

# Guestworkers Share Recruitment Feedback

*EFI Report Highlights 10 Ways to Improve Recruitment*

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, February 14, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Equitable Food Initiative, the workforce development and certification organization that partners with growers, farmworkers, retailers and consumer advocacy groups, recently published findings of an eight-month survey highlighting the challenges Mexican farmworkers face when they are recruited and deployed to work.

As part of the study, more than 1,300 interviews were conducted with 650 guest farmworkers who were recruited for work on fresh produce farms in the United States, Canada and Mexico. The results highlighted concerns around transparency in contracts, physical safety, isolation, high costs related to travel or recruitment, and threats or abuse from employers. In fact, 70% of those surveyed reported that threats of being sent home or not hired again happened frequently.

From these findings EFI has developed a report, 10 Ways to Improve Recruitment of Guest Workers, According to Farmworkers, which can be downloaded on the EFI website at [equitablefood.org/improving-recruitment](https://equitablefood.org/improving-recruitment). The complete report from the study is also available there, in both English and Spanish.

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*Kenton Harmer, Managing Director, EFI*

The most important areas of focus for recruitment and human resource managers include:

- starting with a responsible recruitment process
- developing a clear and accurate flow of information and expectations for guest workers
- creating a positive and supportive community for all workers

One interviewed farmworker stated that “by creating community, life is easier and more pleasant which can ease doubts about work problems and increase my productivity.”



“The reality this survey illuminates is that there are still critical but achievable improvements that can be made to have workers arrive ready to work – and return home safely, having met their financial goals,” said Kenton Harmer, managing director for EFI.

“When 49% of respondents reported that they felt that they were not free to leave the farm, or 25% reported that they had to pay recruitment fees, it

shows the importance every grower should place on working with reputable farm labor contractors and adopting a process of responsible recruitment that eliminates illegal and irresponsible recruitment practices and labor conditions.”



Harmer concluded, “The U.S. has nearly 260,000 H-2A guest workers, of which more than 70% are engaged in labor in the fresh produce industry. With increasing recruitment needs in the face of labor shortages, creating a positive recruitment experience should be a top priority for every company – not just for the bottom line but also for the dignity of every employee.”

The research study was commissioned by EFI and executed by &Wider and CIERTO Global.

#### About EFI

Equitable Food Initiative is a nonprofit certification and skill-building organization that seeks to increase transparency in the food supply chain and improve the lives of farmworkers through a team-based approach to training and continuous improvement practices. EFI brings together growers, farmworkers, retailers and consumers to solve the most pressing issues facing the fresh produce industry. Its unparalleled approach sets standards for labor practices, food safety and pest management while engaging workers at all levels on the farm to produce Responsibly Grown, Farmworker Assured® fruits and vegetables. For more information about Equitable Food Initiative, visit [equitablefood.org](http://equitablefood.org).

View a list of EFI-certified farms at [equitablefood.org/efi-certified-farms](http://equitablefood.org/efi-certified-farms).

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