

Farm Worker Forums:  
*Everybody Needs a Choice*

2002



The Report  
2002



## F A R M W O R K E R F O R U M S :

*Everybody Needs a Choice*



May 28, 2003

We are proud to introduce the report *Farm Worker Forums: Everybody Needs a Choice*, an overview of the comments and recommendations that were gathered during four regional forums between April and June 2002. The report describes successes and shares effective practices at both the state and local levels. In California, we recognize the need to invest in all Californians who are trying to improve their lives. We must do everything we can to help California's farmworkers develop the skills that will help them be successful and productive workers.

At the same time, California's largest industry, agriculture, faces daunting challenges due to globalization, competing interest in water resources, technology, and an often aging labor force; we must help that industry to remain competitive by providing it with business services and the required skilled labor force. Our economy depends on it, and our rural economies require it. To these ends, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 promises partnerships and services delivered through a One-Stop system that supports the ongoing growth and diversification of our economy.

In the spirit of that promise, the California Workforce Investment Board and the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA), Region 6, led a collaborative effort of state and local partners to organize these forums and prepare this report. California has acted on many different levels to improve the delivery of labor, training, and employment services to our agricultural industry and labor force. For example, the Board established a Farmworker Work Group to provide insight and recommendations on issues affecting the agriculture industry, farm labor, and rural communities and economies. This work group is an integral part of a larger strategy that the State Board introduced in 2002.

Additionally, DOLETA will provide technical assistance to One-Stop Centers and Local Workforce Investment Boards to increase their capacity to identify, recruit, register and serve migrant and seasonal farm workers in their respective service areas.

California's most important economic asset is a well-educated and well-trained workforce. By investing in our workforce now, we stand ready for the challenges that are sure to come. California has always been the land of opportunity for business entrepreneurs, and the State Board is working to build a better economic environment for all businesses.

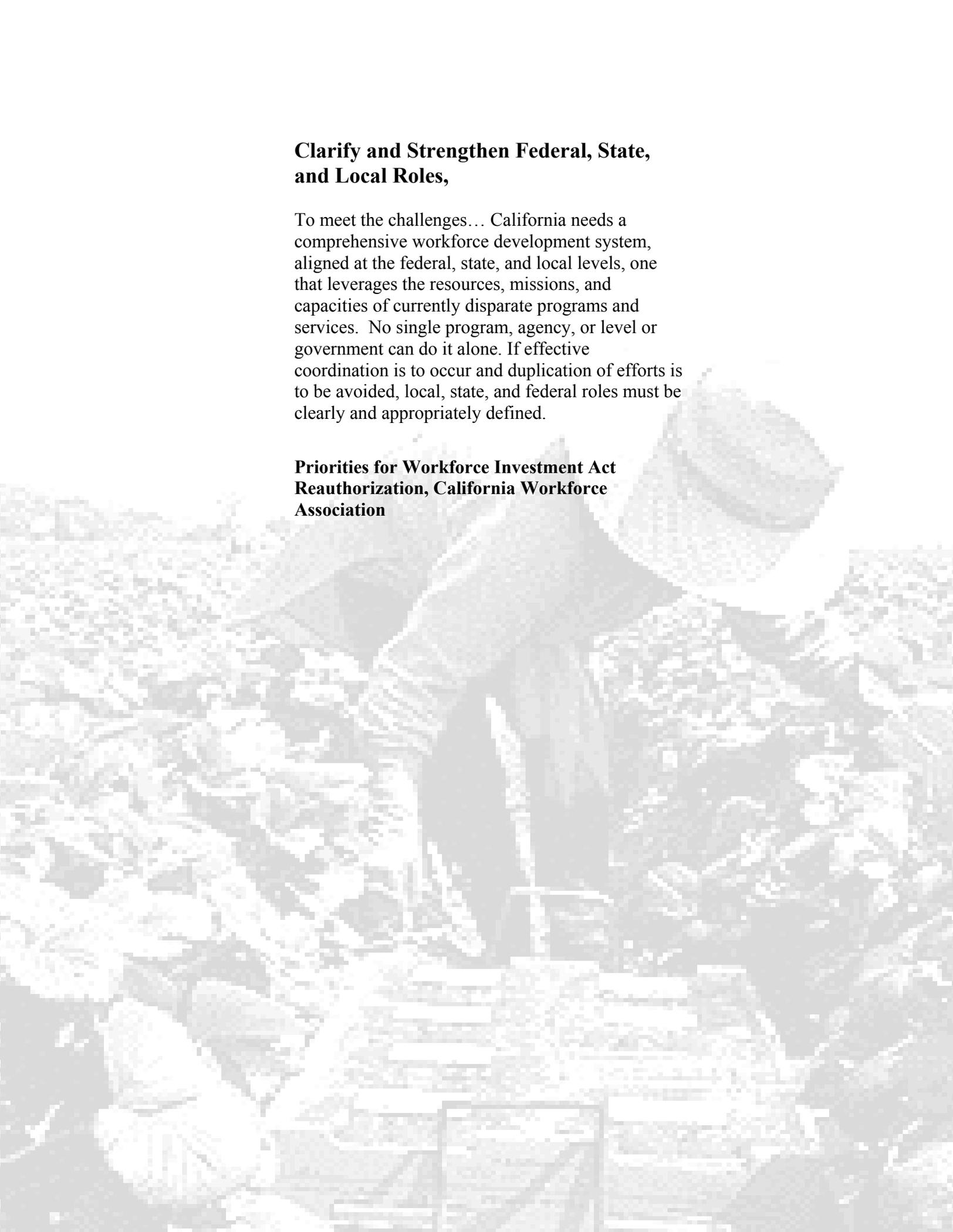
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew R. Baron".

