

A Migrant Farm Workers Activity to Use in your Church:

Create a 32 lb. bucket of "tomatoes" by starting with a 5 gallon bucket. Fill the bucket with 32 lbs. of something – several 5 lb. bags of rice or similar product (rice can be used for the food kits later). You can make "tomatoes" to layer on top (red/green paper balls or foam red/green balls) or use plastic toy tomatoes; the filled bucket can then be used for a visual example. An adult can try to lift it or carry it a short distance.

Or you can use 32 lbs. of potatoes, spaced along the floor. The children can then go down the row picking the potatoes and placing them in the bucket until it is full. An adult can try to lift it or carry it a short distance.



Explain to the group:

Most **Migrant Farm Workers** are paid by the bucket, not by the hour like most jobs. In Florida, Virginia (Eastern Shore) and other places where tomatoes are grown, a tomato picker picks a bucket full (32 lbs.) carries it down the long row, and then hoists it up above his or her head to another worker standing in the truck who dumps it in a bin. The **Migrant Farm Worker** then takes the empty bucket back down the row and picks another bucket full - and so it goes on all day long. Workers pick about 125 buckets a day, which amounts to about \$50.

Migrant Farm Workers are not working just a few hours a day. They work 12 hours a day, 6 days a week during the harvesting season (the crops need to be picked). They pick in the hot sun with little to no shade and even pick in the rain.



Ask the group:

How much do you think you should get paid to pick all the tomatoes or potatoes in this bucket? (Answer .40 - .50 CENTS)

Do you eat fast food? What is your favorite fast food? How much does it cost to eat a meal at McDonalds, Wendy's, Burger King, Taco Bell etc... (Answer \$4-6)

How many buckets would a farmer have to pick to buy a meal at McDonalds? (Answer at least 10)

Migrant Farm workers can pick about 6 buckets an hour. How many hours would a Migrant Farm worker have to work to make enough to buy a meal? (Answer 1 ½ - 2 hours)

Imagine picking all day in 98-100 degree weather in the hot sun? What do you think it would be like to do this work? Do you think you or your parents could do this work? Could you support yourself or your family on the wages? SHARING TIME

Incorporate prayers for Migrant Farmers and the earth into your daily life and remember the work of all who helped make your meals possible.

