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Partial support for 2007 printing and distribution by the Duke Endowment.

Cover design by Archetype
Printed by Grassroots Press

Cartoon page 7, reprinted with permission, David Horsey, Seattle Post-Intelligencer
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All artwork of fruit and vegetables by Sr. Gen Cassani, SSND

Dedicated to the memory of Sister Evelyn Mattern, who began the process of creating this curriculum but never got to see its final version. Her faith and activism have inspired many.

*"Unless action arises from spirit, it's empty. And if spirit claims all the territory and never gets its hands dirty in the marketplace, it too is empty."
—Sister Evelyn Mattern*

To order additional copies, call the NC Council of Churches, 919-828-6501

First printing 2004
Second printing 2007

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For a comprehensive source of downloadable resources and announcements from a variety of farmworker advocacy and service groups throughout North Carolina, visit the Farmworker Institute website, www.ncfarmworkers.org.

Introduction

“Jesus’ life and words are a challenge at the same time that they are Good News. They are a challenge to those of us who are poor and oppressed. By his life, he is calling us to give ourselves to others, to sacrifice for those who suffer, to share our lives with our brothers and sisters who are also oppressed. He is calling us to ‘hunger and thirst after justice’ in the same way that we hunger and thirst after food and water: that is, by putting our yearning into practice.”

—Cesar Chavez, Co-founder, United Farm Workers

Thank you for using the farmworker curriculum developed by the North Carolina Council of Churches Farmworker Ministry Committee and the National Farm Worker Ministry. The curriculum was written with the help of many individuals for churches to examine and reflect on farmworker issues in North Carolina in a biblical context. It is our hope that through the use of this curriculum, your congregation will lift up farmworkers and become a part of the North Carolina movement to improve the living and working conditions of those who harvest our crops.

Intended Use

The curriculum is intended for use with adult and high school worship groups, Sunday schools or Bible studies. There are seven class sessions, each approximately 45-60 minutes long, offered in the curriculum. The sessions focus on the following: Food: A Sacred Exchange; God Has No Borders; Labor in God’s Harvest; Health and Wholeness; Community and Culture; Family and Children; and Faith in Action on Behalf of Our Brothers and Sisters. We hope that your group will use all seven sessions; however the curriculum is designed so that a group can use Sessions 1 and 7 and as many in between as desired. Please note that Session 6 (Family and Children) may be appropriate for younger groups.

Curriculum Organization

Each session is organized into a *Leader’s Instructions* page, a *Handout* (to be copied and passed out to the participants) and a *Learning Activity* page, which can also be passed out to the participants unless otherwise instructed. All participants should also get a copy of the *Farmworker Organizations* page, the *Resources* page, and the *Glossary*, providing definitions of commonly used farmworker-related terms. These are found at the end of the curriculum.

Members of the Farmworker Ministry Committee may be available for leading sessions or for training groups on how to lead sessions. Contact the NC Council of Churches at (919) 828-6501 for inquiries about speakers, copies of the curriculum, or for more information.

The curriculum is online at www.ncfarmworkers.org, www.nfwm.org/curriculum.shtml and www.nccouncilofchurches.org in the Resources section. At these sites, you can find additional resources and tools for use during class sessions.

Leader’s Instructions Page

Each session has a *Leader’s Instructions* page as a guide for conducting the session. The leader will need to review this page in advance of each scheduled session, as there is always some preparation to be done prior to class time. Time parameters are suggested for each segment. You may need to adjust segments to your particular class time limits.

Session Organization

Each session contains: a Theme, Opening and Closing Prayers, Farmworkers' Reality, Biblical Reflection, Learning Activity, Suggested Follow-up Actions and a Learn More section. Some notes follow below:

- ◇ *Learning Activity:* Each session contains an activity to be done with the participants during the class session. Directions are found in the Leader's Instructions. The Learning Activity page will usually be passed out to the participants. Additional resources for Learning Activities (such as photos and articles) can be found at www.ncfarmworkers.org.
- ◇ *Follow-up Actions:* These are organized into three categories: Reflect, Serve, and Advocate and Act, based on the concept that in ministry, in addition to prayer and reflection, we must walk on two feet: the foot of mercy and the foot of justice. We recognize that it is not probable that individuals within your group will engage in more than one or two actions per week. This will especially be the case for organizing the group into a joint or on-going action. However, one of the aims of this curriculum is to lead people of faith to "walk on two feet" and so we feel it is important that the leader encourage participants to commit to actions based on what they are learning and experiencing in the group.

Providing participants with suggested follow-up actions and discussing which are feasible for them have the value of encouraging action. We urge you to take the time each week to do this and to encourage participants to choose activities from various categories. As the weeks progress, your group may want to take some time at the end of a session to organize themselves for group action.

- ◇ *Learn More:* Articles, book chapters, videos and websites related to the session's theme are referred to at the end of the lesson. The facilitator may want to identify the readings ahead of time and provide copies for participants to read prior to meeting. Alternately, participants can be encouraged to seek out the materials on their own for additional information. Some of the resources listed in the Learn More section can be found at www.ncfarmworkers.org. Many of the resources can be borrowed from the libraries of Student Action with Farmworkers and the National Farm Worker Ministry. At the end of the curriculum, there is a more complete listing of resources with further information on farmworkers. In nearly every session, *The Human Cost of Food*, edited by Melinda Wiggins and Charles Thompson, is listed as a resource. If the facilitator or the participants would like to order this book, contact Student Action with Farmworkers at (919) 660-3652.

We hope you and your congregation will continue your involvement with farmworkers beyond the use of this curriculum. The last session, "Faith in Action on Behalf of Our Brothers and Sisters" provides some ideas of how to stay involved. At the end of the curriculum, there is a list of resource organizations you can contact for more information. May your prayerful journey through this curriculum bring you closer to God's love for all people.

"We can choose to use our lives for others to bring about a better and more just world for our children. People who make that choice will know hardship and sacrifice. But if you give yourself totally to the non-violent struggle for peace and justice you also find that people give you their hearts and you will never go hungry and never be alone. And in giving of yourself, you will discover a whole new life full of meaning and love." —Cesar Chavez



Session One

Leader's Instructions

FOOD: A SACRED EXCHANGE

Suggestions: If possible, use this lesson in the context of a meal (simple foods like beans and rice would be best). If time or place does not allow for a meal, offer some healthy snacks or fruit picked by a farmworker.

Step 1: Theme and Prayer (5 min.)

Read the theme aloud and then ask a volunteer to read the opening prayer from the handout.

Theme: *Food is basic to life, and those who provide it enable us to live. Sharing food, the means to life and livelihood, is what a community does. Breaking bread implies that those of us who receive the food pledge ourselves to justice for those who provide it.*

Step 2: Farmworkers' Reality (10 min.)

Read the facts aloud from the handout and briefly discuss with the group what was surprising about these facts and what the group already knew or didn't know about farmworkers.

Step 3: Biblical Reflection (15 min.)

Read Luke 11:2-4 and discuss the following:

Why do you think Jesus included in the Lord's Prayer the phrase requesting daily bread?

Read Matthew 26:26 and discuss the following:

What is the significance that Jesus' last meeting with his community was in the setting of a meal?

Read Isaiah 58:6-7 and discuss the following:

What are our responsibilities to those who provide our food and yet may not have enough to eat for themselves and their families?

Step 4: Learning Activity (15 min.)

Materials: food for meal; copies of dialogue for all; optional: photos of farmworkers to hold up during the reading of the dialogue. You can download sample photos from www.nfwm.org.

Process: Using the food available during the lesson, whether a meal or snacks, have participants solemnly feed each other, actually placing food in each others' mouths. The intention is to perform this intimate act feeling the dependence that we have on each other.

Afterwards, pass around the Learning Activity page and have five volunteers read aloud the words of North Carolina farmworkers.

After the reading, let the group sit in silence for a few minutes to think about the workers' stories. Have participants briefly share their feelings about what they heard.

Step 5: Follow-up and Prayer (5 min.)

Read aloud the suggested follow-up actions from the handout and ask which of the suggestions are most feasible for the group to do during the following week. Encourage participants to commit to at least one action as an individual and consider engaging in some actions as a group.

Close with the following prayer or with a prayer offered by one of the participants.

Closing Prayer

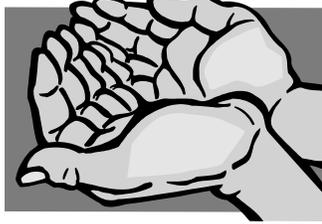
God, our Creator, help us to feel in our hearts and bodies our deep connection with those who touch our food as it is grown and prepared. May we treat our food as a sacred gift from them and from you. Amen.



Session One Handout

FOOD: A SACRED EXCHANGE

Theme: Food is basic to life, and those who provide it enable us to live. Sharing food, the means to life and livelihood, is what a community does. Breaking bread implies that those of us who receive the food pledge ourselves to justice for those who provide it.