Andrew R. Baron,  
Executive Director  
California Workforce  
Investment Board

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Armando Quiroz".

Armando Quiroz,  
Regional Administrator  
U.S. Department of Labor,  
Employment and Training  
Administration, Region 6



## **Clarify and Strengthen Federal, State, and Local Roles,**

To meet the challenges... California needs a comprehensive workforce development system, aligned at the federal, state, and local levels, one that leverages the resources, missions, and capacities of currently disparate programs and services. No single program, agency, or level of government can do it alone. If effective coordination is to occur and duplication of efforts is to be avoided, local, state, and federal roles must be clearly and appropriately defined.

### **Priorities for Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization, California Workforce Association**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The *Farmworkers Forum: Everybody Needs a Choice*, was made possible and owes its success to the valuable contributions of individuals and organizations. First, we would like to thank the Forum Planning Team, which developed the initial framework and guided the successful completion of the forums. This team consisted of Colusa County One-Stop; California Human Development Corporation; Proteus, Inc.; California Workforce Association; Employment Development Department (EDD), Monitor Advocates Office; EDD, Job Service Division and Workforce Investment Division; California Workforce Investment Board, and U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Training Administration, Region VI.

Additionally, we wish to convey our gratitude to the following hosts and partners:

William DeLain, Chair, Tulare County Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

Joe Daniel, Executive Director, Tulare County Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

Kathy Johnson, Assistant Director, Tulare County Workforce Investment Board, Inc., and the local One-Stop staff

Jerry Craig, Executive Director, Riverside County Workforce Investment Board

Wendy Frederick, Riverside County Workforce Development Center, Indio

Lorraine Chavez-Figueroa, Employment Development Dept, Indio Job Service and her entire staff

John Solis, Executive Director, San Joaquin County Workforce Investment Board

Rosemary Gardea, San Joaquin County Workforce Investment Board, and the local One-Stop staff

Joseph Werner, Executive Director, Monterey County Workforce Investment Board, and the entire staff of the One-Stop Career Center of Monterey County

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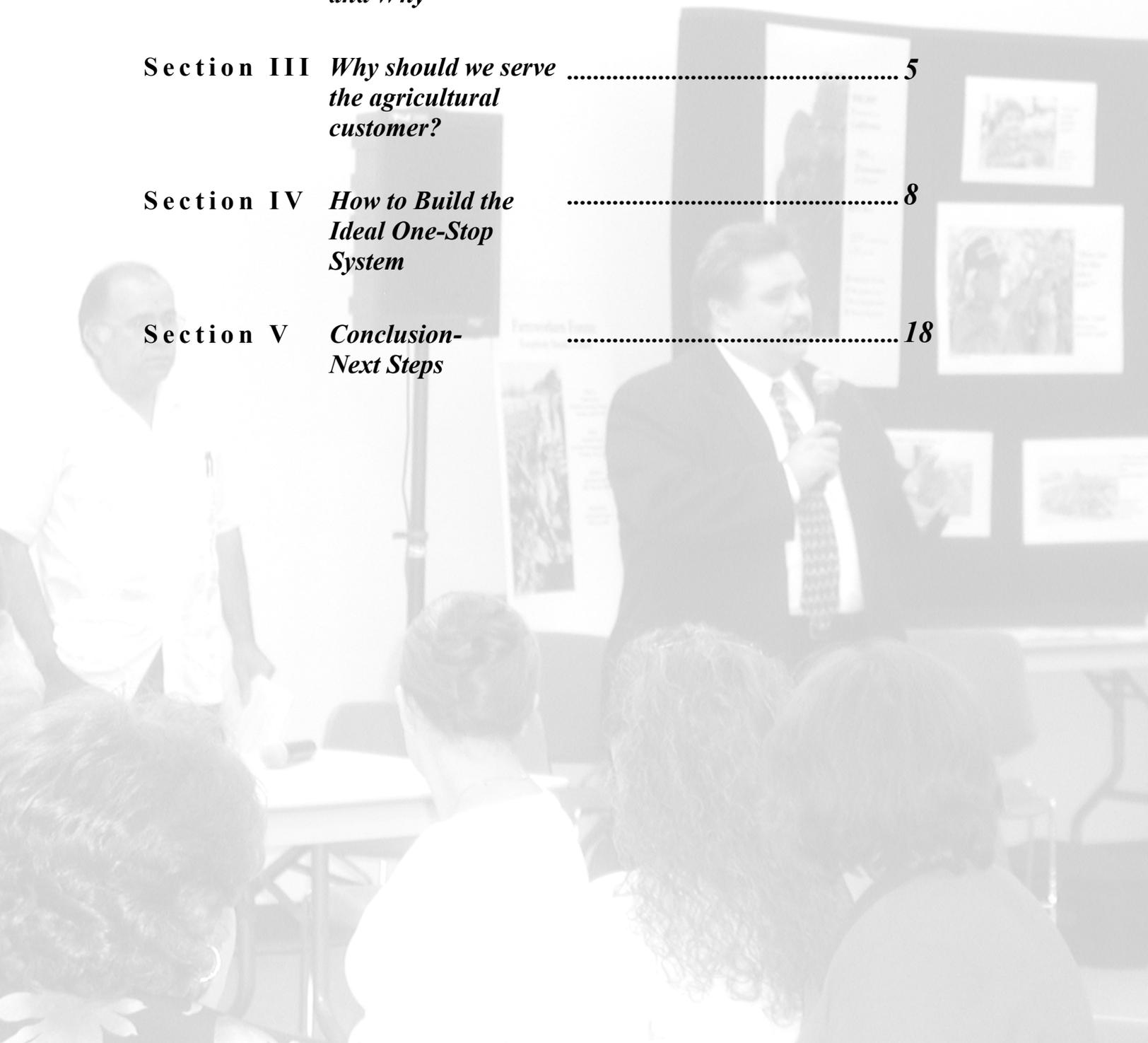
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## I. Executive Summary

