

Campaign for Migrant Worker Justice

*The Campaign for Migrant Worker Justice is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization founded to support the **human rights** and **self-determination** for those involved in the farm labor and immigrant rights movements. Our primary partner in these efforts is the Farm Labor Organizing Committee AFL-CIO.*



Hasta La Victoria!



Poverty

YOU can make a difference for these!



Loneliness

Campaign for Migrant Worker Justice

1221 Broadway Street
Toledo, Ohio 43609
Phone: 419-243-3456
Fax: 419-243-5655
E-mail: cwagner@floc.com



“And the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of Hosts....” James 5:4



“We battle not against flesh and blood but against powers and principalities.” Ephesians 6:12

Message to the Churches

By Baldemar Velasquez

We are Evangelical Christians from many faith traditions who hold the Bible, rightly divided into the Old Testament and New Testament, as authoritative in our lives. We believe that all persons are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26), have been endowed with dignity and worth, and must be treated with respect even in the workplace.

We believe that God cares about tobacco farm workers and the inhumane conditions under which they labor in the fields of the North Carolina and the South. “Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.” (James 5: 4)

The Bible again and again resounds with God's loving care and concern for those who labor. God clearly says in Deuteronomy 24:14-15: “Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns. Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it. Otherwise they may cry to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin.”

God's care about the worker is again expressed in Leviticus 19:13: “Do not defraud or rob your neighbor. Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight;” and in Jeremiah 22:13, God warns: “Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice, making his own people work for nothing, not paying them for their labor.”

The inhumane working and living conditions of tobacco farm workers in the South are well-documented: A North Carolina farm worker earns less than the national average of \$11,000 per year—not even half the federal poverty level for a family of four. Half of North Carolina farm workers cannot afford enough food for themselves and their families, and more than one-third of housing for farm workers on the East Coast is severely inadequate or unfit for human habitation. Many are recruited by criminal syndicates in Mexico, forced to pay thousands in extortionist fees, and work without legal documentation. This makes them particularly vulnerable to exploitation. Moreover, tobacco workers frequently suffer from acute nicotine poisoning, or “green tobacco sickness,” as well as heat stroke and pesticide exposure.

Although Reynolds American Inc. does not directly employ tobacco farm workers, by contracting with tobacco growers, it establishes standards which directly effect the living and working conditions of farm workers, both within its supply chain and even beyond.



In order to address these inhumane living and working conditions and other abuses in the supply chain, we call on Reynolds American to provide the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, which advocates for and represents tobacco farm workers, with a written agreement establishing a process guaranteeing freedom of association and collective bargaining to tobacco farm workers in the Reynolds American supply chain.



Come and pray with us in all these things so when you return to your home churches, you can speak and pray with eloquence, full of knowledge and truth and not with ignorance. Come all who wish to answer God's call of **“who shall go?”** Let us say, “I will” and amen.

Get involved!

Ask about Camp Solidarity, where we take delegations of people out to visit the workers and labor camps in North Carolina!

Contact:

Cathy Larrow at 419-243-3456 Ext. 4

Or

Christiana Wagner at 419-243-3456 Ext. 0

Or

Email: cwagner@floc.com