Opening Prayer

*My plate, empty now, will soon be filled with precious food. In this food, I see the presence of the entire universe supporting my existence. Many beings are struggling for food today. I pray that they all may have enough to eat. Amen.*¹

Farmworkers' Reality

- Each year, two to three million farmworkers and their families labor in United States' fields.² Seventy-five percent of these workers are Mexican.³
- Eighty-five percent of US fruit and vegetable crops are still harvested by hand.⁴
- North Americans spend a smaller percentage of expenditures (13%) on food as compared to other industrialized nations (Britain: 18%, Japan: 20%, France: 20%).⁵
- North Carolina's major hand-harvested crops include tobacco, Christmas trees, sweet potatoes, cucumbers, apples, bell peppers & nursery products.⁶
- In North Carolina, there are an estimated 150,000 migrant farmworkers and dependents during the growing season, 94% percent of whom are Latino.^{7,8}
- Most major US labor laws (such as those governing minimum wage, overtime, workers' compensation and protection when joining unions) are different for farmworkers or exclude them altogether.
- A study conducted in a five-county area in central North Carolina found that due to low wages, nearly half of NC farmworker households cannot adequately feed themselves and their families.⁸

Biblical Reflection

Luke 11:2-4, Matthew 26:26, Isaiah 58:6-7

Suggested Follow-up Actions

Reflect and Serve

- For a week, as part of table grace, reflect on all the foods farmworkers have helped bring to your table.
- For one day, eat no food that a farmworker had a hand in producing (e.g. eliminate fresh, frozen and canned produce).
- Fast for a meal or a day; donate the money you save to a farmworker organization.
- Glean on local farms through the Society of St. Andrew and donate the food to farmworker families or a food bank (www.endhunger.org).

"We depend on other creatures and survive by their deaths... when we do this knowingly, lovingly, skillfully, reverently, it is a sacrament; when we do it ignorantly, greedily, clumsily, destructively, it is a desecration."

Advocate and Act

- Learn about the work of a food policy organization, such as Bread for the World (www.bread.org) or a farmworker organization www.nfwm.org.
- Support living wage laws in your community so low-wage workers can afford to feed their families.

Learn More (See full citation on Resources page.)

- Read *Food and Faith*, edited by Michael Schut.

"Every time we sit at a table to enjoy the fruits and grain and vegetables from our good earth, remember that they come from the work of men and women and children who have been exploited for generations."

**—Cesar Chavez, Co-founder,
United Farmworkers of America**

1. From Thich Nhat Hahn. 2. Report of the Commission on Agricultural Workers, 1992. 3. National Agricultural Workers Survey, US Department of Labor, 2000. 4. Olivieri, VJ. US Dept of Ag., 1993. 5. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Agrifood Trade Service, from Country Profiles (<http://atn-riac.ag-ca>). 6. Ward, L. East Coast Analysis of NAWS, 1998; 7. NC Dept. of Ag. and Consumer Services, 2004; 8. NC Employment Security Commission, 2005; 9. Early, J. Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, 2006.

Session One Learning Activity: Food: A Sacred Exchange

Copy and pass around to group.

Note: Worker quotes are words of actual farmworkers in North Carolina documented by Sister Evelyn Mattern in the 1990's, except Worker 4, documented by Daniel Rothenberg, found on page 313 of *With These Hands* (see full citation in Resources page).

Worker 1: We are only shoulders here, wanted because we do the work no one else wants to do.

Worker 2: The other day that we were at Mass, I couldn't feel my face because it was cracked and that comes from the fertilizers. The fertilizer is alive. It is alive. It is alive in the soil! You pick it up and you start with this rash. Then it starts penetrating...

Worker 1: We are only shoulders here, wanted because we do the work no one else wants to do.

Worker 3: We were all shaking because it was so hot, almost dehydrated. You know what I did? I left them.... It was less than an hour before finishing, and I thought for \$6 I am not going to die here. I'm leaving. In the field, there were no shade trees. It is just a ditch full of weeds, but that's where I stayed, and it didn't matter if there were snakes or thorns. It didn't matter... All I wanted was shade.

Worker 1: We are only shoulders here, wanted because we do the work no one else wants to do.

Worker 4: You know, the Americans don't really like us. They only want us to go to the US and work, like animals. The Mexicans go there to suffer doing hard work, while the Americans stay out of the fields. In the time I worked in the United States, I never saw an American in the fields. You never see them out picking. They hire Mexican supervisors to work their own countrymen to death. They're real tyrants. You can't even stop because they're always yelling, "Faster, faster. You're getting paid to work, not to stand around."

Worker 1: We are only shoulders here, wanted because we do the work no one else wants to do.

Reader: Our food, which nourishes our bodies, hasn't yet been totally reduced to technological process. Some would have us forget where food comes from. They seem to believe it is a product of biology labs and machines, with a heavy sprinkling of fertilizers thrown in for good measure. Food nevertheless, at its most nourishing, remains a product of the wholly and holy cycle of nature: seed placed in earth, blessed by rain, harvested and cooked by human hands (and shoulders) as a meal for the body—and the body is community.



Gen Cassani



Session Two

Leader's Instructions

GOD HAS NO BORDERS

Step 1: Theme and Prayer (5 min.)

Read the theme aloud and then ask a volunteer to read the opening prayer on the handout.

Theme: *Human law, not God's law, creates borders and boundaries. As Christians, we look for ways to overcome these human barriers and divisions between peoples by showing hospitality and mercy towards strangers. Seeing God in them, we are "entertaining angels."*



Step 2: Farmworkers' Reality (10 min)

Read the facts aloud from the handout and briefly discuss with the group what was surprising about these facts and what the group already knew or didn't know about farmworkers.

Step 3: Biblical Reflection (15 min.)

Read Luke 10:29-37 and John 4:2-9 and discuss the following:

In Biblical times, Samaritans were shunned, looked down upon and regarded as outsiders—or unwelcome insiders. How are farmworkers today like Samaritans? What are some of the sentiments or actions that might make them feel unappreciated or like outsiders?

Read Hebrews 13:2 and discuss the following:

Why is it important for Christians to welcome and support immigrants?

Step 4: Learning Activity (15 min.)

Materials: One copy of each of the stories on the Learning Activity page. If possible, have pictures that graphically express what's being read and have two volunteers hold them up during the reading. You can find photographs on the curriculum website.

Process: Ask two volunteers to read the border crossing stories to the whole group. Pick volunteers who are good, animated readers, or divide the reading up for two readers per story. *Let the group know that these are real individuals who were working in North Carolina's fields in 2002.*

Afterwards, ask the group the following:

How did hearing these stories make you feel?

Does putting a human face on immigration issues change your perception of immigrants?

Can you imagine being so desperate to take care of your family that you would risk death?

Step 5: Follow-up and Prayer (5 min.)

Read aloud the suggested follow-up actions from the handout and ask which of the suggestions are most feasible for the group to do during the following week. Encourage participants to commit to at least one action as an individual and consider engaging in some actions as a group.

Close with the following prayer or with a prayer offered by one of the participants.

Closing Prayer

Dear God, we thank you for the opportunity we have had today to meditate upon your favor for the Samaritans among us. We pray that we may learn to show mercy, justice, and love towards all those who we, as a country, neither welcome nor accept into our borders. And we pray for your help in tearing down the borders and fences we have built around our own hearts, that we may learn to love and welcome each of your children as members of one body. Amen.

Session Two Handout

GOD HAS NO BORDERS

Theme: Human law, not God’s law, creates borders and boundaries. As Christians, we look for ways to overcome these human barriers and divisions between peoples by showing hospitality and mercy towards strangers. Seeing God in them, we are “entertaining angels.”

Opening Prayer

God of us all, who brought Jesus into the world a refugee, we pray for your blessings on those who are strangers in a strange land, forced to leave the homes they love because of poverty and injustice. We pray that you protect and keep them on their journeys. We pray for those who would persecute your pilgrims. Open all our hearts so that we might see and welcome Christ in all, neighbors and strangers alike. Amen.

Farmworkers’ Reality

- Pervasive poverty and joblessness in Mexico and Latin America force thousands of farmworkers to cross to “the other side” to work in the US, both legally and without proper documentation. At least 53% of farmworkers are undocumented.¹
- Border crossing is very dangerous and expensive—*coyotes* (border smugglers) often charge thousands of dollars to assist willing migrants. They cross walking, swimming, crawling through tunnels, in the trunks of cars or backs of vans. Since 1994, more than 2500 migrants have died in the Southwestern US desert.² Many more are detained by the US Border Patrol and sent back to Mexico.
- Policies such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have contributed to much of the poverty faced by communities in Mexico. As part of NAFTA, the US demanded an end to Mexican farm subsidies, while large-scale US farmers continue to receive disproportionately large subsidies. Since NAFTA took effect,

“There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.”

—Exodus 12:49

US corn and grain has flooded the Mexican market, bankrupting nearly two million Mexican farmers.³

“We didn’t cross the border. The border crossed us.”

- About 85% of the Mexican rural labor force has gone from being poor, but getting by, to watching their children go hungry.⁴ Many decide to seek work in the US rather than watch their children starve.
- There is a common misperception that immigrants are a drain on taxpayers. In fact, each farmworker in North Carolina contributes over \$12,000 in profits to the agricultural industry, but few have health insurance or workers’ compensation.^{5,6}

Biblical Reflection

Luke 10:29-37, John 4:2-9, and Hebrews 13:2

Suggested Follow-up Actions

Reflect and Serve

- Think about ways you might be more welcoming of the strangers in our midst, such as learning Spanish or participating in local Mexican cultural traditions.
- In your everyday interactions with others, examine the borders that your own heart creates.
- Join a group in your church or community that reaches out to Latinos.
- Support a local group that works on immigration issues.