This report presents recommendations growing out of four regional forums that began on April 16, 2002, in Visalia and concluded in Salinas on June 26, 2002. The forums were given the title *Farm Worker Forums: Everybody Needs a Choice*. The title is derived from the principle that One-Stop Career Centers, and other program partners comprising California's workforce investment system, can empower California's farmworkers to improve the quality of their lives. This is a central principle of workforce development in California. The system strives to enhance the skills of California's workers, allowing them to take better advantage of opportunities in their regional economies, to the mutual benefit of themselves and local industries and businesses.

*"In order to achieve sustainable economic growth, meet the demands of global competition in the changing economy, and improve the quality of life for Californians, the State shall have a collaborative, inclusive and flexible workforce development system that fully engages the public and private sectors, integrates education and workforce preparation, and offers Californians lifelong opportunities to maximize their employment potential."*

California Workforce Investment Board, "Vision"

Moreover, while the forums dealt specifically with farmworkers, the agriculture industry, and rural communities, the underlying issues have implications for California's entire workforce investment system. Examples of these issues include:

- ◆ The need for meaningful alliances between local areas and regional industries in the development of local workforce investment systems;
- ◆ The challenge to ensure that the One-Stop system is accessible to all members of the community. To this end, barriers such as limited English proficiency (LEP), transportation, outreach, and supportive services must be addressed;
- ◆ The demand for local partnerships that coordinate services and leverage resources, to better meet the needs of local communities;
- ◆ The question of how federal, state, and local partners can be effectively engaged in systems and policy development, program strategies, marketing, and leadership to provide California's economy with an adequately skilled workforce;
- ◆ The need to upgrade the skill level of local labor forces, especially in those communities with low-skilled workforces, to the mutual benefit of workers and employers; and
- ◆ The need for local boards to develop systems that reflect the uniqueness of their respective communities.

It is important to remember that the recommendations and suggestions gathered during the forums should be viewed in the context of their more general application throughout the State system, as well as their specific relevance to California's agricultural regions.

*"In my 35 years of service, this is a first, for the Federal, State, and locals to join together to discuss the issue of serving farmworkers."*

*Joe Daniel, Executive Director, Tulare County Workforce Investment Board.*

The forums' success is measured by the interaction they facilitated and their contribution to local discussions on how evolving One-Stop systems can meet the needs of local communities – including, in rural California, the agricultural clientele. During the development and presentation of the forums, federal and state partners were both enlightened and encouraged by the active discussions with local workforce development professionals, focusing on providing services to farmworkers and partnering with local agricultural businesses.

This report was prepared with the same intent as were the forums – that is, to share information and stimulate dialogue among federal, state, and local partners. Throughout this report, we provide

examples of effective local practices and information appropriate to the subject at hand. The report is presented in thematic sections matching the structure of the forums themselves:

- ◆ The origin of the Farm Worker Forums, including the partnerships that comprised the planning team and the guiding principles emerging from the team’s discussions.
- ◆ The importance of the following topics to agriculture and farmworkers:
  - California’s rural and regional economies;
  - The numerous and pressing needs of California’s farmworkers;
  - The spirit of social equity; and
  - The potential benefit for local programs of achieving their workforce development goals.
- ◆ Recommendations of the workforce development community in response to the question: “*How can we build a One-Stop system that can effectively serve the agricultural customer?*”
- ◆ Finally, the report describes various current efforts to develop workforce investment strategies serving agricultural businesses and workers.

