



Farmworkers in the Pandemic: Essentially Disposable

August 27, 2020

“It’s ironic that those who till the soil, cultivate and harvest the fruits, vegetables, and other foods that fill your tables with abundance have nothing left for themselves.”

~ Cesar Chavez

- The webinar recording is on Facebook [here](#) as well as on www.pcusa.org/weekofaction, along with this resource sheet.

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Presenters:

Kathia Ramirez is an organizer and Food Justice Coordinator at CATA- Comité de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agrícolas or the Farmworkers Support Committee. She has served the immigrant and farmworker community in Southern NJ, Kennett Square PA and Salisbury MD for the past 41 years. CATA works around Immigration, Worker's Rights and Food Justice. Kathia was born and raised in Aztlan land, Los Angeles CA, but very proud of her Zapotec Indigenous Roots from Oaxaca Mexico. She has been part of the CATA team for 6 years. In her role, she works closely with community members who are interested in bettering our current food system and she manages our community gardens in each state we work in. Kathia represents CATA and our members in Alliances at the national level working in solidarity with social movements and at the global level to advance Food Sovereignty and Agroecology as an alternative to our Food System. Prior to working at CATA, she was pursuing her Bachelor's in Spanish and Latino Studies at Mount Holyoke College in Western MA. She has served as one of the USFSA- US Food Sovereignty Alliance Northeast Region Co-Coordinator since 2017 and on the board of the DFTA- Domestic Fair-Trade Association.

Antonio Tovar is the executive director of the Farmworker Association of Florida (FWAF), a statewide grassroots organization. Before moving to Florida, he was a journalist for United Press International covering Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America. Antonio was born in Mexico City. He studied Rural Development and Community Health at El Colegio de la Frontera Sur in Chiapas, Mexico and Anthropology at the University of Florida. Dr. Tovar's activism started in High School. In the labor movement he has been the Secretary and Treasurer of the Food Chain Workers Alliance (FCWA); he is Board member of Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC), and the Coalition of Agricultural Workers International (CAWI). He coordinates the Climate Justice collective at La Via Campesina North America, and the South Region at the US Food Sovereignty Alliance. Antonio's activism is complemented with his academic work; he has over 30 academic publications on workers' health and safety with multiple academic partners. He is a Fellow at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Interdisciplinary Research Leaders, and Board member of the Community-Campus Partnership for Health (CCPH). Farmworker Association of Florida was previously awarded a grant by Presbyterian Committee on Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Hunger Program.

Erik Nicholson is National Vice President of United Farm Workers (UFW) where he has worked since 2002. The UFW is the largest and oldest US trade union for agricultural workers. He directs the UFW's efforts to develop strategies that improve the lives of farmworkers who produce food for US consumers, wherever these workers may be in the world. He is Chair Emeritus of the Board and one of the founding members of the EFI. All three major US farmworker unions serve on the board. Erik is the Chair of the Board of CIERTO, a UFW created non-profit dedicated to the identification, training and dispatch of agricultural workers in a clean and transparent manner. In addition to this work, Erik directs the UFW's national campaign to address conditions on dairy farms, an industry that has some of the highest injury and fatality rates in the US. Erik's work involved convening a nascent group of national and international retailers, along with dairy producers to develop a multi-stakeholder effort to improve working conditions at dairies across the US. He has overseen a number of regulatory and legislative efforts directed at improving the lives of farmworkers, including leading negotiations in Washington State on a binding set of rules to protect farmworkers from the COVID 19 virus. He participated in the national negotiations of the Farmworker Modernization Act which passed the House of Representatives late last year. Nicholson has a B.A. from Duke University and has been a featured presenter at several national and international conferences concerned with immigration and guest workers.

Moderators:

- **Margaret Mwale** (Presbyterian Committee on Self-Development of People)
- **Andrew Kang Bartlett** (Presbyterian Hunger Program)

Next steps:

● Take action

- [Tell your Senator to support the HEROES Act](#). Please add a line to the letter in these or similar words: I ask you to support Sen. Rubio's proposal to provide stimulus checks to mixed-status households.
- Sign in support of the [FARM Laborers Protection Act](#)
- [Give](#) to One Great Hour of Sharing to support farmworker organizing and advocacy groups.
- New Jersey Actions from CATA. Email Kathia Ramirez for more information. kramirez@cata-farmworkers.org
 - Right to Refuse Bill - A4268 and S2454/A4153
 - Farm Worker Epidemic Health and Safety Act - S2602
 - Income Support for Undocumented Community - S2480 / A4171
 - Emergency Paid Sick Days - S2453/A4209

