



July 2024 - summer edition

Farmworker Justice

Honoring the people who harvest the fields

Message from the CEO

For our nation's farmworkers summer brings scorching temperatures that make working conditions unsafe and often dangerous.

We live in unprecedented political times, underscoring the importance of regulations that protect farmworkers from heat stress and wildfire smoke, as well as prohibitions against the transport of farmworkers without seatbelts. As such, we were glad to see our recommendations included in "Improving Protections For Workers in Temporary Agricultural Employment in the United States," and look forward to continuing working with the DOL in this effort.

Farmworker families hit by tragedy cannot bear the associated costs nor continue to afford the basics, including food and housing. Our Farmworker Relief Fund will focus on raising awareness of the challenges faced by farmworkers along with proceeds to support families during difficult times.

We continue to be grateful to our generous donors and partners whose support has helped us grow. We recently welcomed Lori Johnson as the new Director of Legal/Senior Staff Attorney which will allow us to expand our ability to seek justice for farmworkers. For more information on how you can support FJ, go to www.farmworkerjustice.org.

Onward!

Ronald "Ron" Estrada
CEO
Farmworker Justice



"We remain thankful to our partners, funders and friends for their support. Working together we can continue our efforts to ensure farmworkers and their families are treated with the dignity they deserve."

**Ron Estrada
CEO
Farmworker Justice**



FJ Publications

In May and June, FJ published several publications under its National Training and Technical Assistance Partner cooperative agreement with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Issue Brief: Farmworkers and HIV - This issue brief provides an overview of current AIDS policy, barriers to screening and testing, and best practices to support HIV testing and treatment in farmworker communities.

Sexual Violence in Agricultural Communities: A Guide for Clinicians - This guide, co-created with Migrant Clinicians Network, provides information on policy and strategies for health care providers to support farmworker survivors of sexual violence. It is available in English and Spanish.

Serving Farmworker Patients Who Speak Indigenous Languages - This fact sheet is for health care providers to ensure the provision of linguistically appropriate services to Indigenous-speaking farmworkers. Co-created with Rural Women's Health Project and Language Access Florida, the fact sheet highlights recommendations for providers directly from Indigenous farmworkers. It is available in English and Spanish.





Creating Safer Workplaces for Women

Farmworker Justice's Creating Safer Workplaces for Women: Sembrando Respeto, Cosechando Dignidad concluded in the spring, successfully reaching and/or exceeding all deliverables. Cumulatively the numbers were impressive: 27, 927 women were reached over the course of the project! Social media views were robust, yielding a total of 29, 289 impressions; 31, 355 copies of informational materials were distributed; and a large number of women (1681) were referred to ancillary services for assistance accessing legal help, childcare, food, Medicaid, etc. Partners shared that this project was instrumental in their communities, providing the opportunity to bring a much-needed topic to the forefront of discussion. FJ has reapplied for funding to continue these important efforts.



Wildfire Preparedness

Farmworker Justice recently began implementation of a three-year project funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to increase knowledge among agricultural workers and their families concerning wildfire emergency preparedness and to link them to emergency alerts and resources. Last month, FJ kicked off the first iteration of a social media campaign on wildfire preparedness to amplify preparedness information during the summer wildfire season. Over the next two years, in collaboration with project partners in Washington state, FJ will pilot a toolkit of resources and develop SMS/text messages to share with farmworkers. Project activities will be informed by a needs assessment to identify gaps in disaster preparedness and risk communication in farmworker communities in Washington state.





H5N1 Update

As of June 24, 2024, the avian flu (H5N1) has been detected in 118 dairy herds across 12 states with three known cases among dairy workers, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Throughout the outbreak, FJ has been in communication with national and federal partners to ensure that advocates and workers have the information they need. As a member of the Farmworker Health Network, FJ participates in calls with federal agencies, including the Health Resources and Services Administration, CDC, and USDA. We also are supporting farmworker organizations, including the Migrant Clinicians Network and National Center for Farmworker Health, to share mitigation practices and strategies to enhance dairy worker protections and outreach. As we gather surveillance on the scope of the outbreak, we will continue to connect with partners on the ground to track developments and provide any support.



