



# National Farm Worker MINISTRY

## ABOUT US

For over fifty years, National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) has been educating, equipping, and mobilizing people of faith and conscience to support farm worker led efforts to improve their living and working conditions.

NFWM supports various farm worker campaigns. These include creating consumer pressure on companies, boycotting, calling on elected politicians, and/or supporting certification programs. Campaigns may be local, regional, national, and even global.

NFWM creates educational, worship, and other faith-based resources for individuals or groups to educate themselves and their communities about the struggles farm workers face for basic justice and human rights.

## CONTACT US

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Learn more about NFWM and explore our resource materials at [nfwm.org](http://nfwm.org).

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## **ISSUES AFFECTING FARM WORKERS**

To feed the country, an estimated two and a half million farm workers labor in fields and on ranches across the United States. They handpick the vast majority of fruit and vegetable crops produced here. Farm workers are the backbone of our \$200 billion agricultural industry. To turn this system around, farm workers are organizing to demand a seat at the table with the people and institutions that have the ability to change their inhumane working and living conditions.

The great paradox of our food system is the very people who work to feed the U.S. struggle to feed their own families. In fact, farm workers have the lowest annual family incomes of any U.S. wage and salary workers. However, these numbers do not tell the whole story of the issues that farm workers face based on their low income. Many farm workers earn an income based on their productivity rate. This discourages taking breaks from the heat to meet a quota. Consequently, farm workers are less likely to be securely paid a minimum wage if they cannot meet the hourly picking rate for specific produce. While this is not an issue on large farms based on protections for minimum wage, many farm workers still work on small farms where this sort of wage theft is not protected.

Most farm workers lack basic labor protections such as workers' compensation, health insurance, and disability insurance. Farm workers remain excluded from the federal protections of the National Labor Relations Act from 1935, which forbids employers from firing a worker for joining, organizing, or supporting a labor union. Unions neutralize the power imbalance between workers and growers, thus empowering workers to stand up and speak out about the injustices affecting them.

Learn more about farm workers at [nfwm.org](http://nfwm.org).