Advocate and Act

- Write letters to Congress supporting legalization for undocumented immigrants. Visit www.nfwm.org for current legislative updates.
- Invite immigrant groups to speak to your church about local issues.

Learn More (See full citation on Resources page.)

- Read *Shadowed Lives: Undocumented Immigrants in American Society* by Leo Chavez.
- Read *Mexican Lives* by Judith Adler Hellman.
- Visit website: www.pbs.org/pov/borders.

1. National Agricultural Workers Survey, US Department of Labor, 2005. 2. Centro Comunitario de Atencion Migrante y Necesitado in Altar, Sonora, Mexico, 2003. 3. Rothberg, D. 1998; 4. Ibid. 5. Sutter, S. NC State University, 1998; 6. National Agricultural Workers Survey, US Dept of Labor, 2005.

Session Two Learning Activity: Borders *Copy, cut and pass out to volunteer readers.*

Jaime¹ (“Hi-may”): [My] experience began Saturday, May 20 of the year 2000. It was the second time that we tried to cross into the American dream. The person who was going to take us across the border from Mexico to the United States was a lady named Alma who hid us in the trunk of a compact car, which was very uncomfortable. She told us not to move for anything, and if immigration caught us to tell them that we had all three bought the car together. I was wearing three pairs of pants and four shirts underneath my jacket because they would not let us take suitcases, and the heat was suffocating. I remember that first I got into the trunk and then my brother. We were both situated in the same position, with my face against his back. It felt a little bit difficult to breathe, but when the car began to move I could breathe better, but not very well. Soon, when we were in Tucson—what bad luck—a narcotics patroller stopped Alma and took her out of the car.

That was when my nightmare began. They closed the car completely with us still lying in it. I couldn’t find any air; I tried to find a pocket of oxygen somewhere, but my brother told me, “Don’t move! Don’t push me; you’re hurting me!” But the sensation of asphyxiation was unbearable. I don’t know how long I was in that torturous situation when soon everything started to go dark. I lost feeling in my body and something incredible happened—moments from my life began to fly by like in a movie. It is very strange to begin to die like that.

Then my brother yelled, saying that immigration had tried to open the trunk, but could not, so they broke the back seats. Thus I began to feel air again, a lot of air. I could not move so they pulled me out by the hands and left me lying against the car until I could talk and see. I thanked them and they put me in a patrol car where Alma already was. They gave me a lot of water and the immigration officer turned the air conditioning on high.

This is part of what one has to go through to achieve the American dream.

Juan¹: In my life I have known many stories of people fighting daily in order to move ahead in search of opportunities to survive and fulfill their needs and those of their families, people like me and others trying to achieve hopes and dreams. To forge a better future with strength, work, and dedication even though it means the tears of an anguished mother facing the painful situation of knowing that her children are far away, watching time pass, praying that she will receive good news from her children.

What I can now tell is only a short part of a long story of my life, in which one day I left my house seeing the tears of my mother and my siblings as they watched me set off for dangerous places in which many lose their lives. These thoughts pushed us forward and led us to a point divided by a deep and wide river.

Upon arriving there, I, my father, and the others had to look to the other side, trying to get to it and on the first try only one made it, but soon returned, and the second time, we tried two at a time, I with my clothes in a bag full of air and my dreams with me. I dived in but only got to the middle of the river when the bag full of air that had supported me broke and the current dragged me and my clothing under, flooding my mouth and lungs and dreams so that I felt desperate, pleading for anyone to help me and one person tried, throwing me a dry log that came to me, and I with even less strength pulled my head out of the water and I could see my father crying with the other people only to then submerge again tired, without strength, with my lungs full of water and in my mind remembering every instant of my life, every moment together with those I care for, sadness, joys, and so many things, so many dreams mixed with so many motivations and those are my motivations. For them, I pray to God and in that moment I remember what he said to me, “*Ayúdate que yo te ayudaré*”—“help yourself so that I might help you”—and with my knees on the rocks at the bottom of the river, I found the strength to propel myself up and taking his hand I reached the surface and swam to the shore where I began a new opportunity to continue forward, live happily with all the beauty God has given me and give him thanks for all of the strength, faith, and family that he has given me, only him, my God.

1. Individuals working in North Carolina interviewed at Episcopal Farmworker Ministry, Newton Grove, NC, Summer 2002.

Session Three

Leader's Instructions

LABOR IN GOD'S HARVEST

Step 1: Theme and Prayer (5 min.)

Read the theme aloud and then ask a volunteer to read the opening prayer on the handout.

***Theme:** Jesus brings “Good News” to the poor and “proclaims release to the captives.” Those who labor to provide our food deserve this good news, too: fair wages, work with dignity, a day of rest.*

Step 2: Farmworkers' Reality (10 min.)

Read the facts aloud from the handout and briefly discuss with the group what was surprising about these facts and what the group already knew or didn't know about farmworkers.

Step 3: Biblical Reflection (15 min.)

Read Isaiah 65:21-23 and discuss:

How would Isaiah's desire that people not labor in vain apply to people who work in the fields of North Carolina?

Read James 5:1-5 and discuss the following:

How is fair treatment of workers part of the Christian message?

Step 4: Learning Activity (15 min.)

Materials: Four copies of the role play (found on Learning Activity page); four giant “name tags” for each part.

Process: Ask for four volunteers from the group; if possible, choose four who are successively taller. Assign the “farmworker” role to the shortest person, then the “grower,” “CEO,” and “consumer” roles to the progressively taller volunteers.

Ask the “Farmworker” to stand in front of the group and read his/her part first. Then the “Grower” stands directly in front of the worker and reads her/his part. “GOODY Brands CEO” stands directly in front of the grower to read her/his part, and the “Consumer” stands directly in front of “CEO” to read. At the end, there will be a line, with the “Consumer” at the front, blocking the view to the rest of the readers.

After the role play, discuss the following:

What happened to the farmworker as everyone else read his or her part?

Do individuals have the responsibility to make purchases that are produced under fair working conditions? How do we determine which products to buy?

How can consumers demand fair treatment for the laborers who pick and pack the food we eat?

Could a farmworker union help to equalize the roles highlighted in the role play? Why or why not?

Step 5: Follow-up and Prayer (5 min.)

Read aloud the suggested follow-up actions from the handout and ask which of the suggestions are most feasible for the group to do during the following week. Encourage participants to commit to at least one action as an individual and consider engaging in some actions as a group.

Close with the following prayer or with a prayer offered by one of the participants.

Closing Prayer

Bless the hands of the people of the earth, the hands that plant the seeds, the hands that bind the harvest. Soften the hands of the oppressor and strengthen the hands of the oppressed. Bless the hands of the workers; bless the hands of those in power above them, that the measure they deal will be tempered with justice and compassion. Amen.

Session Three Handout

LABOR IN GOD'S HARVEST

Theme: Jesus brings “Good News” to the poor and “proclaims release to the captives.” Those who labor to provide our food deserve this good news, too: fair wages, work with dignity, respect.

Opening Prayer

God, help us to understand the way of freedom and power proclaimed by Jesus in the synagogue. May we learn how to live the Christian life that brings good news to the poor and freedom to those held captive by oppressive economic systems. Amen.

Farmworkers' Reality

- At the height of the growing season, farmworkers often work 12-14 hours a day in the hot sun with few breaks, and the average farmworker earns less than \$11,000 a year,¹ which is not enough to feed his/her family.
- Seventy-one percent of every food income dollar goes to corporate food processors, 23% goes to farmers and 6% goes to farmworkers.²
- Increasing farmworkers' wages by 50% would cost the average consumer less than \$3.85 more for fresh produce a year.³
- A union is an association of workers who seek to improve their working conditions. Many things in a farmworker union contract are like personnel policies in an office. They include provisions for breaks, availability of bathrooms and fresh drinking water.
- Farmworker union contracts empower farmworkers themselves to enforce standards rather than rely on overworked, understaffed state agencies.
- Farmers often do not have the resources to improve farmworker wages and housing without a contribution from the corporate food processor that profits the most. In Ohio, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee pioneered effective three-way agreements between growers, workers and processors for a more equitable distribution of profits.
- Farmworkers are specifically excluded from the National Labor Relations Act. Without this legal pro-

tection, farmworkers rely on consumer support and have sometimes resorted to boycotts as a means to gain a voice on the job.

- In September 2004, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee signed a collective bargaining agreement with the NC Growers Association and the Mt. Olive Pickle Company, ending the 5 ½ year boycott of the company. The 8,500 farmworkers covered gained job security, pesticide protections, and a grievance procedure, allowing workers to address problems on the job without fear of retaliation.

Biblical Reflection

*Isaiah 65:21-23,
James 5:1-5*

Suggested Follow-up Actions

Reflect and Serve

- Pray for the resolution of labor conflicts.
- Support farmworker union efforts by joining support committees; contact NFWM for information.
- Hold a fundraiser for a farmworker organization.

