

Essential Work, Throw-Away Workers: Stand With Farmworkers



Photo: Arleen Thaler, 2018

Farmworkers are overwhelmingly immigrants and people of color. They often live in poverty and work in unsafe conditions. Their labor feeds us.

There are many ways to stand in solidarity with these essential workers, particularly as they risk their health and lives.

Step up and speak out!

From Rural & Migrant Ministry:

We need to protect New York farmworkers from COVID-19 and support those who have already been impacted. The agricultural workforce is essential to New York's economy and to the security of our food supply, yet farmworkers remain unprotected and vulnerable to both infection and extreme economic hardship resulting from the coronavirus.

For the past two months, urgent pleas by farm laborers and worker advocates alike have been ignored by lawmakers. New York State has failed to establish health and safety regulations or provide clear protocols for how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on farms or in farmworker housing facilities. There are no directives for local health departments on how to handle outbreaks on farms or resources to ensure the availability of quarantine housing for infected workers. Meanwhile, there are more and more reports of COVID-19 infections among farmworkers. This crisis will only worsen as migrant and seasonal workers arrive to New York during in the coming weeks and month, many traveling here internationally on guest worker visas.

Farmworkers are unnecessarily risking their lives in order to feed their families and put food on everyone's table. What's worse, New York has failed to provide desperately needed aid to those who are undocumented, including the majority of our state's farm labor force. When farmworkers lose their jobs—whether due to COVID infection, reduced production, or because they don't have childcare—most are excluded from unemployment benefits or federal assistance. We cannot treat essential workers as expendable. New York needs to do better.

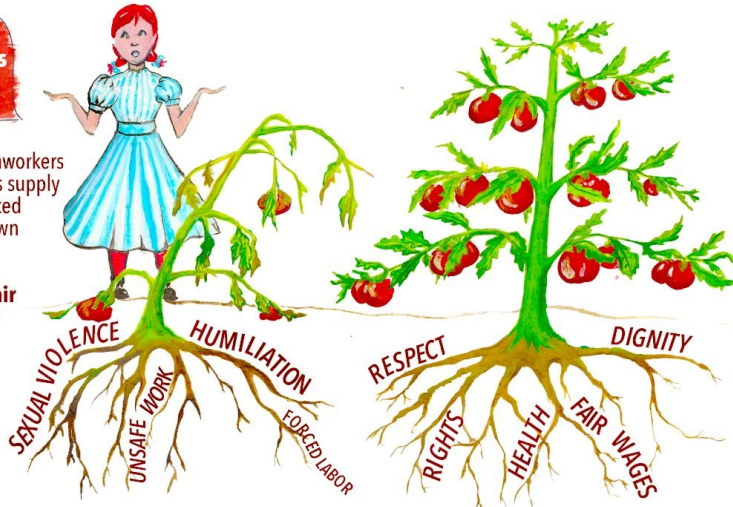
- Call Governor Cuomo at **1-518-474-8390** and tell him that his administration needs to establish protocols to protect the farmworkers. Demand immediate steps to prevent and respond to the spread of COVID-19 among New York farmworkers, financial relief for farmworkers and all undocumented workers, and enforceable health and safety regulations for farmworkers and all essential workers.
- Sign the Worker Justice Center of New York's petition www.change.org/Protect_NY_Farmworkers
- Urge local municipalities that have set up childcare grants, programs and scholarships to make them open to all essential workers in the food chain
- Add farmworkers and food chain workers to your congregation's prayers, give thanks for their contributions and sacrifice and acknowledge that our well-being rests upon their shoulders

Oh no, I don't have any tomatoes for my burgers!

The well-being of farmworkers at the base of Wendy's supply chain cannot be divorced from the company's own well-being.

Wendy's, join the Fair Food Program now!

#BOYCOTTWENDYS



Boycott Wendy's!

Wendy's is the only major fast food restaurant chain that has not yet joined the Fair Food Program. Through this amazingly successful program, buyers pay a penny a pound more for tomatoes and that money goes to improve the farmworkers' wages and working conditions. Learn more at www.boycott-wendys.org and let others know by sharing this short [video](#) on your personal and parish social media.

Together, we can ensure that our community receives the resources it needs.



Learn more at 2020census.gov.

The every-10-year-census count is extremely important. It determines how many state and federal representatives our region will get, and informs the distribution of billions of dollars of federal and state funding.

You can answer the quick census questionnaire at www.my2020census.gov/ or by calling **844-330-2020** or you can fill out the paper copy that was mailed to you.

The Census response rate for New York State is only at 55%. We can and must do better. **YOU can help!**

Do you know: **an elderly person living alone? a family without internet access? a household whose first language isn't English? a busy single mom?**

Please make sure they've filled out the Census questionnaire, and help them access it if they haven't yet. It's easy, quick, safe, and critical. Please help to make the Census count accurate so our region gets all the funding we deserve!

If you haven't already....

**Fill Out The Census!
And Tell Others!**



Support Farmworkers on Strike for Safer Working Conditions

Farmworkers from fruit-packing warehouses in Yakima County, Washington have gone on strike to protest the dangerous conditions in their workplaces and to demand greater transparency over COVID-19 cases at these facilities, hazard pay, and freedom from retaliation by their employers.

The Covid-19 rate in Yakima County is terribly high— over 3,500 cases out of a population of 250,000. Packing house employees work close together and fear for their health and lives.

Please stand in solidarity by **calling the fruit companies** and asking management to **negotiate in good faith with the workers.**

Matson Fruit Co.
(509) 697-7100

Columbia Reach
(509) 457-8001

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