



The Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs  
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The Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP) is the national federation of nonprofit and public agencies that operates job-training programs for America's migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Our member agencies work in various capacities with over 100,000 migrant and seasonal farmworkers each year. The federally-funded job training programs they operate require that applicants show proof of work authorization.

Over the past several years, that requirement has been harder and harder to meet as more of the agricultural workforce is made up of undocumented immigrants. The most recent published data shows at least 53% of farmworkers to be in this status. That means several things: **first**, these workers cannot receive "safety net" services available from federal and state funded sources. **Secondly**, as workers at risk of deportation should they complain to federal or state officials, they have little hope of bargaining for higher wages and for benefits that most of America's workforce receives. **Thirdly and most importantly**, their status jeopardizes their families, since many workers have children who were born here and therefore are American citizens. Farmworkers live in constant fear that they will be suddenly deported while their citizen children become wards of the state. **Fourthly**, the recent upsurge in talk-show raging against immigrants is unleashing a wave of nativism reminiscent of the racism so prevalent before the Civil Rights era of the 1960s.

**AFOP recommends the following strategy to President Obama:**

- ✓ Fully support the AgJOBS bill. This bipartisan legislation (S.1645 and H.R. 3142) was created by a coalition of farmworker advocates, unions and growers that employ farmworkers. It would allow at least 1 million farmworkers who meet certain criteria to obtain temporary residency and earn their way to permanent residency.
- ✓ Enact more realistic immigration quotas for countries that "send" workers to America's fields, farms and orchards. The pitifully low quotas for Mexico, for example, guarantee that there will be a strong push of undocumented people coming here to work in jobs that have low appeal to American workers.
- ✓ Instruct DHS to stop harassing, targeting, and deporting low-wage workers who are not violent criminals.
- ✓ Use the "bully pulpit" of the Presidency to help reverse the cultural toxicity orchestrated by elements of the media these past two years. Surveys show that a majority of Americans actually support the principles of AgJOBS—yet these right-wing media elements and anti-immigration advocacy groups have cowed political leaders who know that solutions are available.

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