Advocate and Act

- Honor farmworker-called boycotts and purchase union label produce, and follow farmworker campaign developments; visit www.nfwm.org.
- Patronize businesses like Mt. Olive Pickle Co. which sign contracts with farmworker groups.

Learn More (See full citation on Resources page.)

- Read Chapter 9 of *The Human Cost of Food* about farmworker organizing.
- Read *Forged Under the Sun: The Life of Maria Elena Lucas* edited by Fran Leeper Buss.
- Read *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers' Movement* edited by Susan Ferriss et al.
- Visit websites of farmworker groups: www.ufw.org, www.floc.com, www.pcun.org, www.ciw-online.org.

“If you dehumanize people, then they lose their self-worth and they won't fight for their rights. The union gives workers self-worth, it gives them faith in their ability to really change their situation.”

*—Dolores Huerta
Co-founder, UFW*

1. National Agricultural Workers Survey, US Department of Labor, 2005. 2. Farmworker Institute factsheet, “Farmworkers' Vital Contribution to North Carolina's Economy,” 2007. 3. North Carolina Farmworker Health Alliance and Student Action with Farmworkers factsheet, “Farmworkers Contribute Significantly to North Carolina's Economy,” 1998.

Session Three Learning Activity: Labor in God's Harvest

Copy and pass around to participating volunteers first. After role-play is completed, pass out to all.

Farmworker:

I am a farmworker from Chiapas, Mexico. I come to North Carolina every year to pick cucumbers, tobacco and sweet potatoes. I don't mind the work, but I earn so little. My wages come to only \$8,000 a year. Also, I had to pay \$1500 to a coyote - or smuggler - to bring me across the border. I'm still paying it off! I work from 5 in the morning 'til sun-down. I live with 12 others in a rundown trailer with only one bathroom and no place to wash our clothes. I would like to go home to Mexico to be with my wife and children, but we really need the money and back home there is no work.

Grower:

I am Mr./Ms. Grower. I provide jobs in my community, though most Americans don't want my jobs. I know these migrants are happy working for me. Some of them complain about the wages I give them, but it's better than what they make back in their home countries. I am proud to sell my produce to big companies like *Tasty Foods Corp.* They support my business and provide me with the seeds to grow and tell me when to plant. Even if I wanted to pay my workers more and provide decent housing, it wouldn't be economically viable unless the corporations paid me a higher price for my produce. I depend on my partnership with them.

Tasty Foods Corp CEO :

I am the CEO of the *Tasty Foods Corp.* We make several very popular food items sold all over the US. In fact, our earnings are in the \$100 millions. To our customers, *Tasty Foods* means quality and value. We are able to keep our cost to the customer low and our profits high because we can negotiate the lowest prices for the produce we buy. We know our partner growers mean well, and we trust that they follow the law when it comes to the farmworkers. Besides, we don't hire the farmworkers and we don't want to interfere with how the growers run their businesses. That's not our responsibility.

Consumer:

Whenever I do my shopping, I look for *Tasty Foods*. My family likes their products and they are so often on sale. Last week, I got another two for one deal. Why shouldn't I buy *Tasty Foods* products?

("Tasty Brands Corp." is symbolic only and does not represent a real corporation.)

Farmworker Success Stories and the Role of Boycotts

First Farmworker Called Boycotts

In the 1960's, Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers of America pioneered the use of consumer boycotts to gain a voice in their work place. During the table grape and lettuce boycotts, farmworkers called on churches and community organizations for support. The boycott spread and resulted in 1966 in the first ever union contract for farmworkers.

Today, all of the workers employed by the largest single strawberry grower in California now work under a UFW contract, as do thousands of other farmworkers in California, Florida, and Washington state.

FLOC Victories

In 1986, the Ohio-based Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) addressed the dilemma described in our learning activity with the first three-way contracts in US labor history, in which companies pay more for the crop they purchase from the farms, resulting in more money for workers and farmers alike. This followed the 8 year boycott of the Campbell Soup Company.

In September 2004, FLOC again negotiated this type of labor agreement with the Mt. Olive Pickle Co. and the North Carolina Growers Assoc., which resulted in more than 8,000 H2A farmworkers becoming the first such guest workers in the U.S. to win union representation. The contract includes improved wages, grievance procedures and safety protections, especially from toxic exposures. This followed a 5 year boycott of the Mt. Olive Pickle Co.

Collective bargaining is an effective way to improve farmworker conditions as it redresses the power imbalance between growers and workers and makes respect, fairness, and dignity the basis for the employment relationship.

Many farmworker victories have come in large part because of consumer boycotts. The purpose of a consumer boycott is to bring non-violent change by holding corporate food processors accountable to the workers from whom they profit.

Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) Victories

CIW began organizing in South Florida tomato fields in the 1990's. Tomato pickers were paid a per-bucket piece rate that had not changed significantly since 1978. CIW asked Taco Bell, one of the major purchasers of Florida tomatoes, to pay one penny more per pound, which growers would then pass on directly to the pickers, doubling the piece rate to workers. Taco Bell refused to talk, and so CIW launched a boycott of Taco Bell in 2001.

Growing consumer support from students, church groups, and community activists resulted in Taco Bell and its parent company YUM Brands signing a contract with CIW in March of 2005, thus ending the boycott. The negotiated settlement includes: the penny per pound increase, a code of conduct, and an agreement to encourage other fast food companies to follow their lead.

Session Four

Leader's Instructions

HEALTH AND WHOLENESS

Step 1: Theme and Prayer (5 min.)

Read the theme aloud and then ask a volunteer to read the opening prayer on the handout.

Theme: *Those who labor to provide us with food to strengthen our bodies have their own bodies, minds and spirits broken by the living and working conditions under which they suffer.*

Step 2: Farmworkers' Reality (10 min.)

Read the facts aloud from the handout and briefly discuss with the group what was surprising about these facts and what the group already knew or didn't know about farmworkers.

Step 3: Biblical Reflection (15 min.)

Read I Corinthians 12:20-26 and discuss:

The Scripture implies that when one is sick, the whole community is sick. Given the suffering in the farmworker community, what does this say about our whole society?

How do we heal ourselves and heal the community when so many are sick?

Jesus ministered to the whole individual—physically, emotionally, spiritually, and socially. As followers of Jesus, how can we be healers?

Step 4: Learning Activity (15 min.)

Note: There is no separate Learning Activity page.

Materials: flip-chart paper and markers

Process: Use the “But why?” method of analysis to identify problems as they relate to farmworkers in general, health issues in particular. The goal is to try to move to a deeper understanding of root causes. Pick one of the health problems already

mentioned in the Farmworkers' Reality section. The leader asks, “But why does this happen?” Write the answers on a large flip chart. Choosing one answer, ask again, “But why?” List those answers and pick one. Continue to ask, “But why?” As more answers come up, try to find the connections between causes and effects.

The process should result in a list of issues that impact each other. There should be a single course of causes/effects, but also branches. Causes include medical, physical, social, economic, political, environmental, and religious situations. The group should discuss some of the causes, possible solutions, and talk about how to address these issues.

EXAMPLE

Health problem: A boy has tetanus.

But why? He stepped on a rusty nail.

But why? He didn't have shoes on; he lives in poor housing conditions.

But why? His family didn't have any money to buy him shoes because of low wages earned as a farmworker.

Buy why? His family had to leave Mexico because there were no jobs available.

But why?...

Step 5: Follow-up and Prayer (5 min.)

Read aloud the suggested follow-up actions from the handout and ask which of the suggestions are most feasible for the group to do during the following week. Encourage participants to commit to at least one action as an individual and consider engaging in some actions as a group.

Close with the following prayer or with a prayer offered by one of the participants.

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, we pray that our brothers and sisters working in the fields may be comforted in their suffering and made whole. When they are afraid, give them courage; when they feel weak, grant them your strength; when they are afflicted, afford them patience; when they are lost, offer them hope; when they are alone, move us to their side; in the name of the Healer, we pray. May we be your agents of healing. Amen.

Session Four Handout

HEALTH AND WHOLENESS

Theme: Those who labor to provide us with food to strengthen our bodies have their own bodies, minds, and spirits broken by the living and working conditions under which they suffer.

Opening Prayer

God of health and wholeness, we pray for those who toil in conditions that result in disease, limiting their ability to be whole. We pray for those who create the conditions and for those who allow the conditions to continue. May farmworkers feel your healing touch on their bodies, minds, and spirits. We pray in the name of Jesus, the great physician and healer. Amen.

Farmworkers' Reality ¹

• Working conditions

Agriculture is one of the most hazardous industries in the United States. Workers labor long days exposed to intense sun and heat. They often work stooped over, which leads to chronic back injuries. Farmworkers are also exposed to pesticides and get skin illnesses, like green tobacco sickness, from exposure to some crops. In addition, there are seldom toilets or handwashing facilities in the fields (as mandated by law); drinking water is often warm and/or dirty. Most farmworkers also suffer because they lack needed breaks, sick leave, workers' compensation, health insurance, and access to health care.

