

Driving Workforce Certainty



Quick Facts

- The agriculture industry employed just under 2.7 million people in 2021 with an additional 20+ million employed in agriculture related jobs through the supply chain.
- The Department of Labor states that upwards of 50–70% of U.S. agriculture labor is unauthorized.
- While continuing to grow, the H-2A represents less than 10% of the hired agriculture labor force.
- According to the Partnership for a New American Economy, shortages in farm labor have resulted in higher food prices for consumers and as much as \$3 billion in missed GDP growth.

Background

For years, the fresh produce industry and our agriculture sector partners have made an overwhelming case for legislation to reform our broken immigration system and help build a legal and reliable workforce. With passage of the bipartisan 2021 Farm Workforce Modernization Act (H.R.1603) in the House of Representatives, we are one step closer to getting the reforms the fresh produce industry has needed for decades.

This legislation marks an important first step in that process and it includes the basic principles of immigration reform that we have long advocated for. In particular,

Workforce Reform Today

Key Senators have indicated they would like to restart bipartisan negotiations on broad immigration reform efforts that would garner support from both Democrats and Republicans. IFPA believes there must be three important elements included in those negotiations:

- 1.** Provide permanent legal protections and other needed reforms for Dreamers, agricultural workers, and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders.
- 2.** Adopt a modern approach to securing the border by investing in smart border security and improving

the bill provides legal status for the current workforce, reforms the current federal agriculture guest worker program known as H-2A, and ensures that we will have future access to a skilled, dedicated workforce. The bill also includes provisions to ensure the proper enforcement of our nation's immigration laws.

We encourage the industry to contact their Senators about the need for a Senate bill. While bipartisan negotiations began early this year, more support is needed to see this long-standing issue addressed.

infrastructure at ports of entry. Simultaneously, Congress should focus on addressing the urgent need for secure, orderly, and compassionate processing at the border.

- 3.** Inclusion of reforms to the H-2A program including those that were passed by the House of Representatives as part of the bipartisan 2021 Farm Workforce Modernization Act (H.R.1603).