## II. Background – Who, What, Where, When, Why

The California Farm Worker Forums were held in response to concerns raised at the 2001 Annual Training and Technical Assistance Conference of the Western Alliance of Farmworkers Advocates (WAFA). A primary concern expressed by conference participants was that farm workers were not being offered the full range of employment and training services available through the One-Stop system.

In response to these concerns, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration’s (ETA) Region 6 Office and the California Workforce Investment Board (CalWIB) agreed to conduct a series of regional forums to provide technical assistance on providing One-Stop services to farm workers. A planning committee met to consider strategies for improving One-Stop services to the farmworker and agricultural business communities. The planning committee held its first meeting in December 2001. Members included representatives from ETA, CalWIB, the California Employment Development Department (EDD), National Farm Worker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees, the California Workforce Association (CWA), the North Central Counties Consortium, and the Colusa County One-Stop system.

After lengthy discussion and brainstorming, the committee resolved to initiate a dialogue among local, state, and federal partners and to foster cooperation among local community partners to serve local agriculture businesses and the labor force.

To this end, the idea of the Farm Worker Forums was born. Their purpose would be twofold: to provide technical assistance to improve the delivery of One-Stop services to the agricultural community, and to hear the concerns and obtain the feedback and ideas of local area representatives. Holding a series of Forums around the state, the committee agreed, would be the best way to provide training and technical assistance while fostering a discussion about the

challenges farmworkers face in accessing One-Stop services and the challenges local partners face in serving farm workers and the agricultural industry.

The committee sought to bring local partners and stakeholders together at the Forums. Some examples of target audiences include:

- ◆ Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) Administrators and staff;
- ◆ Local board members and staff;
- ◆ All One-Stop partners;
- ◆ One-Stop operators, including front-line staff;
- ◆ Agricultural worker advocacy groups;
- ◆ Local elected officials;
- ◆ Farm worker service groups;
- ◆ Agricultural businesses; and
- ◆ Farm workers.

The committee decided to sponsor several Forums across California during Spring 2002. This would not only respond to the concerns of the Western Alliance of Farmworkers Advocates (WAFA), but would also support efforts throughout the One-Stop system to improve and increase services to farmworkers. Since it was not feasible to conduct a Forum in each LWIA, the committee took a “regional” approach in designating Forum sites. The regions were determined by examining the level of agricultural activity within a given area, and the size of its farm worker population. Thus the California Farm Worker Forums came to be.

Four Forums were held in Indio, Salinas, Stockton, and Visalia. They convened local One-Stop partners, local elected officials, agricultural employers, and farm workers, to address local One-Stop system issues, and to begin the dialogue among all partners on how to improve services to the farmworker communities. At each Forum, the following topics were discussed:

- ◆ Valuing the agricultural customer;
- ◆ Myths of serving the agricultural customer;
- ◆ Providing best practices in serving the agricultural customer; and

- ◆ Challenges to implementing comprehensive services.

An additional objective of the Forums was to examine the role of Section 167 grantees in the One-Stop system so that (1) agricultural customers receive appropriate and equitable service in the One-Stop system, and (2) all One-Stop operators and partners participate in delivering services to agricultural customers. Ultimate goals include providing policy clarification, identifying best practices, and promoting a continuous dialogue between One-Stop system partners.

The Forums were an attempt to encourage the valuing of agricultural customers and to address barriers to serving them that may exist within the One-Stop system.

The (National Farmworkers Jobs Program) NFJP has been authorized continuously since its creation under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and most recently under section 402 of JTPA.

The NFJP (WIA §167 grants) supplements the workforce investment activities of the States with services that respond to the unique needs of farmworkers and their families. The NFJP is not a substitute for the other WIA services that must be made available to the farmworker job seekers in the State.

The States are required to make the services of the One-Stop systems in the State available to all job seekers in an equitable fashion. The services available from the Adult and Dislocated Workers program, from the Job Service, and from all other DOL-funded Workforce Investment System partners in the State, must be available to farmworkers in an equitable fashion, appropriate to their needs as job seekers as well as to their needs as farmworkers. Judge Richey's decision in the case brought against the Employment Service required the entire system to serve farmworkers equitably. That requirement has not changed under WIA.