• Housing conditions

Most farmworkers live in overcrowded, substandard housing and may experience lead poisoning, poor plumbing, broken screens, inadequate washing facilities, missing beds or beds with thin, filthy mattresses.

• Lifestyle

Due to frequent travel and the isolation of living in grower-provided housing in rural areas, farmworkers do not have regular access to health care. Other barriers include language, lack of knowledge and information about available services, and complete reliance on crew leaders or growers for transportation. In addition, poverty-level wages can lead to malnutrition.



Biblical Reflection

I Corinthians 12:20-26

Suggested Follow-up Actions

Reflect and Serve

- Consider the implications of our current health care system, in which many do not have health insurance. Find out what is being done in your community to make changes and how you can help.
- Volunteer to translate at a health clinic.
- Transport farmworkers to health clinics.
- Collect first-aid items to distribute in labor camps.

Advocate and Act

- Support better pesticide regulations by writing to your elected officials. (First, talk to a farmworker organization to find out if there are major pesticide issues in your area.)
- Work with farmworker groups to fund training of farmworkers in first aid or other health education.
- Plan actions supporting farmworker unions whose contracts provide some type of health care.

Learn More (See full citation on Resources page.)

- Visit the websites of the Migrant Clinicians Network (migrantclinician.org), the National Center for Farmworker Health (ncfh.org), or the NC Farmworker Health Program (ncfarmworkerhealth.org).
- Read Chapters 6 and 7 of *The Human Cost of Food* on farmworker housing and health.

“[In the US,] farmworkers exhibit the type of health status that one sees in the Third World. We see a lot of infectious diseases because of poor sanitation, poor nutrition, and exposure...Whenever you have a population with poor access to health care, then you have a public health problem.”

—Dr. Ed Zuroweste
Migrant Health Provider, Chambersburg, PA

1. This information comes from the National Center for Farmworker Health website (www.ncfh.org) and the Farmworker Institute factsheet, “United States Farmworker Factsheet” 2007.

Session Five

Leader's Instructions

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Step 1: Theme and Prayer (5 min.)

Read the theme aloud and then ask a volunteer to read the opening prayer on the handout.

Theme: *Farmworkers offer us the richness of their culture and traditions as they seek to form communities in North Carolina and integrate themselves and their families into our communities. We can embrace these new traditions with open arms as well as invite them into our culture.*

Step 2: Farmworkers' Reality (10 min)

Read the facts aloud from the handout and briefly discuss with the group what was surprising about these facts and what the group already knew or didn't know about farmworkers.

Step 3: Biblical Reflection (15 min.)

Read I Corinthians 12:4-11 and discuss:

How are different cultures like diverse spiritual gifts? Why is that diversity important?

Continue on to I Corinthians 12:12-14; 22 and discuss the following:

In what ways are farmworkers indispensable members of our society? What can we do to welcome farmworkers as essential members of our communities?

Step 4: Learning Activity (15 min.)

Materials: copies of Learning Activity page with cultural traditions.

Process: Divide up participants into small groups of three to five. Pass out Learning Activity with examples of farmworker culture. Have groups look at the examples and discuss the following:

1. Read the song "Rifare mi Suerte" (Raffle my Luck). *What songs or types of songs tell a story about your community or about values important to your community?*

2. Read the story "A Man's Promise to the Virgin Mary." *What icons or symbols are important in your faith tradition? How do you pass those values to your children and community?*

3. *How do these readings help you understand cultural traditions of immigrant farmworkers?*

Bring the small groups back together and have one person from each group share some of the things they learned with the full group.

Step 5: Follow-up and Prayer (5 min.)

Read aloud the suggested follow-up actions from the handout and ask which of the suggestions are most feasible for the group to do during the following week. Encourage participants to commit to at least one action as an individual and consider engaging in some actions as a group.

Close with the following prayer or with a prayer offered by one of the participants.

Closing Prayer

O God our Creator, open our eyes to the beauty of cultures and traditions different from our own. Help us to understand that the crafts we create, the songs we sing, the stories we weave are your creations. Guide us on the path towards a day when each person is able to discover her talents and be valued for those gifts. Be with us as we discover the joy of the diversity of your people. Amen.



Session Five Handout

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Theme: Farmworkers offer us the richness of their culture and traditions as they seek to form communities in North Carolina and integrate themselves and their families into our communities. We can embrace these new traditions with open arms as well as invite them into our culture.

Opening Prayer

O God of many cultures and many nations, we thank you for the varied gifts and talents you have bestowed upon us. Help us to recognize the value of ways other than our own, and give us guidance in accepting other traditions into our hearts. We know that in you, we are all one people. Amen.

Farmworkers' Reality

- North Carolina's Latino population is the fastest growing in the nation, increasing by about 400% in the last decade.¹
- Immigrant farmworkers "acculturate" and adopt many US customs. In turn, local communities "transculturates," changing and adopting new traditions.²
- The vast majority of Latino farmworkers are Roman Catholic.
- Religious beliefs and practices are more likely to be passed on through the family than the church, through traditions like *tresañeras* (the introduction of the three-year old to the church), *posadas* at Christmas (reenactment of the Holy family seeking refuge), and praying to the Virgin of Guadalupe.³
- As Latino farmworkers make North Carolina their home, we see increasing numbers of *tiendas* (stores), Mexican restaurants serving authentic food, festivals, *conjuntos* (musical groups), and even *curanderos* (folk healers).
- Farmworkers continue to face severe discrimination based on race, class and national origin.

"Don't criticize me because I live on the other side. I have not lost my roots. I came out of necessity..."

—Lyrics to a song by Los Tigres del Norte

Biblical Reflection

I Corinthians 12:4-11; 12-14; 22

Suggested Follow-up Actions

Reflect

- Attend a mass or other worship service in Spanish to learn more about Latino culture.
- Talk to congregations in your area doing Hispanic ministry and find out how you can support them.
- Invite a family from a different culture to your home to share food and cultural traditions.

Serve

- Support immigrant-owned businesses by shopping at *tiendas*.
- Volunteer at a local Hispanic center.

Advocate and Act

- Write letters to the editor of your local paper denouncing discrimination against immigrants.
- Support bilingual education and other ways that preserve diverse cultures.
- Encourage your local library to purchase bilingual or Spanish language books.

Learn More (See full citation on Resources page.)

- Read Chapter 1 (Culture) in *The Human Cost of Food*.
- Read *Y No Se Le Tragó la Tierra (And the Earth Did Not Devour Him)* by Tomás Rivera.



The Virgin of Guadalupe is an important symbol in Mexican Catholic culture



1. El Pueblo, Inc., www.elpueblo.org. 2. Thompson and Wiggins, *The Human Cost of Food*, University of Austin Press, 2002. 3. Ibid.

Session Five Learning Activity: Culture

Copy and pass out to group.

Raffle my Luck¹ – Rificaré mi Suerte: Humberto Zapata Alvizo, farmworker, Nash County, NC

*Ahora que estoy tan lejos
De la tierra en la que nací
Oh, mis queridos padres
Cuanto han sufrido por mí.*

Now that I'm so far
From the land where I was born
Oh, my beloved parents
How much you have suffered for me.

*Mi pobre vieja madre
Que me dió tantos consejos
Con lágrimas en sus ojos
Me dio su bendición.*

My poor old mother
Who gave me so much advice
With tears in her eyes
She gave me her blessing.

*No llore mas, madre
Esté bien, no sufra
Déjeme rifar mi suerte
Buscando mi fortuna.*

Don't cry any more, mother
Be well, don't suffer
Let me raffle my luck
By seeking my fortune.

*También dejé a mi amor
A quien le prometí regresar
Sé muy bien que me esperará
Estoy seguro que Dios me lo concederá.*

I also left my love
Whom I promised I'd return
I know very well she'll wait for me
Surely God will concede me this.

*Me gustaría ser esos pájaros
Y volar adonde tu estés
Cruzando valles y montañas
Y llegar a donde están los seres que yo
amo.*

I would like to be those birds
And fly to where you are
Crossing valleys and mountains
And get to my loved ones.

*Milagrosa Virgen María
Conoces bien mi sufrimiento
De rodillas, iré a verte
Si me permites regresar a casa.*

Miraculous Virgin Mary
You know my suffering well
On my knees, I'll go to see you
If you let me return home.

A Man's Promise to the Virgin Mary²: Alfonso Damaso, farmworker, Dover, NC

“Although it can be difficult to decide what to bring for a three-year trip to the United States, there is one thing Alfonso Damaso always has with him: his faith in the guiding hands of the Virgin Mary. Alfonso, like many of his family members, is very devoted to the Catholic religion, which shows in the traditions that he follows. He carries many physical objects that symbolize her presence. Along one wall of his room, there is a beautiful altar with many intricate depictions of the Virgin Mary. However, perhaps the most meaningful token is self-made and natural: his hair.

“When Alfonso comes to work in the United States, he makes a promise to the Virgin Mary that he will not cut his hair while he is here. Further, as soon as he returns, he cuts his hair and presents it to the Virgin Mary at his church with the help of his wife. ‘There is a mass and afterwards my wife cuts my hair and I deliver it to the Virgin.’ This is the third time he has kept his promise and, like the other two times, he will complete his journey by crawling the final five or six meters to approach the Virgin Mary on his knees. There are many reasons that he chose his hair as a symbol of his devotion. He says, ‘Jesus Christ had long hair. Juan Diego had long hair. And above all, the Virgin Mary has long hair.’”

