



in our own backyard

THE HIDDEN PROBLEM OF
CHILD FARMWORKERS IN AMERICA
<http://www.ourownbackyard.org>

Part IV: Teacher Resources

Glossary



Glossary

Advocate: To speak or write in favor of; support or urge by argument; recommend publicly; a person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc.

Agriculture: The business or science of cultivating the land, producing crops and raising livestock; farming.

Bill: A form or draft of a proposed statute presented to a legislature, but not yet enacted or passed and made law.

Boycott: A unified effort to change the way a company does business by refusing to buy its products.

Child Labor: Work for children under age 18 that in some way harms or exploits them (physically, mentally, morally, or by blocking children from education).

Children's Act for Responsible Employment (CARE): The CARE bill is a United States bill that strengthens protections for minors working in agriculture and amends other provisions of the federal child labor laws. The bill has not passed Congress yet.

Civil Society: The space existing independently of both government control and the society. It binds people together and across cultural lines of society through associational life. Some organizations of civil society include: The Red Cross, National Rifle Association (NRA), and Boy Scouts of America.

Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor (ILO C 182): ILO Convention 182 calls on states to quickly take immediate and effective measures to outlaw and eliminate the *worst* forms of child labor as a matter of urgency. The "worst forms of child labor" are: slavery and slavery-like practices, including forced labor and forced recruitment for armed conflict; prostitution or pornography; the use of children for illicit activities (drug trafficking); and "hazardous work," which is harmful to a child's health, safety or morals. C 182 has been ratified by 147 countries, including the United States.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): The CRC is an internationally recognized agreement between nations that establishes a comprehensive set of goals for individual nations to achieve on behalf of their children. In general, the Convention calls for: freedom from violence, abuse, hazardous employment, exploitation, abduction or sale; adequate nutrition; free compulsory primary education; adequate health care; equal treatment regardless of gender, race, or cultural background; the right to express opinions and freedom of thought in matters affecting them; safe exposure/access to leisure, play, culture, and art.

The U.S. and Somalia are the only two nations that have NOT ratified the CRC. However, the United States has ratified its two optional protocols: The Optional Protocol on Children in Armed Conflict (OPCA) and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC).

Dehydration: An abnormal loss of water from the body, esp. from illness or physical exertion.

Department of Labor: The United States Department of Labor is a Cabinet department of the United States government responsible for occupational safety, wage and hour standards, unemployment insurance benefits, re-employment services and some economic statistics.

Many U.S. states also have such departments. The department is headed by the United States Secretary of Labor.

Developing Country: A nation having various degrees of economic development and common characteristics, including widespread poverty, high birthrates and dependence on developed countries for aid – e.g. India, Peru, Zimbabwe.

Developed Country: An industrialized nation with common characteristics, including advanced technology, high per capita income – e.g. the United States, Italy, Japan.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): A federal agency created in 1970 to permit coordinated and effective governmental action, for protection of the environment by the systematic abatement and control of pollution, through integration of research monitoring, standard setting, and enforcement activities. The EPA also regulates chemical products such as insecticides and pesticides. The EPA is responsible for ensuring that each product is safe for use for both the consumer and the environment. Before an insecticide may be sold in commerce (through any channel-vet, pet) it must be registered and approved by the EPA.

Exempt: Released from, or not subject to, an obligation, liability, etc.

Exploitation: The unjust or improper treatment of one person by another for profit or advantage.

Exposure: The condition of being exposed without protection to the effects of harsh weather.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA): The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a law signed by Franklin Roosevelt in 1938 that regulates labor practices in the U.S.; The FLSA, enforced by the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor, protects over 80 million Americans, covering all workers who are engaged in or producing goods for interstate commerce or who are employed in certain enterprises. It establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and child labor standards affecting full-time and part-time workers in the private sector and in Federal, State, and local governments.

Fatal: Causing or capable of causing death; mortal; deadly.

Government Accountability Office (GAO): An independent nonpartisan federal agency that acts as the investigative arm of Congress making the executive branch accountable to Congress and the government accountable to citizens of the United States.

Grueling: Extremely difficult or exhausting.

Hazardous: Involving risk or danger.

Hazardous Occupations Orders (HOs): Hazardous occupations orders are the means through which occupations are declared to be particularly hazardous for minors. The FLSA prohibits workers under 18 years of age from performing those nonagricultural occupations that the Secretary of Labor declares to be particularly hazardous for the employment of children under 18 years of age or detrimental to their health or well-being.

Heat Exhaustion: A condition characterized by faintness, rapid pulse, nausea, profuse sweating, cool skin, and collapse, caused by prolonged exposure to heat accompanied by loss of adequate fluid and salt from the body.