*20 CFR Part 652 et al. Workforce Investment Act; Final Rules; Summary and Explanation*

### III. Why should we serve the agricultural customer?

At each of the four regional Forums the program included a panel and breakout discussions on the topic “*Why are agricultural workers and business important local customers?*”

The discussions varied somewhat from one Forum to the next. Among the issues that arose:

- ◆ Changes in the agriculture industry due to the redirection of water resources;
- ◆ Projections of depressed economic conditions in the Central Valley, compounded by looming restrictions aimed at preserving air quality;
- ◆ The diminishing role of the EDD Job Service in agriculture, contrasted with the increasing importance of farm labor contractors;
- ◆ The need to help farmworkers make the transition to other industries;
- ◆ The need for California’s agricultural industry to remain competitive in the global market; and
- ◆ The many needs of the farmworker community.

The panel discussions were followed by breakout groups to discuss and share their reasons why farmworkers and agriculture employers need One-Stop services. Following are some of the reasons shared during those discussions. The results fall into three general categories:

- ◆ Economic
- ◆ Social
- ◆ Program

#### *Economic*

- ◆ In 2001, California’s gross income from agricultural production increased to \$27.6 billion, making it the largest industry in California.
- ◆ California’s farms (and farmworkers) feed the world.

#### **GLOBAL MARKETPLACE**

California is the nation’s leader in agricultural exports, annually shipping more than \$6.5 billion in food and agricultural commodities around the world. It is estimated that 14 percent of California’s agricultural production is exported.

*California Department Of Food & Agriculture  
Resource Directory 2002*

- ◆ Some comments pointed out that agriculture supports other industries in California’s economy, with each dollar of agricultural production accounting for \$3.50 in benefits to other industries. For example, in Stanislaus County alone, \$1.353 billion in agriculture brings nearly \$4 billion to the county.

California agriculture reaches far beyond the farm or ranch. Agriculture, in fact, is an industry that employs a significant number of urban and suburban residents who help process, transport, sell, and distribute the bounty.... ‘More than one million Californian workers, nearly 8 percent of the total state workforce are involved in this process’, said California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF) President Bill Pauli.”

*CFBF, “Rural/Urban Connection is Celebrated”  
News Release November 5, 2002*

- ◆ Enabling farmworkers to earn higher wages would increase tax revenues for local, State, and federal government through sales tax, property taxes, etc.
- ◆ A properly skilled and trained worker will increase profits for his or her employer.

In 1996, Bear Creek Corporation, a bare root rose grower in southern San Joaquin valley, formed a partnership with the United Farm Worker Union (UFW). They collaborated to provide farmworkers, employed by Bear Creek, training. By 1998-99, Bear Creek saw tangible results in increased profits:

- Rose quality improved to a quality that allowed the roses to be sold at a higher grade, which resulted in a percentage yield on premium roses of 53.8% from 1996.
- Over a three-year period, the number of days of work lost due to injury decreased by 800%, and the average cost of worker's compensation claim dropped from \$27,000 to \$1,200.
- Hourly labor costs as a percentage of total overall enterprise costs were reduced by 3% every year of the partnership.

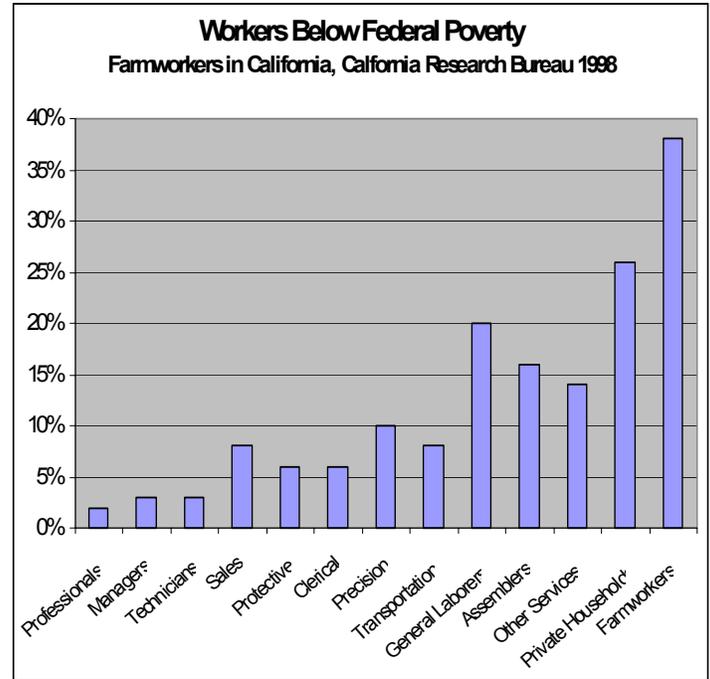
The farmworkers employed by Bear Creek benefited as well:

- Average hourly earnings increased by 6% from \$7.62 to \$8.07.
- Piece rate earnings increased 44% from \$11.13 to \$16.12.
- The number of paid holidays was doubled.
- Medical plan contributions were increased by 50%, and the retirement plan contribution rate increased by 100%.