1. *Recollections of Home*, Publication of Student Action with Farmworkers, 2000. Humberto Zapata was interviewed by Joe Bagby in 1999. 2. *Cultured Ground*, Publication of Student Action with Farmworkers, 2001. Alfonso Damaso was interviewed by Brian Eichner and Marivel Gomez in 2001.

Session Six

Leader's Instructions

FAMILY AND CHILDREN

Step 1: Theme and Prayer (5 min.)

Read the theme aloud and then ask a volunteer to read the opening prayer on the handout.

Theme: *We take special care to acknowledge and value the children of farmworkers in our local and national community, many of whom work in the fields themselves.*

Step 2: Farmworkers' Reality (10 min.)

Read the facts aloud from the handout and briefly discuss with the group what was surprising about these facts and what the group already knew or didn't know about farmworkers.

Step 3: Biblical Reflection (15 min.)

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-7 and discuss:

What are some of the responsibilities that parents and the community have for children?

In what ways does our current agricultural system put road blocks in the way of meeting these responsibilities?

Most farmworkers are separated from their families for long periods of time. What are some of the ways that separation is hard on children and family life?

Step 4: Learning Activity (15 min.)

Materials: Copies of songs and narrative on Learning Activity page.

Process: Ask volunteers to read each of the three songs and the narrative aloud, and then lead a discussion of the following questions:

What values are evident in the songs? How do the songs incorporate faith, nature and family?

What children's songs do we sing that share values about family and faith?

How do families change when a family member has to leave his/her children to work in another country or migrate with his/her children?

What challenges might young immigrants face that adults do not? How is Seira's story similar or different from that of local teenagers you know?

Step 5: Follow-up and Prayer (5 min.)

Read aloud the suggested follow-up actions from the handout and ask which of the suggestions are most feasible for the group to do during the following week. Encourage participants to commit to at least one action as an individual and consider engaging in some actions as a group.

Close with the following prayer or with a prayer offered by one of the participants.



Closing Prayer

O God, bless your children working in the fields and bless those children who sit in comfort. Give bread to those children who hunger and a hunger for justice to those of us who have bread. Amen.

Session Six Handout FAMILY AND CHILDREN

Theme: We take special care to acknowledge and value the children of farmworkers in our local and national community, many of whom work in the fields themselves.

Opening Prayer:

O God of the harvest, despite the prosperity of this good earth, there are children in our fields, children who work to help their families, children who cannot go to school regularly, children who are exposed to pesticides, children whose parents cannot support them from the wages they earn. Bring a harvest of love into our hearts so that we may work for justice in our world and justice for the children in the fields. Amen.

Farmworkers' Reality

- Forty-five percent of adult immigrant farmworkers are married and have children but leave their families behind while working in the United States. Most live in isolated labor camps provided by employers. About 90% of the families left behind live in Mexico.¹
- There are an estimated 800,000 child farmworkers in the US.²
- The Fair Labor Standards Act sets 12 as the minimum age for farm work, making agriculture the only industry that allows children under the age of 16 to work.³
- By the time a migrant child is 12 years old, he/she may be working in the fields between 16-18 hours per week.⁴
- The average migrant child may attend three different schools in one year. For many migrant children, it takes three years to advance one grade level.⁵
- In 1994, 60% of migrant students dropped out of school (down from 90% in the 1970's).⁶

"We would work as much as was needed. You could work up to 14 or 15 hours a day. But you're not forced to work more than 12 hours; beyond 12 is optional."

**—Frank M., 16
Avondale, AZ**

Biblical Reflection

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

Suggested Follow-up Actions

Reflect

- Investigate educational gaps between white residents of your area and people of color. What is being done to eliminate gaps?
- Find out what a *tresañera* and a *quinceañera* are, and learn how to make a *piñata*.

Serve

- Volunteer at a school that has a migrant education program (or an English as a Second Language site).
- Start a collection in your church of school supplies for migrant students.

Advocate and Act

- Support national legislation like the DREAM Act, granting in-state college tuition to undocumented students (www.nilc.org for more information).
- Organize events in schools and churches to bring attention to migrant children.

Learn More (See full citation on Resources page.)

- Read chapter 8 of *The Human Cost of Food*.
- Read *Fingers to the Bone: US Failure to Protect Child Farmworkers* by Human Rights Watch.



1. National Agricultural Workers Survey, US Dept. of Labor, 2000. 2. Human Rights Watch, *Fingers to the Bone: United States' Failure to Protect Child Farmworkers*, 2000; 3. Fair Labor Standards Act; 4. Migration Education Messages and Outlook (MEMO), 1994; 5. US Dept. of Labor, *Prevailing Wage Surveys (NC)*, 2002; 6. Education Resources Information Center

Session Six Learning Activity: Children

Copy and pass out to group.

Children's Songs ¹

“Las Mañanitas” is the traditional birthday song sung in Mexico.



Las Mañanitas

*Estas son las
mañanitas
Que cantaba el Rey
David
Hoy por ser día de tu
santo
Te las cantamos a ti.
Despierta, mi bien,
despierta,
Mira que ya
amaneció
Ya los pajarillos
cantan
La luna ya se metió.*

Morning Songs

These are the morning songs that were sung by King David. This being the day of your saint (your birthday) we sing them to you. Wake, my friend, wake! It's dawning already; Already the birds are singing; The moon has disappeared.

Los Pollitos

*Los pollitos dicen “pio pio pio.”
Cuando tienen hambre,
cuando tienen frío.
La gallina busca
el maíz y el trigo.
Les da su comida
y les presta abrigo.*

The Baby Chicks

Baby chicks say “pio pio pio.” When they are hungry, when they are cold. The hen looks for corn and wheat. She gives them their food and keeps them warm.



Narrative of a Teenager ²

Seira Reyes came to South Carolina from Mexico with her family in 1997.

“When I found out I was coming to the United States I was very excited, yet confused by not knowing what to expect. I knew this was going to be an interesting trip but I didn't think it was such a big deal since we were only planning to stay for a year. My dad had already been in the US for two years... Actually now that I think about it no one even told me or asked me what I thought. The only way I found out was by overhearing conversations. One day they just said that we were going to the other side and I said, ‘Okay.’ What else could I say?”

“[One] frustrating transition was when I first arrived at my new school. The size of the schools here are humongous compared to the ones in Mexico. Even though I was thirteen, I cried the first day of school. I was also very embarrassed because I was always late for the first couple of days. I had taken English classes in Mexico and knew a lot of grammar, but I had never practiced speaking English or ever really listened to it so I didn't understand anything...I tried really hard, studied a lot, and had to overcome many obstacles.”

1. Documented by Student Action with Farmworkers interns Emily Hall and Maureen McNamara, 2003. 2. “Todo Mi Equipaje/ My Only Luggage,” *NC Crossroads*, Published by NC Humanities Council, May 2003. Seira Reyes was interviewed by SAF interns Samantha Fernandez and Lorena Magaña-Ortiz in 2002.

Session Seven

Leader's Instructions

FAITH IN ACTION ON BEHALF OF OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Note: This session is intended to be done only after the group has completed previous sessions.

Step 1: Theme and Prayer (5 min.)

Read the theme aloud and then ask a volunteer to read the opening prayer on the handout.

Theme: *We can begin to act according to the view that life is a round table, where everyone brings gifts to the meal and leave behind the view that life is a ladder, where some inevitably perch on the higher rungs.*

Step 2: Biblical Reflection (15 min.)

Read Luke 16:19-31 and discuss the following:

In our society, who is the rich man? Who is Lazarus? Does this text require too much of us? Does faith make possible the sacrifices implied?

Read II Timothy 1:7 and discuss:

What is God's challenge to us? How do we live out these gifts?

Step 3: Course Review (15 min.)

To review the course, the leader should guide discussion around the following questions:

- *What has been the most meaningful part of this course for you?*
- *How has this experience affected your understanding of and relationship to farmworkers?*
- *How does what you have learned affect your understanding and relationship to food?*
- *What strikes you as common threads in the lives of farmworkers?*
- *How does what you have learned in this curriculum affect your feelings about agriculture in our state?*
- *What do you think are the most effective ways to empower farmworkers?*

- *Are you willing to make part of your life some consistent practice on behalf of farmworkers?*

Step 4: Planning Ahead: Commitments to the Farmworker Struggle (15 min.)

Materials: flip chart, markers

Process: Briefly discuss what follow-up actions from previous sessions participants have done and what they liked.

Using a flip chart, ask the participants to brainstorm what they would like to do to continue their involvement with farmworkers. If the group has a hard time coming up with ideas, use suggestions on the handout.

1. While the group is brainstorming suggestions, write them on the flip chart for all to see.
2. Then, on another sheet, group the ideas into three categories: Reflection, Service and Advocacy. For example, supporting the farmworker union and supporting legislation would go under Advocacy; making health or school kits would go under Service; planning a worship service under Reflection.
3. Get the group to prioritize which items (at least one in each category) are most important to them.
4. Determine a timeline—what needs to be done by when—and ask individuals to volunteer for each task.
5. Gauge the group's interest and set up another meeting for ongoing support of farmworker issues, if appropriate.