● Connect with us on social media:

- CATA Farmworker Support Committee: [Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Website](#)
- Farmworkers Association of Florida: [Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Website](#)
 - United Farm Workers: [Facebook](#) / [YouTube](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Website](#)
 - Presbyterian Committee on Self-Development of People: [Facebook](#) / [YouTube](#) / [Website](#)
 - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: [Facebook](#) / [Website](#)
 - Presbyterian Hunger Program: [Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [YouTube](#) / [Website](#)
 - Presbyterian Office of Public Witness: [Facebookx](#) / [Website](#)

● Find Resources:

- [Harvest of Justice 2020](#): Video, Info Sheets, Social Media Toolkit, and a Curriculum for Youth and Young Adults from the [National Farm Worker Ministry](#)
- [PC\(USA\) Office of Immigration Issues](#) has a [Just Immigration](#) network of concerned and active folks. [Sign up to participate](#).

● Learn about the Platform for FOOD & FARM WORKERS

From the National Family Farm Coalition, HEAL Food Alliance and partners; abbreviated platform focusing more on farmworkers; full platform [here](#).

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUARANTEES FOR FOOD WORKERS:

- All employers must be required to provide workers with information on how to protect themselves from the virus and **guarantee safe workplaces** including providing protective equipment, frequent and regular hand-washing breaks, and the required space for “social distancing.
- Allocate funding as needed for language-appropriate information transfer
- Farmworkers must be provided easy access to a sufficient amount of **clean water** at close proximity to the work site and the same health & safety information and **protective equipment** must be given to workers in crowded and substandard employer-provided housing.

INCOME FOR ALL WORKERS:

- Ensure that all workers receive the **supplemental income** they need to survive, **regardless of immigration or employment status** by:
 - Expanding access to unemployment insurance to all workers
 - Setting up lost wage funds that covers **full replacement of wages** for both workers and for employers who pay lost wages

PAID SICK DAYS AND HEALTHCARE FOR ALL:

- Access to **free testing and healthcare coverage** for all workers regardless of immigration status, including H2A and migrant workers.

PROTECTIONS FOR IMMIGRANTS

- Immediate **moratorium on the Public Charge Rule** which would disqualify immigrants who use public assistance from obtaining permanent residency status.
- An immediate **moratorium on all immigration enforcement**, including repatriations and deportations of guest workers and non-status migrants
- An **immediate release of all immigration detainees** from detention centers and detention camps, and adequate health services for all.
- A removal of restrictions on work permits for guest workers and migrant workers who have been laid off or terminated, or who fall ill and need to remain in the country to access health care.

EXPAND FOOD ACCESS

- **Expand, increase, and protect food and nutrition programs like SNAP and Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**, with no discriminatory barriers including testing,

citizenship, or work requirements, and expand healthy and sustainable options within those programs

ENABLE SMALL-SCALE/INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS TO PROVIDE FOOD FOR COMMUNITIES

- Provide financial support for smaller and independent producers to **pay a living wage to farmworkers**

University of Florida/IFAS Farm Labor Supervisor COVID-19 Training

Resources

The following website links will give you further documents for guidance on keeping your workers safe. You will find access to free posters, employer checklists, FAQs, videos and latest updates. You will find some items available in several languages for printing.

Farm Labor Supervisor Training Program Contact Information:

UF/IFAS Farm Labor Supervisor Training Program
Dr. Kimberly L. Morgan, kimorgan@ufl.edu, Economist
Barbara Hyman, hymanb@ufl.edu, Education/Training Specialist III
Phone: (239) 658-3461
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FLSTraining15/>
Website: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/>

1. Center for Disease Control (CDC) –

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-agricultural-workers.html>

2. Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety

(SCCAHS) – has developed an Extension COVID-19 Training Toolkit to provide resources that are meant to help you deliver a COVID-19 training program to agriculture, forestry, and fishery (AFF) supervisors and workers. We recommend that you visit the Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety's [COVID-19 web page](#) regularly for updated information on COVID-19 communication and educational materials and resources related to AFF workers. Please SCROLL

DOWN to the bottom of the web page to see all of the print (PDF) materials and audio/visual resources, as well as links to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), regional departments of health and departments of agriculture, agricultural health and safety organizations, and farmworker advocacy organizations. The Extension COVID-19 Training Toolkit is comprised of the following: PowerPoint slides, PowerPoint presentation as videos, short CDC guideline videos, and print materials. <http://www.sccaahs.org/index.php/covid-19/>