*"Investing in the Agricultural Workforce, New Strategies to Strengthen Rural Economies and Communities"*; Farmworker Institute for Education and Leadership Development (FIELD) in 1996

### Social

- ◆ Poverty among farmworkers is well documented.
- ◆ Farmworkers possess transferable skills that are not being utilized by local communities.
- ◆ Farmworkers are willing to work very hard at jobs that others will not seek or accept.



- ◆ Farmworkers have a high injury rate and a short work life.

**AGRICULTURE IS A HAZARDOUS OCCUPATION.** Agriculture is among the most hazardous occupations, with a death rate approximately four times that of all other industries combined. Farming is underreported as an occupation in standard surveillance data, and actual mortality rates may be 30 percent to 100 percent greater. In 1993 there were 2,400 deaths of farm residents or 51 deaths per 100,000 farm residents. In California alone, there are more than 20,000 reported disabling injuries annually among agricultural workers.

**HAZARDS TO FARM CHILDREN.** There are nearly 300 deaths per year to children and adolescents from farm injuries, a particularly tragic statistic unique to agriculture, where the home and workplace are the same.

*Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety, UC Davis*  
<http://agcenter.ucdavis.edu/>

- ◆ A Forum participant stated that 80% of farmworkers' children do not graduate from high school, and that society is missing out on the potential that population possesses.

The **High School Equivalency Program** and the **College Assistance Migrant Program (HEP-CAMP)** have existed since 1967 and 1972 respectively. The HEP helps migrant students who have dropped out of high school get their GED. CAMP assists migrant students in their first year of college with academic, personal, and financial support. Since their inception, both programs have achieved stunning success rates. In the 1998-1999 academic year, 73 percent of the HEP participants received their GEDs while 88 percent of the CAMP students successfully completed their first year of college. Overall, nearly three-quarters of all CAMP students graduate with baccalaureate degrees.

<http://www.hepcamp.org/index.htm>

- ◆ Farmworkers are members of their communities and should be afforded services accordingly.

“In late fall and early winter, some workers migrate to Southern California and Arizona for the winter vegetable harvest, and others return to Mexico, but most remain in the areas where they did farm work, jobless and waiting for a new season to start.

Workers willing to follow the ripening crops can find 8 to 10 months of harvest work each year. However, relatively few workers follow the ripening crops in California. A 1965 survey found that 30% of the workers migrated from one of California’s farming regions to another (California Assembly 1969), and a 1981 survey of Tulare County farmworkers found that only 20% had to establish a temporary residence away from their usual home because a farm job took them beyond commuting distance (Mines and Kearney 1982). The National Agricultural Workers Survey, conducted annually, reported that 20% to 40% of California crop workers interviewed would be willing to or had traveled beyond daily commuting distance from their homes to do farm work (USDOL 1998, Gabbard et al. 1994).”

Taylor, E.J., Martin, P.L., (2000). *For California farmworkers, future holds little prospect for change. California Agriculture, Volume 54, Number 1*

- ◆ The court order by U.S. District Court Judge, Charles Richey mandates One-Stop service for Farmworkers

*Program*

- ◆ Rural local areas that have not exhausted their WIA Dislocated Worker funding have a great opportunity to invest in agriculture workers and businesses.
- ◆ Services should be provided to farmworker youth.
- ◆ Helping to develop a skilled labor force will enhance the safety of our food supplies.

USDA RELEASES OVER \$5 MILLION TO CALIFORNIA FOR STRENGTHENING AGRICULTURE HOMELAND SECURITY PROTECTIONS

On May 31, 2002, the USDA released \$5,034,869 to the state of California to bolster food and agricultural homeland security protections, out of a total of more than \$43 million being provided to states. The resources are part of \$328 million approved to strengthen USDA’s homeland security preparedness.

The \$43 million is to support critical efforts to strengthen the food supply infrastructure.

- ◆ The Colusa County One-Stop model has shown that farmworkers can help a program to meet performance measures.
- ◆ Local areas are required to serve individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP)

**LEP ONE-STOP TO OPEN IN SACRAMENTO**

Sacramento Works Career Center . . . is a cooperative effort of over ten government and community agencies designed to integrate on-site academic, vocational and social services with job training and employment for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). Sacramento County Refugee Coordinator Roy Kim spearheaded creation of this LEP-focused one-stop center. “This center was made possible by the high level of coordination that exists between the different employment service programs operating in the area,” said Kim. Indeed, all public funds — including refugee program funds — designated for employment and training are administered by the operator of the new center and Kim’s employer. Financed largely through state refugee employment funds, WIA funds and Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funds, the new center will house bilingual, bicultural staff who will assist LEP clients. It is located in a neighborhood populated by refugees and other immigrants. Although the other 13 Sacramento Works locations will also serve LEP individuals, Kim feels that the opening of the new center “is a large step towards providing the same level of employment services to new Americans as to long-term residents.”

