juárez area and runs a farmworker center that offers various social services, such as education and union organizing.

Texas Migrant Interstate Program

Drawer Y

Pharr, TX 78577

Contact: Jorge Solís or Tomás Yañez

Voice: (956) 702-6047 or 1-800-292-7006

Fax: (956) 702-6058

This government program coordinates migrant education in Texas and Midwest states and publishes a directory of Texas education agencies with migrant programs.

Texas Rural Legal Aid, Inc.

1200 North Mesa

El Paso, TX 79902

Contact: Francisco Domínguez

Voice: (915) 544-4421

Provides legal services primarily to chile and onion farmworkers from West Texas and New Mexico and to landscaping, nursery, and meatpacking workers recruited in El Paso but working elsewhere. Legal issues addressed include breach of contract, failure to disclose, housing and transportation violations, and job and wage discrimination.

United Farmworkers of America-AFL/CIO

Box 62

Keene, CA 93531

Voice: (805) 822-5571

Fax: (805) 822-6103

Email: UFWofamer@aol.com

Website: <http://www.ufw.org>

The UFW is the main farmworker organization in the United States. It is currently leading the strawberry workers campaign. UFW's website has listings on a variety of UFW campaigns, as well as action alerts, news articles, UFW publications, and information about other farmworker related organizations.

University of California Agricultural Health and Safety Center at Davis

ITEH Building, Old Davis Road

University of California

Davis, CA 95616-8757

Contact: Dr. Marc Schenker, Director

Voice: (530) 752-5253

Fax: (530) 752-5044

Email: agcenter@agcenter.ucdavis.edu

Website: <http://agcenter.ucdavis.edu>

Provides leadership in addressing a broad spectrum of health and safety issues concerning the agricultural workplace. Currently working on safety problems among California farmers, hazard and risk detection, pesticide use and exposure, and agricultural injury and illness. The center's outreach and training programs address issues of culturally sensitive educational materials for agricultural workers; suggest behavioral modifications that pertain to safe work practices and improve the work lives of farmers and farmworkers; promote collaboration between community nonprofit groups, farmworker clinics, insurers, and state agriculture and health agencies in order to improve means of preventing agricultural illness and injury; provide information concerning employee rights and responsibilities and safety and labor standards enforcement; develop cooperative relationships between government agencies and employee representative organizations; and develop medical education materials for primary health care providers relating to agricultural skin disease, respiratory disease, and injuries.

Vocational Rehabilitation Service Projects Program for Migratory Agricultural and Seasonal Farmworkers with Disabilities

U.S. Department of Education
Switzer Building, Room 3411
330 C St. SW
Washington, DC 20202-2740
Contact: Mary Winkler-Chambers, program manager
Voice: (202) 205-8435
Website: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/RSA/PGMS/vrs.html>

Western Farmworker Stream Network

Northwestern Regional Primary Care Network (NWRPCA)
4154 California Ave. SW
Seattle, WA 98116-4102
Contact: Marcia Miller, executive director NWRPCA
Voice: (206) 932-2133
Fax: (206) 932-6441
Email: mmmiller@nwrpca.org

This network of care providers aims to expand access to primary health care and to develop a region-based system to meet the needs of western farmworkers. The Pesticide Training Project coordinates safety training certification to reduce farmworker pesticide exposure. Its Profiles Project aims to develop resource, demographic, and housing information for each state in the western migrant farmworker stream.

Internet Resources

Agricultural Ergonomics Research Center at UC Davis

<http://www.engr.ucdavis.edu/~ergo/>
Provides information about the center's mission and projects, and links to other ergonomics and agricultural safety sites.

César E. Chávez Institute for Public Policy

<http://thecity.sfsu.edu/~ccipp>
Provides funds for research that applies to social, economic, political, cultural, and educational projects with a direct bearing on Chicanos and Latinos.

Coordinator of Agricultural Labor Affairs - USDA

<http://www.usda.gov/oce/oce/labor-affairs/affairs.htm>
Coordinates USDA policy on agricultural labor and communicates with other government agencies. Topics include immigration, the H-2A program, pesticide use, and employment.

Economic Research Service - USDA

<http://www.econ.ag.gov>
ERS functions include research, situation and outlook analysis, staff analysis, and developing economic and statistical indicators in commercial agriculture, food and other consumer economics, natural resources and the environment, rural economy, and energy.

EPA Pesticide Program

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides>
EPA's Worker Protection Standard (WPS) is intended to reduce the risk of pesticide poisonings and injuries among agricultural workers exposed to pesticide residues. This website has pesticide worker safety information in both English and Spanish, along with links to other programs and recent legislation.

Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC)

<http://www.iupui.edu/it/floc>
Serves migrant workers in Texas, Florida, and the Midwest. Provides information on union organizing, occupational health and safety, social services, human rights, and pesticide use.

Farm Safety for Children

<http://www.cococo.net/~underdown/>
Offers information on protecting child farmworkers. Topics include safety signs and apparel; tractor and farm machinery; animal, chemical, fire, and plant safety; and first aid.

Michigan State University Extension JSRI Migrant Labor Database

<http://www.msue.msu.edu/msue/imp/modml/masterml.html>
This site lists hundreds of article citations regarding migrant labor but does not provide the text of the articles.

Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act

<http://www.usda.gov/oce/oce/labor-affairs/mspasumm.htm>

National Agricultural Safety Database (NASD)

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nasd/nasdhome.html>
Database of materials (in both English and Spanish) devoted to increased safety, health, and injury prevention in agriculture.

National Clearinghouse on Guestworker Legislation, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation

<http://www.crlaf.org/gworkers.htm>

Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA)

<http://www.panna.org/panna>
PANNA has campaigned to replace pesticides with ecologically sound alternatives since 1982.

Section 402 of the Job Training Partnership Act

<http://www.wdsc.org/msfw>
Section 402 of the Job Training Partnership Act aims to assist migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families achieve economic self-sufficiency through a network of program sponsors who deliver job training and developmental assistance.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Resources on Farmworkers and Colonias

<http://www.hud.gov/migrant.html>
Lists and links to a wide variety of resources for individuals and organizations interested in farmworker housing.

U.S. Education Department's Office of Migrant Education Programs (MEP)

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/MEP>
MEP helps children of migratory farmworkers meet the same academic content and performance standards expected of all children. The website lists current campaigns, a calendar of events, MEP publications, educational grants, and state-by-state information on national migrant education programs.

Publications

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Judith LeBlanc Flores, *Children of La Frontera: Binational Efforts to Serve Mexican Migrant Students* (Charleston, WV: 1996).

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Lynda Diane Mull, "Broken Covenant: The Future of Migrant Farmworker Children and Families in the United States," *Protecting Children*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1996.

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Juan Vicente Palermo, *Immigrant and Migrant Farmworkers in the Santa Maria Valley, California* (Santa Barbara, CA: Chicano/Latino Working Poor Project, Center for Chicano Studies, University of California at Santa Barbara, 1997).

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Texas Migrant Education Program Directory (Pharr, TX: Texas Education Agency, Division of Migrant Education, 1997).

Marjorie S. Zatz, "Using and Abusing Mexican Farmworkers: The Bracero Program and the INS," *Law and Society Review*, vol. 27, no. 4, 1993.

For Your Information

Document Available: 1st NAO Han Young Report. Contact U.S. NAO, Department of Labor - OSHA, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room C-4327, Washington, DC, (202) 501-6653. A second report on failure to enforce health and safety regulations at the plant is due out later this summer.

Document Available: The National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice released a new report, "Cross Border Blues," detailing conditions uncovered in factories now producing for Guess in Tehuacan, Mexico. Contact: National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice by fax at (773) 381-3345 or by email at nicwj@igc.org

Document Available: On Tuesday, July 7, Texas State Comptroller John Sharp released a report on Texas' borderlands. "Bordering the Future" (Publication #96-599) includes data on the economy, transportation, housing, health, environment, crime, immigration, and governance, as well as recommendations for making improvements in these areas. Contact 1-800-531-5441, extension 3-4900. The report is also available electronically on the State Comptroller's internet site at <http://www.window.state.tx.us>

Document Available: The North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation has just published "Ecological Regions of North America: Toward a Common Frontier," a series of full-color maps, descriptions, and case studies for understanding North America's wide variety of ecosystems. This publication is now available on the internet at <http://www.cec.org/english/resources/publications/> under the "Environmental Conservation" section. This publication is available in three languages. For more information or to obtain a copy of this publication, please email info@ccemtl.org

Upcoming Conference: The fifth annual U.S.-Mexico Border Energy Forum will take place in the city of Chihuahua, Mexico, November 16-17, 1998. The goal of the conference is to convene leaders from industry, government, educational institutions, and environmental organizations to address the vital issues of energy and the environment as they affect the U.S.-Mexico border. For more information, contact Soll Sussman at (512) 463-5039 at the Texas General Land Office. Registration deadline is November 2, 1998.

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