

Agricultural Business and Workforce System Integration Forums

- ETA leadership convened three forums in Sacramento, Dallas, and Tampa
- Over 200 participants including agricultural employers, National Farmworker Jobs Program (WIA 167) grantees, state and local workforce system staff from WIBs, One-Stops, and state agencies, and other partners in attendance
- Objectives included sharing and applying the demand driven vision for agricultural industry and integrating workforce system's services to achieve universal access for farmworkers

July 11 - 13, 2006

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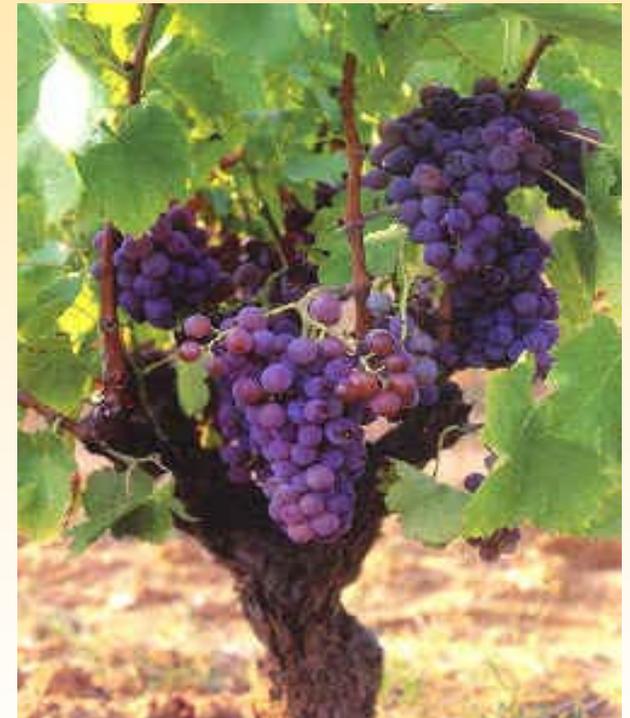


What Agricultural Employers Are Saying

Eleven agricultural employers from 9 states representing 50 to 3000 farmworkers and variety of crops from broccoli to wine grapes

Common Employer Themes Across Forums:

- Waning youth pipeline
- Tight competition for labor
- Price pressures keep wages and benefits low
- Difficulty complying with legal and regulatory requirements



Agricultural Employers Workforce Challenges

- Labor Shortages: Shortage of Skilled, Reliable Workers
- Image Problem of Agriculture
- Workers Leaving Agriculture
- Employers Limited Familiarity with Workforce System
- No Incentive for Workforce System to Serve Agricultural Employers
- Language and Cultural Barriers in Workplace

What Public Workforce System Officials are Saying

Eleven public workforce system officials from 10 states from WIBs and SWAs

Common Workforce System Themes

Across Forums:

- WIBs not focusing on agriculture
- Funding/resource shortages and cuts
- Farmworkers language barriers
- Labor Shortages



Public Workforce System Challenges

- One-Stops and WIBs concerned about serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers b/c of performance measures
- One-Stops lack understanding of agricultural industry and its needs
- Farmworkers feel unwelcome at most One-Stops b/c they lack the English and technology skills needed
- Workforce system does not engage all necessary partners to effectively serve agricultural customers

Strategic Plans

- Examples of Innovation
 - State Web sites
 - Mobile workforce services and classrooms
 - Focus Groups between employers and workers
- Key components:
 - Research and Data Collection
 - Agricultural Employer Engagement
 - Increased Collaboration

Regional Strategies...Global Results



Talent Driving Prosperity

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Conclusions and Recommendations

- Disseminate Existing Examples of Integration
- Collect labor market information
- Use technology as a method for coordinating labor flow
- Develop consumer image and education campaigns
- Create competency models & career ladders
- Explore the potential for waivers
- Bring all partners together on all levels

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