Step 5: Prayer (5 min.)

Close with the following prayer or with a prayer offered by one of the participants.

Closing Prayer

Holy God, we understand that the farmworkers among us are like Lazarus at the gate. For their sake and for ours, may we open the gate now by finding ways to admit farmworkers into our thoughts and into our lives. By welcoming Lazarus may we may be different from the rich man who does not rest with God. This difficult work we ask to do in your name. Amen.

Session Seven Handout FAITH IN ACTION ON BEHALF OF OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Theme: We can begin to act according to the view that life is a round table, where everyone brings gifts to the meal and leave behind the view that life is a ladder, where some inevitably perch on the higher rungs.

Opening Prayer

God, we believe that your reign is present wherever people strive to make it present. Be with us today as we seek for ways to empower those whom we often cannot see and as we discover our own capabilities to reach out in new ways. This we ask in your name. Amen.

Biblical Reflection

Luke 16:19-31, II Timothy 1:7



Walking on two feet: the foot of mercy and the foot of justice

Ideas for Long-term Commitments to the Farmworker Struggle

Reflect

- Incorporate farmworkers into your worship in a regular way, e.g. every Labor Day Sunday invite farmworkers to address the congregation.
- Utilize National Farm Worker Ministry worship, Thanksgiving and Lenten materials found at www.nfwm.org.
- Hold Sunday School sessions or study group series using this curriculum.
- Develop a Farmworker Sunday when prayers, sermon, and materials are focused on food, farmworkers, and the Body of Christ.

Serve

- Plan an annual collection at your church of items

farmworkers need during the summer: gloves, hats, sheets, handkerchiefs.

- Donate your church's offering once or twice a year to a farmworker organization.
- Join the National Farm Worker Ministry's "Project Solidarity" to partner your church with a migrant labor camp to reduce isolation of farmworkers and for cultural exchange.
- Hold fundraisers for a farmworker organization.

Advocate and Act

- Develop a farmworker committee to promote knowledge and support of justice for North Carolina farmworkers within your congregation or denominational network. Contact the National Farm Worker Ministry for assistance.
- Study and support farmworker unions and boycotts in your congregation or committee: United Farm Workers (UFW), Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW).
- Write to your elected officials supporting state and federal legislation favorable to farmworkers. Visit www.nfwm.org for current legislative updates.
- Become a Witness for Justice volunteer through Legal Aid of North Carolina Farmworker Unit (see contact information on next page). This involves visiting labor camps on occasion to help assure that human rights are respected there.

Learn More

- See next pages (p. 24-25) for a list of organizations and resources.



Organizations Supporting Farmworkers in North Carolina

**Farmworker Ministry Committee,
NC Council of Churches**
1307 Glenwood Ave. Ste 156, Raleigh, NC 27605
(919) 828-6501
DLong@nccouncilofchurches.org
www.nccouncilofchurches.org

**National Farm Worker Ministry,
NC Office**
4907 Garrett Rd., Durham, NC 27707
(919) 489-4485
nc@nfw.org
www.nfw.org

Student Action with Farmworkers
1317 W. Pettigrew St., Durham, NC 27705
(919) 660-3616
mwiggin@duke.edu
www.saf-unite.org

Episcopal Farmworker Ministry
PO Box 160, Newton Grove, NC 28366
(910) 567-6917
www.efwm.org

Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC)
PO Box 557, Dudley, NC 28333
(919) 489-4485
www.floc.com

Legal Aid of North Carolina, Farmworker Unit
224 S. Dawson St. / PO Box 26626
Raleigh, NC 27611
(919) 856-2180
MaryleeH@legallaidnc.org

NC Farmworkers' Project
103 E. Main St. / PO Box 352 Benson, NC 27504
(919) 894-7406
Mercedeshp@earthlink.net; ncfwp@earthlink.net

**Eno River Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship, Farmworker Action Team**
4907 Garrett Rd., Durham, NC 27707
(919) 489-4485
daustin@mindspring.com

Triangle Friends of the United Farm Workers
2722 McDowell Street, Durham, NC 27705
(919) 489-2659

NC Farmworker Health Program
Office of Research, Demonstrations and Rural Health Development
2009 Mail Service Rd., Raleigh, NC 27699-2009
(919) 733-2040
Elizabeth.Freeman@ncmail.net

NC Migrant Education Program
2222-C Fayetteville Rd., Asheboro, NC 27205
(336) 318-6097
RTaylor@randolph.k12.nc.us

Websites of national organizations for more information

Advocacy

National Farmworker Ministry www.nfw.org
Student Action with Farmworkers www.saf-unite.org
Assn. of Farmworker Opportunities www.afop.org
Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network www.cmf.org
Farmworker Justice www.fwj.org
Jobs with Justice www.jwj.org
Nat'l Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights www.nnirr.org
National Immigration Forum www.immigrationforum.org
National Immigration Law Center www.nilc.org

Migrant Education

ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education www.ael.org/eric
East Coast Migrant Head Start www.ecmhsp.org
E. Stream Center on Resources & Training www.oneonta.edu
Working Films www.workingfilms.org
("On the Job in North Carolina" and "New Faces:" Educational multimedia curricula about farmworkers and Latinos for NC students)

Health and Housing

Farmworker Health Services www.farmworkerhealth.org
Migrant Clinicians Network www.migrantclinician.org
National Center for Farmworker Health www.ncfh.org

Labor

Farm Labor Organizing Committee www.floc.com
United Farm Workers www.ufw.org
PCUN (Oregon farmworker union) www.pcun.org
Coalition of Immokalee Workers www.ciw-online.org

Farmworker Demographics and Statistics

National Agricultural Workers Survey:
www.dol.gov/asp/programs/agworker/news.htm

Resources to Learn More

Resources in bold are those referred to in this curriculum. Many of these resources are available at the library of Student Action with Farmworkers (919) 660-3652. The NC Farmworker Institute website has resources and information from various farmworker groups throughout North Carolina: www.ncfarmworkers.org. Check here for free, downloadable resources and upcoming events.

Books

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands: La Frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Atkin, S. Beth. 1993. *Voices from the Fields: Children of Migrant Farmworkers Tell Their Stories*. New York: Little, Brown and Co.
- Barger, W. K. and Reza M. Ernesto. 1994. *The Farm Labor Movement in the Midwest: Social Change and Adaptation among Migrant Farmworkers*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Barndt, Deborah, ed. 1999. *Women Working the NAFTA Food Chain: Women, Food and Globalization*. Toronto, Canada: Second Story Press.
- Bus, Ran Leeper, ed. 1993. *Forged Under the Sun: The Life of Maria Elena Lucas*. East Lansing: University of Michigan Press.**
- Chavez, Leo. 1992. *Shadowed Lives: Undocumented Immigrants in American Society*. Ft. Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.**
- Collins, David R. 1996. *Farmworkers' Friend: The Story of Cesar Chavez*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc.
- Ferriss, Susan, Ricardo Sandoval and Diana Hembree, eds. 1998. *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers' Movement*. New York: Harcourt Brace.**
- Hellman, Judith Adler. 1994. *Mexican Lives*. New York: New Press.**
- Hoffman, Pat. 1987. *Ministry of the Dispossessed: Learning from the Farmworker Movement*. Los Angeles: Wallace Press.
- Human Rights Watch. 2000. *Fingers to the Bone: United States Failure to Protect Child Farmworkers*. New York: Human Rights Watch.**
- Krebs, A. V. 1992. *Corporate Reapers: The Book of Agribusiness*. Washington, DC: Essential Books.
- Levy, Jacques. 1975. *Cesar Chavez: Autobiography of La Causa*. New York: Norton.
- Light, Ken. 1998. *To the Promised Land*. New York: Aperture Foundation, Inc.
- Perez, Ramon. 1991. *Diary of an Undocumented Immigrant*. Houston: Arte Publico Press.
- Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN). 1997. *Testimonies from the Fields: Clergy, Community Activists, Students and Members of Labor Unions Report on the Oregon Farmworkers Struggle for Justice*. Portland, Ore.: PCUN.
- Rivera, Tomas. 1987. *Y No Se Lo Trago la Tierra (And the Earth Did Not Devour Him)*. Houston: Arte Publico Press.**

Rothenberg, Daniel. 1998. *With These Hands: The Hidden World of Migrant Farmworkers Today*. Harcourt and Brace.

Schut, Michael, ed. 2002. *Food & Faith: Justice, Joy and Daily Bread*. Denver: Living the Good News.

Smith, Sydney. 1987. *Grapes of Conflict*. Pasadena: Hope Publishing House.

