Changes in Farmworker Characteristics

Susan Gabbard, Trish Hernandez, Sarah MacDonald, Daniel Carroll

Farm Labor and the ALRA at 40
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The views presented are those of the speaker and not the Department of Labor
Overview

• Who are California farmworkers and how do they differ from farmworkers in the rest of the U.S.?
  ▪ Their demographics
  ▪ Where they come from
  ▪ Work patterns
  ▪ Farm job characteristics

• How has the population changed over the last two decades?
About the National Agricultural Workers Survey

• National survey of crop workers started in 1989; the only source of reliable information on crop worker demographics.
• Random sample survey of 1,500-3,000 workers annually.
• 56,976 farmworkers interviewed from 1989 to 2012 (19,720 of them were in California).
• Establishment survey – find workers at work.
• Limited regional coverage and no local numbers.
• The data is grouped in two-year intervals to get a large enough sample size for comparisons.
• Three time-periods will be compared: 1989-1990, 1999-2000, and 2011-2012. These time points are referred to as 1990, 2000, and 2012 throughout the talk.
• Some of the findings reported have a larger margin of error due to the smaller sample size and are marked with a superscript “a”.
How Have the Characteristics of the California Farm Labor Force Changed?
California Farm Labor Force Mostly Immigrant

Percent of Workers Who Were Foreign-Born

- 1990: California 93%, Rest of U.S. 51%
- 2000: California 97%, Rest of U.S. 75%
- 2012: California 95%, Rest of U.S. 59%

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
In 1990, California Farmworkers:

- Were work authorized 91%
- Few unauthorized 9%
- Highly migrant 41%
- International migrants 27%
- Had families 83% and lived with them 64%

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
The 1990s Saw an Influx of Newcomers

Labor force changed:

- Younger; average aged declined from 35 to 32 years
- More migrant 51%
- More singles 41%
- Unaccompanied increased from 36% to 63%

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
After 2000 Decline in Newcomers and Indigenous Among California Farmworkers

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey

Percent of California Workers Who Were Newcomers

Percent of California Workers Identified As Indigenous

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
Return of Older Workers with Families

In 2012, California farmworkers were:

• Older; average age 37
• Had families 75%
• Single 25%
• Accompanied by family at the work location 64%
• Women 28%
Fewer California Farmworkers Migrated On An Annual Basis

Percent of California Farmworkers Who Were Migrant

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
International Migrants Crossing the U.S.-Mexico Border to Work in California

Map source: http://travel.state.gov/content/dam/tsg-global/country-maps/mx-map.gif
Sending Regions

Map showing regions in Mexico and their sending regions from 1992 to 2012.

- West Central Mexico
- Pacific South Mexico
- Rest of Mexico
- Central America

Bar charts for 1992, 2000, and 2012 showing the percentage distribution of sending regions.
California Farm Labor Force Now Mostly Unauthorized

Percent of Workers Who Were Unauthorized

1990:
- California: 9%
- Rest of U.S.: 13%

2000:
- California: 63%
- Rest of U.S.: 50%

2012:
- California: 63%
- Rest of U.S.: 41%

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
Increased Educational Attainment Among California Farmworkers, But Less Than Rest of U.S.

Percent of Workers With More Than a 6th Grade Education

- 1990: California - 34%, Rest of U.S. - 62%
- 2000: California - 32%, Rest of U.S. - 49%
- 2012: California - 46%, Rest of U.S. - 64%

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
How Have Their Jobs and Work Patterns Changed?
## California Farmworkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Patterns</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average number of years doing US farm work</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers having one employer in past year</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average hours worked per week</td>
<td>39 hours</td>
<td>46 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of weeks worked in farm work</td>
<td>31.5 weeks</td>
<td>40 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
California Farmworkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compensation</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paid by the piece</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live in employer provided housing</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmworker paid for all or some equipment used at work</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominal wage</td>
<td>$5.58</td>
<td>$9.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
# California Farmworkers

## Health and Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health and Safety</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employer provided clean drinking water every day</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer provided a toilet every day</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer provided water to wash hands every day</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In last 12 months, employer provided training in safe use of pesticides</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey
The End

Contact information:

Susan Gabbard
sgabbard@jbsinternational.com

Daniel Carroll
carroll.daniel.j@dol.gov