



Farmworker Advocacy Resources

Together with U.S. citizens, immigrant farmworkers help bring food to our tables and provide needed assistance to American farmers. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, these workers have continued to show up day after day to help with the essential work of feeding the nation.

Background

- Approximately 1.2 million undocumented farmworkers live and work in the U.S. Undocumented workers make up as much as [70%](#) of America's total farmworker workforce and contribute significantly both on the farm and outside the farm gate.
- Undocumented farmworkers are important members of our communities. The majority of undocumented farmworkers have been living in the U.S. for [over 10 years](#). Almost 65% of current undocumented farmworkers are parents, and many of their children were born in America and are already U.S. citizens.
- Even when taking into account the vital contributions of the undocumented workforce, the American agriculture industry needs more workers. Farmworker shortages have resulted in rising food prices for consumers and as much as [three billion dollars](#) in missed GDP growth.
- More than [40%](#) of farmers are unable to obtain the necessary workers for the production of their main crop. In 2019, farms in Idaho had 1,000 open positions on offer at almost double the state minimum wage. According to state workforce data, just five American workers applied for the positions.
- With a growing labor shortage, farmers have naturally turned to the legal immigration system as a potential solution. But the temporary H-2A agricultural guestworker program has been an increasingly cumbersome, outdated, and expensive process for farmers that cuts into already slim margins.
- The country relies on undocumented farmworkers for its food supply, and the essential, difficult nature of their work means there are no simple fixes. Growers and farmworker advocates, typically opposed, have together made it clear that a legislative solution to legalize undocumented workers and reform the H-2A program is urgently needed.

Advocate for Farmers and Farmworkers

Contacting your member of Congress and/or their staff is one of the most effective ways to share your views on the need to pass a legislative solution for farms and immigrant farmworkers. You

can look up your members of Congress and call them to let them know you support a bipartisan legislative immigration reform to address agricultural workforce needs.

House of Representatives: [Find Your Representative](#)

Senate: [How to Contact U.S. Senators](#)

Resources

[Infographic: Who Are American Farmworkers?](#) provides demographic and population statistics on American farmworkers, 87% of whom are immigrants. It also provides information about undocumented farmworkers and the temporary H-2A agricultural worker visa program.

[The Economic Impact of Undocumented Farmworkers](#) provides information about the contributions of undocumented farmworkers both on the farm and outside the farm gate.

[Immigrant Workers and American Food Production: Five Things to Know](#) provides additional information about immigrant farmworkers, highlighting their essential role during the Covid-19 pandemic and the sharply increasing demand for H-2A workers.

[How We Compromised to Help America's Farms](#) describes how the situation on America's farms has led to agreement from both Democrats and Republicans on the need for a new way forward.

Key Legislation Pending in Congress

In the previous Congress, a group of lawmakers introduced bipartisan legislation which would provide a legislative solution for farms and undocumented farmworkers.

- The [Farm Workforce Modernization Act \(H.R. 5038\)](#) was introduced on November 12, 2019. The bill would provide an earned path to legal status for undocumented farmworkers, reform and modernize the H-2A program, and require all agriculture employers ensure their workers are authorized moving forward. The bill [passed](#) the House of Representatives with bipartisan support on December 11, 2019.