Litigation

We continue to support farmworkers through impact litigation in partnership with legal services organizations across the country. See below our most recent cases:

Hanekom v. Kuchenbecker

A federal judge in Iowa denied Golden Opportunities International's motion to dismiss Carel Hanekom's case, a South African worker on an H-2A visa. Represented by Iowa Legal Aid and Farmworker Justice, Hanekom alleges RICO violations due to underpayment. The court found that Hanekom's job classification was fraudulently misrepresented, leading to lower wages and implicating Golden Opportunities in the scheme.





Litigation (continued)

Colorado Livestock Association v. Polis

The Colorado Livestock Association (CLA) appealed a lower court decision on June 26, seeking declaratory and injunctive relief. Representing an anonymous worker, Colorado Legal Services, Farmworker Justice, and Farmstand argue the lower court's decision was prejudicial, aiming for a favorable outcome in the appeals court.

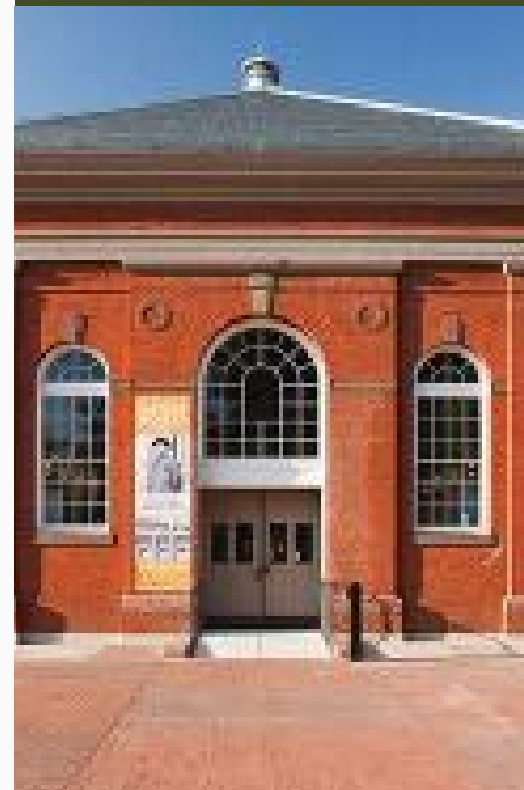
Stay tuned for updates on these legal cases impacting farmworker rights.

Save the Date...

Farmworker Justice will host its **24th Annual Legacy Awards** on September 25th, 2024 at 12:00 noon at the historic, North Hall at Eastern Market.

This year's Legacy Awards Luncheon will bestow Amy K. Liebman, Migrant Clinicians Network, with the Shelley Davis Humanitarian Award which recognizes those who have made notable contributions to the farmworker community. And, the Corporate Responsibility Award will be presented to AT&T Corporate for their efforts to advance positive change for farmworkers and their families. Additional awardees to be confirmed.

The luncheon will also celebrate farmworkers for their work ensuring our food supply and way of life.



**Farmworker Justice's
24th Annual
Legacy Awards**

**September 25th, 2024
12:00 Noon**

**North Hall
at Eastern Market**

FJ Welcomes Lori Johnson

We are excited to welcome Lori Johnson as our new Legal Director/Senior Attorney.

Previously, Lori was with Legal Aid of North Carolina's statewide Farmworker Unit (FWU), where she became Managing Attorney in 2015, and provided high quality representation of farmworkers on employment, health, and immigration-related matters.

From bringing litigation to end a devastating employee blacklist to assisting survivors of human trafficking, she represented farmworkers in many federal and state court cases and administrative claims. Lori also engaged in and prioritized a community education program for farmworkers. She had been with Legal Aid of North Carolina and its predecessors since 1997 and is licensed to practice in North Carolina.

A native of Wisconsin, Lori received her BA in International Relations from the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and her JD from Northeastern University School of Law in Boston, Massachusetts.



“For over 40 years, farmworker legal aid organizations and advocates around the country have looked to FJ for information, resources, and as a trusted partner. I am delighted to join FJ and use my decades of litigation experience to lead the organization’s legal team. Together, we will continue to work on behalf of farmworkers and their families”

- Lori J. Johnson, Legal Director/Senior Attorney, Farmworker Justice

Make sure to visit our website to learn more about Farmworker Justice and our various resources for farmworkers, advocates and elected officials.

www.farmworkerjustice.org