

Who Are California Crop Workers and How Is This Changing?

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This presentation provided information on California crop agriculture from the 2012 Census of Agriculture (CoA), and current patterns and changing trends in the demographic and employment characteristics of California farmworkers from the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS). Crop sales in California totaled 26.5 billion dollars and California farmers spent 8 billion dollars on hired and contract labor. From 1999-2000 to 2013-2014, the California crop labor force became older and more settled. Newcomers to the farm labor force and international migrants crossing the border to do farm work in California declined sharply. By 2014, the majority of workers lived with nuclear family; singles declined by nearly a half and the share with children increased by more than a quarter. Workers were spending more weeks per year in farm work and fewer weeks abroad than they had in 2000, and the share that held non-farm jobs during the previous year increased nearly three-fold. The California crop labor force continued to be made up primarily of Spanish-speakers and workers' average educational attainment remained at fewer than eight years. Females comprised a slightly greater share of the California farm labor force than it did in 2000, with the largest growth being in horticulture. The share of California crop workers with health insurance increased by 64 percent between 1999-2000 and 2013-2014, and the share who visited a U.S. health care provider in the previous two years increased from one-third to over a half.