Hispanic/Latino: A person of Latin-American or Spanish-speaking descent.

Independent Inspections: A process by which a person who is not employed by a company makes sure that company's factories obey the law and its code of conduct.

Insecticide: A chemical substance used to kill insects.

International Labor Organization: An agency of the United Nations consisting of government, labor union and business representatives dedicated to protecting the rights and interests of all workers around the globe.

Labor Unions: Organizations that protect the interests of workers in a particular industry or occupation.

Legislation: A law or a body of laws enacted.

Living Wage: A wage sufficient to provide the necessities and comforts essential to an acceptable standard of living.

Migrant Worker: A person who travels from one area to another in search of work, especially in harvesting crops. Migrant workers seek temporary or seasonal work in agriculture, fishing or related industries, including food processing. They follow the growing seasons across the country and are largely responsible for the cultivation and harvest of fruits, vegetables and many other food products or are employed in food processing plants. Children with a migrant parent were more likely to work than were children whose parents are settled.

Minimum Age: Under the FLSA, the minimum age for particularly hazardous work in agriculture is age 16, whereas the minimum age for particularly hazardous work in all other sectors of the economy is age 18. However, the age 16 minimum for particularly hazardous jobs in agriculture does not apply on family farms- that is, where a parent employs his or her own child, or a guardian employs a child in his or her custody. In other jobs not considered particularly hazardous, the minimum age for employment in agriculture is 14 years, whereas in every other industry the normal minimum age is 16 years. However, there are three broad exceptions to the age 14 minimum for agriculture, with the result that children as young as 10 years old are permitted to work.

Minimum Wage: A wage below which employers may not legally pay employees for specific kinds of employment.

Motivation, Education, and Training (MET): Motivation Education & Training, Inc. (MET) is a private nonprofit organization funded by a variety of public and private grants and contracts. The organization was founded for the purpose of providing academic and vocational training to migrant and seasonal farm workers, with the objective of furthering economic self-sufficiency for MET participants. While serving farm workers is still the cornerstone of the agency's mission, MET has broadened its scope to include initiatives that target low-income and disadvantaged populations throughout the agency's service area.

Nausea: Sickness at the stomach, esp. when accompanied by a loathing for food and an involuntary impulse to vomit.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH): NIOSH is the federal agency in the United States responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related injury and illness. NIOSH is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the Department of Health and Human Services.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA): A Federal agency within the US Department of Labor that is responsible for setting standards to promote and enforce employee safety in the workplace.

Pesticide Poisoning: Disturbance of function, damage to structure, or illness in humans resulting from the inhalation, absorption, ingestion of, or contact with any pesticide. Immediate signs of acute poisoning include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, wheezing, rashes, headaches, and dizziness. Long-term consequences may include childhood leukemia, kidney tumors, brain tumors, brain damage, and learning and memory problems. Children are disproportionately exposed to pesticides compared with adults due to their greater intake of food, water, and air per unit of body weight.

Pesticides: Chemicals used in agriculture to enhance plant growth and protect against pests. They can cause harm to people who work without protection on farms where they are used.

Petition: A formal written request asking for change, which may be signed by supporters who agree with the request.

Piece Rate: Payment for production based on the number of units processed, rather than the number of hours used. Children whose parents are paid a piece rate are more likely to work in the fields than are children whose parents are paid by the hour.

Poverty: Lacking sufficient essential resources for survival such as food, shelter and clothing.

Seasonal: Pertaining to, dependent on, or accompanying the seasons of the year or some particular season; periodical.

Sector (Economic Sector): A distinct part, especially of society or of a nation's economy.

Toil: To work long and hard.

Toxic: Capable of causing injury or death, especially by chemical means; poisonous.

Unsanitary: Not sanitary; unhealthy or unhealthful; tending to harbor or spread disease.

Vulnerable: Especially capable of or susceptible to being wounded or hurt.

Young American Workers' Bill of Rights: Proposed legislation in the U.S. Congress that would strengthen laws protecting child laborers in the U.S., especially in agriculture.

Youth Minimum Wage: The youth minimum wage is authorized by Section 6(g) of the FLSA, as amended by the 1996 FLSA Amendments. The law allows employers to pay employees under 20 years of age a lower wage for a limited period -- 90 calendar days, **not** work days -- after they are first employed. Any wage rate above \$4.25 an hour may be paid to eligible workers during this 90-day period.

Youth Worker Protection Act (YWPA): A comprehensive bill introduced into the Congress of the United States that will update the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to better protect employed minors. Congress has not passed the bill.