*REFUGEE WORKS, US Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), Vol.3, Issue #3, December 2002*

## IV. How to Build the Ideal One-Stop System

During the Forums, participants formed smaller groups in which they addressed the question: “What is needed to achieve an ideal One-Stop system serving agricultural workers and businesses?” This resulting summary of recommendations is characterized by the following themes:

- ◆ Ease of Access
- ◆ Building and Sustaining Partnerships
- ◆ Service Program Elements
- ◆ Focus on Training
- ◆ Identifying Remaining Barriers

Summaries of comments on these five themes are provided with comments from the forum planning team with the intent to provide further clarification on a given issue.

### Ease of Access

The issue of how to improve access to the One-Stop system for agricultural clients received the most extensive comments and suggestions. The recommendations are categorized under the following topics

- ◆ Marketing/Outreach
- ◆ Location
- ◆ Reception/Service

#### *Marketing/Outreach*

There were a number of comments to the effect that access to One-Stops could be greatly improved if the system improved marketing and outreach to the agricultural community. While great emphasis was placed on farmworkers, agricultural employers were included.

A number of the comments expressed a need for concerted efforts to make the agricultural community aware of One-Stop services.

Some commenters suggested that One-Stop centers should be easily identifiable by means of a statewide “brand name.”

The California Workforce Investment Board adopted a One-Stop Certification policy framework, which will include eventual incentives to be used in the certification process. An example is the development and use of a State One-Stop “brand” or “logo that can identify and market certified One-Stops throughout California.

Additional marketing suggestions included:

- ◆ Bumper stickers with a State logo;
- ◆ A toll-free 800 number for information;
- ◆ Bilingual marketing; and
- ◆ Good information on easy access to services.

A consistent comment at all the Forums concerned the need for effective outreach to farmworker communities. Comments suggested that effective outreach requires more community outreach and multilingual publications. Many remarked that, while One-Stops do provide some information in Spanish and other languages, much essential information is provided only in English. This discrepancy needs to be addressed.

A common theme that was emphasized throughout the forums was the need for well-trained initial-contact persons with information on services and career opportunities available at California’s One-Stops. Participants felt the farm workers, as well as other customers, were reluctant to pursue the One-Stops services because they were not made aware of the full range of services when they visited the centers.

**The Kings County Workforce Investment Board** took a major step in reaching out to monolingual and bilingual Spanish-speaking farm workers by holding an Agricultural Worker Job Fair. Education, employment and training agencies joined with area employers to discuss their various services and opportunities with Job Fair attendees. Career counseling was offered on-site, with the opportunity to sign up for the various services offered at the Job Fair.

Nine Hundred Fifty farmworkers attended the Agricultural Worker Job Fair on January 31, 2002 at the Civic Auditorium in Hanford. The massive turnout was a result of the outreach in partnership with **EDD Southern Valley Region**. EDD has cultivated with **KFTV-Channel 21 Univision** (Spanish television in the Central Valley) partnership that has resulted in invaluable outreach into the farmworker community in the Central Valley as demonstrated by the success of the **Kings County Agricultural Worker Job Fair**.

Other comments indicated that an effective approach would be to make One-Stop information available at those places where farmworkers go for health care. Health care centers and clinics are often attended by farmworkers and would be an effective means of promoting awareness of One-Stop services.

### *Location*

A number of commenters said that the location of a One-Stop is key to ensuring access to it. Recommendations were made concerning strategies in serving rural communities and overcoming such challenges as how best to serve large geographic areas with sparse populations. Among the recommendations:

- ◆ Locate One-Stops near farmworker communities and public transportation outlets;
- ◆ Decentralize services to broaden access points;
- ◆ Customize rural satellite access points to serve farmworkers; and
- ◆ Provide transportation services to those wishing to visit One-Stops.

A noteworthy number of comments were provided on the need to invest in mobile One-Stop units to

bring services to farmworkers that often reside in remote locations.

The Governor allocated approximately \$374,862 of the 15-percent discretion funds to **Proteus Inc.**, a National Farmworkers Job Program grantee, to provide WIA services in western Fresno and Kings counties to farmworkers in rural areas that are among the most impoverished in California. Proteus had also funded a mobile office van to provide services in Tulare and Kern Counties through a Community Development Block Grant. These units have full satellite Internet capability, complete audio/visual capability to operate workshops and classes. A regional partnership will provide staffing and to develop the workshops. [www.proteusinc.org](http://www.proteusinc.org)

### *Reception/Service*

The greatest number of comments regarding access to services focused on the quality of a client's reception at the center and the manner in which services are provided. On this topic, comments were extremely broad, ranging from the issue of serving undocumented workers to the need for fully staffed centers.

Many commenters recommended that One-Stops be "store-front" operations, emphasizing the importance of a convenient location and an inviting atmosphere in ensuring that farmworkers have maximum access to local One-Stop systems. Some suggested television monitors in One-Stop lobbies to apprise clients of available services. Other comments underlined the importance of a friendly lobby "greeter" to welcome clients and provide direction as needed.