3. **UF/IFAS-** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_covid19

4. **Florida Department of Health** – <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/>

5. **World Health Organization (WHO)-**
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

6. **EPA Approved List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)-**
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>

7. **FDACS “Be SMART Florida Consumer Safety Awareness Campaign -**
<https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/COVID-19-Information/Be-SMART-Florida-Consumer-Safety-Awareness-Campaign>

8. **Florida Office of Insurance Regulation – Workers’ Compensation Insurance**
- <https://www.floir.com/Office/Coronavirus-COVID-19.aspx>

9. **U.S. Department of Labor: Office of Foreign Labor Certification COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions:**

- https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/oflc/pdfs/DOL-OFLC_COVID-19_FAQs_Round%201_03.20.2020.pdf
- https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/oflc/pdfs/DOL-OFLC_COVID-19_FAQs_Round%202_04.01.2020.pdf
- https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/oflc/pdfs/DOL-OFLC_COVID-19_FAQs_Round%203.pdf

10. **OSHA, U.S. Department of Labor** - <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

11. **FFVA urges producers to use COVID-19 contract for farm labor contractors, workers:**

As producers prepare for the coming season, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is encouraging them to ensure that the farm labor contractors with whom they work pledge to implement workplace safety guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

See guidance here:

<http://ffva.informz.net/ffva/data/images/2020%20pdf%20library/COVID-19%20Ag%20Worker%20Safety%20Checklist%20and%20Guidance.pdf>

FDACS issued an addendum to be used with the producer-farm labor contractor contract as well as a training acknowledgement form to be signed by employees.

Download the FLC contract addendum in English here,

<http://ffva.informz.net/ffva/data/images/2020%20pdf%20library/FLC%20Contract%20Addendum%20-%20COVID-19.pdf> and the employee training acknowledgment here.

<http://ffva.informz.net/ffva/data/images/2020%20pdf%20library/Worker%20Training%20Acknowledgement%20Form.pdf>

Spanish versions of the addendum and acknowledgment are here

<http://ffva.informz.net/ffva/data/images/2020%20pdf%20library/FLC%20Contract%20Addendum%20-%20COVID19%20-%20Spanish.pdf> and here.

<http://ffva.informz.net/ffva/data/images/2020%20pdf%20library/Worker%20Training%20Acknowledgement%20Form%20-%20Spanish.pdf>

FFVA strongly urges every grower and FLC to sign the contract addendum and to have workers sign the training acknowledgement. We do not consider this optional. Thank you in advance for doing your part.

12. John Hopkins University of Medicine Coronavirus Resource Center:

https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/covid-19-basics/understanding-covid-19/module-1-virology-coronaviruses-and-covid-19#/lessons/KIFfzW_7D-tsed_kwflV9l6nEdyyPIL

13. These documents apply for Oregon but could be useful:

- <https://oregonfb.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Field-Sanitation-Notice-English.pdf>
- <https://osha.oregon.gov/OSHAPubs/factsheets/fs85.pdf>
- <https://osha.oregon.gov/OSHAPubs/checklists/1876-supplement.pdf>
- <https://osha.oregon.gov/Documents/COVID-19-Emergency-Ag-Rule-Q-A.pdf>

14. [Farmworker Association of Florida Videos Spanish and Creole](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsk591d9PltfJyIKB63s3Pw?view_as=subscriber)

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Farmworker Organizations Supported by PC(USA) One Great Hour of Sharing Ministries

Including alliances with farmworker group members

- Agricultural Justice Project (PHP)
 - Alliance for Fair Food (PHP)
 - Alianza Agrícola (SDOP)
 - CATA – Farmworker Support Committee (PHP)
 - Coalition of Immokalee Workers (PDA, PHP, SDOP)
 - Farmworker Association of Florida (PHP, SDOP)
 - Fellsmere Committee of Farmworkers, Fellsmere, FL (SDOP)
 - Food Chain Workers Alliance (PHP)
 - National Farm Worker Ministry (PHP)
 - Rural and Migrant Ministry (PHP)
 - Student Action with Farmworkers (PHP)
 - US Food Sovereignty Alliance (PHP)
- PHP – Presbyterian Hunger Program
PDA – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
SDOP – Presbyterian Committee on Self-Development of People

Contact Margaret.Mwale@pcusa.org or Andrew.KangBartlett@pcusa.org with questions or comments.