



Cartoon by David Hinesy. Reprinted courtesy of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

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Who Are Colorado's Farmworkers

Field Sanitation: The majority of employers are still not in full compliance with OSHA regulations requiring toilets, drinking water, and washing water in the fields.

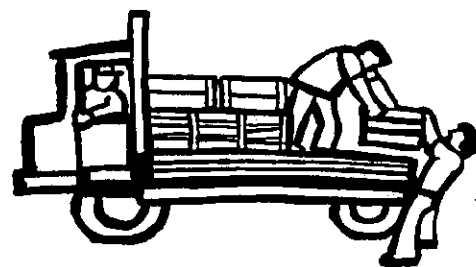
Occupational health: Farmworkers continue to have the highest work-related injury and mortality rates of any occupation in the U.S.

Barriers to health care are considerable:

Poverty, language, lack of trust, cultural and educational differences, lack of transportation, working hours interfere with daytime clinic hours, poor continuity of care due to mobility, rural health resources already at capacity, and prejudice and discrimination.

Compared to other Colorado children, migrant children are:

- about twice as likely to have abnormal hearing (result of untreated ear infection)
- more than 10 times as likely to be infected with tuberculosis.



Dental disease rampant: 19% of randomly-selected migrant adults screened needed extractions the day of the exam.

Housing is grossly inadequate, and the problem is worsening. Lack of housing makes it increasingly difficult for families to come to Colorado.

(Additional information is available from Colorado Migrant Health Program, 4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, Denver, CO 80222, 303/692-2430)





WHO ARE COLORADO'S FARMWORKERS?

Approximately 21,000 migrant farmworkers (actively migrating or recently settled-out), 29,000 seasonal farmworkers (no longer migrate)

97% Hispanic, 2% Native American, 1% White

Home Base of Migrant Farmworkers: 67% from Mexico, 21% from Texas, 11% other states, 1% other countries

Most come as family units, 27% are 'solo males' who do not bring their families to Colorado

Education: Average number of grades completed: 6

Language: 33% speak English, 18% speak limited English, and 48% speak Spanish only

Average family income: \$6,400/year for migrant farmworkers,
\$8,400/year for seasonal farmworkers
Average of 6 persons per family

99% of families are below the poverty level

Hunger is associated with poverty: the people who feed us often run out of food themselves.

THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO COLORADO'S ECONOMY

We in the U.S. enjoy among the lowest food prices of any country in the developed world.

Total economic activity in Colorado related to labor-intensive agriculture (fruits and vegetables) exceeds one billion dollars each year. Migrant and seasonal farmworkers make this activity possible. Colorado crops include apples, peaches, cherries, onions, melons, potatoes, spinach, lettuce, carrots, tomatoes, broccoli, squash, sugar beets, and many more.

- Cash receipts from Colorado's labor-intensive crops increased by 55% from 1987-1992
- Acreage of Colorado vegetables increased by 29% from 1987 to 1992.

THEIR NEEDS

Environmental Health: The EPA estimates that 300,000 farmworkers suffer acute illnesses and injuries each year from pesticide poisoning.

According to the National Safety Council, the long term safety is unknown for 90% of pesticides currently in use.

