

EFI-Certified Operations Demonstrate the Business Value of Investing in Farmworker Families

Support Strengthens Workplace Culture and Employee Retention

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, August 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Equitable Food Initiative](#), the workforce development and certification organization that partners with growers, farmworkers, retailers and consumer groups, is highlighting how back-to-school programs that support farmworker families strengthen morale, improve retention and help create workplaces where people are proud to build long-term careers.



Equitable Food Initiative certifies Responsibly Grown, Farmworker Assured fresh produce

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*Alexandra Martinez, Sr.
Marketing and Sales Associate*

For many farmworker families, the start of a new school year brings added expenses and logistical challenges. EFI-certified operations demonstrate that investing in workers and their families is a smart business strategy that builds loyalty, strengthens workplace culture and helps employers retain valued employees in a competitive labor market.

Two EFI-certified operations, Sierra Farms (GoodFarms) and FirstFruits Farms, offer examples of investments that have created meaningful impact.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Sierra Farms’ Stuff the Bus backpack drive and Drive-Thru Food Bank programs. In partnership with local organizations, the company helps provide 185 backpacks and school supplies for the children of employees while also supporting hundreds of families through monthly food distributions.

Operations Manager Juan Montañez says the programs are designed to show workers “something more than just a paycheck” while helping improve employee retention and demonstrating the company's commitment to investing in its people.

At FirstFruits Farms, the [annual Back-to-School celebration](#) brings together employees, their families and the broader community for a day that includes free haircuts, school supplies, educational activities and family fun. Last year's event welcomed approximately 220 participants, including about 90 children. Marketing Manager Emily Cox noted that caring for employees helps create an environment where people are proud to stay and grow with the company, reflected in the number of multi-generational families who continue working at FirstFruits Farms.



Alexandra's headshot

“Back-to-school is a wonderful moment to celebrate the worker families at the center of our industry,” said Alexandra Martinez, senior digital marketing and sales associate for EFI. “When employers invest in their workforce beyond just a paycheck, it creates a culture where employees feel truly valued and cared for. That trust leads to higher engagement, better retention and a stronger, more resilient food supply chain for everyone.”

Programs like back-to-school events show farmworkers they are genuinely supported. Whether through school supply drives, family events or other forms of support, these efforts reflect a simple principle: When companies invest in the well-being of the people who grow food, everyone benefits. Workers feel valued, communities grow stronger, and companies are better positioned to retain experienced employees and continue producing safe, high-quality food.

About EFI

Equitable Food Initiative is a capacity-building and certification nonprofit that works to improve the lives of farmworkers and drive business performance by integrating worker engagement throughout the supply chain. Committed to multistakeholder participation, EFI works with growers, farmworkers, retailers and experts to create assessment, training and organizational development programs that support continuous improvement and address

agriculture's most pressing challenges. For more information about Equitable Food Initiative, visit equitablefood.org.

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