

## Who Are Migrant Farm Workers & Seasonal Agriculture Workers?



- ◆ 68% are male
- ◆ 32% are female.

The ethnic background of migrant farm workers & seasonal is approximately:

- ◆ 69% Mexican & Mexican American
- ◆ 6% Central American
- ◆ 1% South American, Caribbean, Asia & Pacific Islands
- ◆ Agricultural workers in the U.S. have an average age of 38.

The breakdown of the primary crops worked are:

- ◆ 37% vegetables
- ◆ 32% fruit & nuts
- ◆ 19% horticulture
- ◆ 10% field crops (hay, grain, or cotton)
- ◆ 3% miscellaneous or multiple crops

In the last several years, an average of five farm worker deaths have occurred each growing season.

Farm workers are paid by the piece 55 - 60 cents per 32 lb. bucket of produce. Very few are paid minimum wage unless the farm they work on is part of the fair food program.

To learn more visit:

[www.nfwm.org](http://www.nfwm.org),  
<https://www.justice4all.org/eastern-shore/>  
[www.fwjustice.org](http://www.fwjustice.org)  
[www.migrantclinician.org](http://www.migrantclinician.org)  
[www.ecmhsp.org](http://www.ecmhsp.org)  
[www.fairfoodprogram.org](http://www.fairfoodprogram.org)  
[www.ciw-online.org/](http://www.ciw-online.org/)



*There are five migrant camps that are licensed and operating currently on the Eastern Shore (not all these camps have children), several families use trailer parks for housing.*

*There are two large tomato packing plants on the Eastern Shore, as well as several packing plants for potatoes, green beans, herbs and other produce.*



### Presbytery of Eastern Virginia

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## Migrant Farm Workers & Seasonal Agriculture Workers They bring food to our table...



### ...but are not invited to the feast

Agriculture is Virginia's largest private industry, 8 million acres of agricultural land account for more than 30% of all the state land. In 2021, the Virginia Department of Health reported over 200 migrant & seasonal labor camps spread out over the entire state of Virginia

Every year thousands of migrant and seasonal farm workers arrive on the Eastern Shore of Virginia increasing the spring and summer population. These workers arrive to do the essential labor of growing and harvesting food in late April and stay through October. The Eastern Shore is an area that produces the majority of tomatoes, potatoes and other produce that fill grocery store shelves. Workers work long hours: 10-12 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the growing and harvesting season. They are the backbone of our local agricultural economy. Yet they live and work here among us in poverty and isolation. Several families stay through the winter months searching for local odd jobs.

Churches have long had a commitment to ministry with migrant farm workers, agriculture workers and their families seeking to provide ministries and services that address the wide range of special needs experienced by those who are temporarily in our communities to help meet farming's essential seasonal employment needs.

**Updated 4/26/2022.**

Each church group brings specific connections, understanding, strengths and interest to migrant and seasonal workers ministries. While each church group is unique, all are committed to a love of neighbor that in the spirit of Christ welcomes the stranger. By planning and working cooperatively, we learn from each other. We see and better understand; we complement each other's work, and we use our limited resources more effectively all for the benefit of the migrant and seasonal community we seek to serve.



### **Primary Needs May Include**

- \* Adequate housing
- \* Safety
- \* Ability to rise above the poverty level.
- \* Updated child labor protection
- \* Recognition by the community of the value of the migrant farm worker to the area's economy
- \* Medical insurance, reciprocity, or portability of Medicaid
- \* Transportation to appointments
- \* Provision for religious care, formation, & worship
- \* Local "odd jobs"
- \* Expanded head start programs & daycare facilities.
- \* Assistance with medical payments
- \* Greater access to health and community services & nutrition classes
- \* More English-language instruction
- \* Expanded opportunities for skills training & general education.
- \* Access to recreational programs & facilities
- \* Bilingual assistance for farm workers

### **What Can We Do**



### **Pray, Donate, Volunteer & Advocate**

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

Advocate for the "least of these".

The following list of needs offers specific ways in which you can be involved. PEVA's Hunger Action Advocate will be more than happy to arrange for pick up from your church, or you may arrange to drop off donated items to the PEVA office.

**Clothing** – 100% cotton clothing, children clothing (NB-5T spring, summer, and light fall attire), children's shoes, adult jeans, adult short sleeve T-shirts & long sleeve T-shirts, sun visors, baseball caps, bandanas, socks, and adult athletic shoes size 9 & smaller.

**Baby Kits** – Six cloth diapers or size NB to 1 disposable, two shirts, two washcloths, two gowns or sleepers, two diaper pins, one sweater or sweatshirt, two receiving blankets (one can be knitted).

**Household** – Linens such as sheets & blankets, and household cleaners.

**Hygiene Kits** – Put together a gallon zip lock bag containing one toothbrush, one tube of toothpaste (4-7 ounces), one hand towel, one washcloth, one comb, one nail clipper, one bar of soap (bath size, in wrapper), and six Band-aids travel hand sanitizers.

**Food Kits** – Put together a canvas grocery bag containing one of each: 4lb bag of MASECA (Cornmeal) for tortillas and or all-purpose flour for other cooking, 2-5lb bag of dried beans (black and or pinto only), 16-48oz oil for cooking, 2-10lbs bag of enriched long grain rice 12-18oz can of Jalapenos, canned tomato sauce & canned vegetables.

**Monetary Gifts** – Children & adult shoes, over the counter medicines, eyeglasses grocery store or visa gift cards, and children's books (in English & Spanish).

**School Kits**- a school supply bag with just the basics for those starting Kindergarten.

### **Contacts**

#### **East Coast Migrant Head Start Project LaShaundra Weeks**

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#### **Rhonda Strand**

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#### **Dos Santos Food Pantry & Garden – Una Familia Ministry- Tutoring, Ministry of St. James & St. George's Episcopal Churches**

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#### **Catholic Church - St Peter the Apostle, (Onley VA) Eastern Shore Migrant Ministry, Administrator**

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#### **Eastern Shore Migrant Ministry – Ministry of Catholic Charities**

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#### **United Methodist Church –**

[www.easternshoredistrictumc.org](http://www.easternshoredistrictumc.org)  
757-710-8258  
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#### **Legal Aid Justice Center - Manuel Gago**

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