Thompson, Charles D. and Melinda Wiggins. 2002. *The Human Cost of Food: Farmworkers' Lives, Labor and Advocacy*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Videos

- "Alambrista!" 1977. Robert M. Young. Filmhaus.
- "Cesar Chavez: Celebration of Life." 1994. United Farmworkers of America, Inc. (UFW), AFL-CIO.
- "Children of the Harvest." December 1998. NBC *Date-line*. Andy Court and Victor Anrango (producers), Dennis Murphy (reporter).
- "H2 Worker." 1990. Stephanie Black. New York: Icarus Films.
- "Harvest of Shame." 1960. CBS News, with Edward R. Murrow.**
- "Help Wanted: Farmworkers in North Carolina." 2001. Durham, NC: Burning Tree Productions.
- "El Jardin de Eden." ("The Garden of Eden.") 1994. Vanguard Studios.
- "Justice on the Table." 2003. Farmworker Justice Coalition. Eugene, Oregon: Moving Image Productions.
- "Legacy of Shame." 1995. CBS News, with Dan Rather. Fox Video.
- "Listening to Children: A Moral Journey with Robert Coles." 1995. Social Media Productions.
- "Milagritos...Little Miracles: When Communities Create Farmworker Housing." 1998. National Center for Farmworker Health (NCFH). Austin, Texas.
- "El Norte." 1983. Gregory Nava and Anna Thomas. CBS/Fox.
- "Standards of Living." 2005. WRAL, Focal Point.

Farmworker Worship Resources by National Farm Worker Ministry

Packet of Worship Resources includes: prayers, litanies, responsive readings, Farmworker related Scripture listing, and more.

Harvest of Justice Table Prayer Pamphlets, English and Spanish.

Witnesses to the Kingdom: The Beatitudes Embodied.

Glossary

- Border Patrol** – a government agency that controls border crossing between the United States and Mexico. The Border Patrol has become increasingly militarized in the last several years.
- Boycott** – the practice of abstaining from purchasing, using, or dealing with a specific business or organization in order to bring about a change in policy, including wages and working conditions. A boycott is a nonviolent tool to bring about social change through moral and economic pressure.
- Cesar Chavez** – (1927-1993) founder of United Farm Workers along with Dolores Huerta in 1962. The UFW was the nation’s first successful farmworker union. Chavez was an early leader in nonviolent efforts for farmworker rights, often fasting and rallying supporters in the farmworker struggle.
- Collective bargaining** – a tool used by unions to negotiate for fair wages and working conditions with their employers. Workers and their union representatives negotiate with the employer to create an agreement stipulating fair working conditions.
- Coyote** – also known as a “border smuggler,” this individual may charge thousands of dollars to assist undocumented migrants in their dangerous attempts to cross the US border to find work. Coyotes may “sell” workers to a labor contractor to pay off the workers’ debts.
- Crew leader (or labor contractor)** – an intermediary between some farm owners and the farmworkers. The crew leader, many times a former worker, often hires the workers. The farm owner pays the crew leader, who then pays the workers, usually after taking a cut for himself. The crew leader is often the only person on the farm who speaks both Spanish and English.
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)**– initially enacted in 1938, this Act excluded farmworkers entirely until 1978. The FLSA requires a minimum wage only for farms where 10 or more workers are employed. Additionally, the FLSA excludes all farmworkers from receiving overtime pay and establishes the minimum age for farmworkers at 12, whereas in all other industries the minimum age is 16. ¹
- FLOC** – Farm Labor Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO, a labor union founded in 1967 in Ohio by farmworkers seeking better wages and working conditions. FLOC represents thousands of farmworkers in the Midwest and North Carolina. FLOC pioneered the three-way labor agreement between farmworkers, growers and corporate food processors.
- Glean** – a term referring to the “traditional Biblical practice of gathering crops that would otherwise be left in the fields to rot or be plowed under after harvest.” ² By gleaning the fields after harvest, food can be collected and donated to community food banks and other organizations.
- Guestworker** – a farmworker recruited by the US government to come to the US to work for a specified period of time. Guestworkers “cannot apply for Legal Permanent Residency and can only work for the employer who applied for their visa.” ³ (See H2A definition.)
- H2A** – the guestworker program created by the US government to alleviate perceived labor shortages in the agricultural industry. This program brings workers from Latin America and Caribbean countries to work legally in US fields for a specified period of time. The largest user of the H2A program is North Carolina, where the NC Growers Association (NCGA) administers it. Although standards have been set to regulate H2A working conditions, abuse is well documented. In 2004, Legal Aid of North Carolina Farmworker Unit brought a lawsuit against the NCGA alleging racketeering, blacklisting, witness tampering, visa fraud, and violations of monopoly and wage and hour laws. ⁴
- Migrant farmworker** – a person “whose principle employment is seasonal agricultural labor and moves into tem-

porary housing to seek farm work.”⁵ Such workers may be employed by the actual farm owner, by a crew leader, or by an H2A contract. Migrant workers may continue in the migrant stream, traveling from state to state seeking work, or they may go back to their home country after the harvest.

NAFTA – the North American Free Trade Agreement, created in 1992 to reduce trade tariffs between Canada, the United States, and Mexico. As a result, many small Mexican farms have been crippled while large US farms have prospered, receiving disproportionately large government subsidies. The crippling of Mexican farms has led to increasing immigration to the US by individuals seeking work. Recent trade proposals CAFTA and FTAA would extend NAFTA to the rest of the Americas.

Processor – a company, such as Mt. Olive Pickle Company, that produces a consumer food product after receiving the crop from farms. The processor is usually responsible for setting the purchasing price of the crops, and thus has a direct effect on wages and working conditions of farmworkers.

Seasonal farmworker – someone who works in agriculture during the harvest season and who works in other jobs during the off season. Seasonal workers are permanent residents of the community and do not move into temporary housing.

Si se puede – a popular slogan of the UFW attributed to its founder Cesar Chavez as he rallied farmworkers in the seemingly impossible task of changing working conditions. This is typically translated as “Yes, it can be done!,” or “Yes, we can!”

Tri-party agreement – a labor agreement between three parties: in this case, the farmworkers, the farm owners, and the corporate food processors. The tri-party agreement works so as not to apply undue pressure on the farm owners alone, but rather places responsibility for working conditions on the processor as well. This type of agreement was pioneered by FLOC in its agreement with Campbell Soup in the 1980’s.

UFW – United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO. Originally organized in 1962 under the name National Farm Worker Association, the UFW is a union of farmworkers organized by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta in California. The UFW, the largest farmworker union in the country with offices in five states, continues to achieve contracts years after their successful grape and lettuce boycotts.

Undocumented – individuals in the US without legal documents. As of the year 2000, approximately 52% of farmworkers in the US were working without the proper documentation necessary to make them legal residents.⁶ Because of this, many farmworkers fear they will be deported by their employers, and therefore do not complain about poor working conditions.

Union – an association of workers who seek to improve their working conditions and wages through collective bargaining with a given employer. Unions enable workers to receive fair wages, job security, and the enforcement of safe working conditions.

Virgin of Guadalupe – a vision of the Virgin Mary who appeared to a native Aztec man in the 16th century. The shrine in Mexico City which commemorates this vision is a pilgrimage site for Mexican Catholics, and the Virgin’s image has become a central aspect of Catholicism in Mexico and the rest of the world.

Workers’ Compensation – provides medical coverage for employees injured on the job. Despite the fact that farm labor is one of the most dangerous occupations in the country, an overwhelming majority of farmworkers do not receive workers’ compensation. Current NC law requires only those farms employing 10 or more fulltime, non-seasonal (year-round) workers to provide workers’ compensation, which in reality includes only a few farms. Recent attempts to change this law have been unsuccessful.

1. Student Action With Farmworkers factsheet, “Farmworkers in the United States,” 2000. 2. The Society of St. Andrew website, www.endhunger.org. 3. Student Action With Farmworkers factsheet, “Farmworkers in the United States,” 2000. 4. Collins, Kristin, “Workers File Rights Suit,” *Raleigh News and Observer*, 4/21/04. 5. NC Farmworker Health Alliance factsheet, “Facts About North Carolina’s Farmworkers,” 1997. 6. *ibid*.

United Farm Workers Prayer

Written by César Chávez, founder of the UFW (1927-1993)

United Farm Workers Prayer

Show me the suffering of the most miserable, so I may know my people's plight.

Free me to pray for others, for you are present in every person.

Help me to take responsibility for my own life, so that I can be free at last.

Grant me courage to serve others, for in service there is true life.

Give me honesty and patience, so that I can work with other workers.

Bring forth song and celebration, so that the Spirit will be alive among us.

Let the Spirit flourish and grow, so that we will never tire of the struggle.

Let us remember those who have died for justice, for they have given us life.

Help us love even those who hate us, so we can change the world.

Amen.

Oración del Campesino en la Lucha

Enséñame el sufrimiento de los más desafortunados; así conoceré el dolor de mi pueblo.

Líbrame a orar por los demás; porque estás presente en cada persona.

Ayúdame a tomar responsabilidad de mi propia vida; sólo así seré libre al fin.

Concédeme valentía para servir al prójimo; porque en la entrega hay vida verdadera.

Concédeme honradez y paciencia; para que yo pueda trabajar junto con otros trabajadores.

Alúmbranos con el canto y la celebración; para que levanten el Espíritu entre nosotros.

Que el Espíritu florezca y crezca; para que no nos cansemos entre la lucha.

Nos acordamos de los que han caído por la justicia; por que a nosotros han entregado la vida.

Ayúdanos a amar aún a los que nos odian; así podremos cambiar el mundo.

Amen.