Another major point made at all the Forums was the importance of accommodating the special needs of farmworkers in such areas as language, schedule, and clients' unfamiliarity with the One-Stop delivery system.

Recommendations commonly suggested that One-Stop hours of operation should be expanded beyond the traditional 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule to better accommodate farmworkers. A need was also seen for weekend operations.

**The Employment Development Department Job Service office in Calexico operates from 3:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to mirror the working hours of the farmworkers.**

There should be adequate bilingual staff to serve farmworker communities properly. Moreover, many comments identified a need for cultural sensitivity beyond simple bilingual services. To this end, One-Stops should have farmworker specialists to provide effective services to farmworkers.

Additional comments were made to the effect that giving farmworkers adequate information of the services available would increase access to the system. Therefore, the following recommendations were made:

- ◆ Cross-train One-Stop staff on the services available from all One-Stop partners, as well as services available in the community;
- ◆ Establish a comprehensive list of available services in the One-Stop system, including partner services;
- ◆ Provide all publications (including those describing partner services) in Spanish-language versions;
- ◆ Offer bilingual staff assistance, one-on-one services, workshops and orientation sessions;
- ◆ Improve initial contact and orientation processes with equal treatment for all clients; and
- ◆ Provide information such as job listings to Spanish-language media (TV, radio, newspapers).

***EDD Southern Valley Region Media Job Announcement Listings is utilized by the following Media:***

**RADIO**

***The Job Announcement List airs daily on the following radio stations:***

- ✓ **KOQQ** La Super Q Fresno
- ✓ **KGST** La Mexicana Fresno
- ✓ **KLBN** La Buena Fresno
- ✓ **KUFW** La Campesina Visalia---  
(This station reaches customers statewide as well as AZ & WA).
- ✓ **KBIF** Radio Grito Visalia
- ✓ **KMQA** La Maquina Tulare
- ✓ **KMYX** La Campesina Bakersfield---  
(This station reaches customers statewide as well as AZ & WA).

**TV**

***The same Job Announcement List airs on the following TV stations:***

- ✓ **KFTV--Channel 21 Univision "Arriba Valle Central"**  
(Mondays only) **Fresno** (Reaches Kern Co. thru Stanislaus Co.)
- ✓ **KVPT--Channel 18 Valley Public Television "Leading You Towards Success"** (Wednesdays & Sundays only) **Fresno** (Reaches the South Valley Region).

**NEWSPAPER**

***The weekly newspaper column focuses on all EDD services and issues, and is written by Roger Amezola, the South Valley Region Marketing Specialist.***

- ✓ **Noticiero Semanal--"SERVICIO PARA UN BENEFICIO," Porterville**

Many of the recommendations regarding improving access dealt with the types of services needed by farmworkers. Specific recommendations included:

- ◆ Offer more training opportunities and real customer choice;
- ◆ Provide adequate, well-staffed child care in a designated area while parents are being served in the One-Stop;

- ◆ The local boards should exercise the flexibility permitted in the WIA to broaden eligibility to include farmworkers.

On February 21, 2002, in response to the confusion regarding the eligibility of farmworkers for WIA Title-I dislocated worker funded services, and the under expenditure of dislocated worker funds in rural areas, the CalWIB in partnership with EDD released an information bulletin. The bulletin provided the technical clarification that demonstrated that the farmworkers were not excluded from dislocated worker funded services and that targeting the farmworker labor force would assist rural areas to further optimize these resources.

- ◆ Make the One-Stop a gateway to the kind of family assistance that will result in comprehensive services to farmworkers, such as assistance with housing, utilities, legal aid, and immigration (e.g., INS services to offer credit for years worked in the U.S.);
- ◆ Ensure access and/or information on health services, e.g., nutrition, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse assistance, and rehabilitation services;
- ◆ Offer transportation services (e.g., bus passes) to clients in training, and to help them retain employment (transportation was cited as a vital service, the lack of which at times prevents farmworkers from pursuing job opportunities);

Through the partnership between the **Anaheim WIB** and **Anaheim Transportation Network (ATN)**, participants can arrange for van or car pools to insure that they arrive at work on time, every day. The ATN is a non-profit organization that works with businesses in Anaheim to solve transportation issues. Through a grant from the Governor's 15% Discretionary Fund, ATN is able to offer services that include van pool to and from job fairs and interviews for job seekers; van and/or car pools to and from the worksite to insure that attendance and punctuality do not become a performance issue for the participants; Kiddie Shuttle to pick up participants' children from school and transport them to an after school activity or daycare.

"50 Stories One-System: Profiles of Local Workforce Investment in California." CWA

- ◆ Ensure that farmworkers are provided a range of choices equal to those offered to other clients;
- ◆ Provide accurate and meaningful labor market information at One-Stops that will allow farmworkers to explore a variety of possible careers;
- ◆ Establish flexible on-the-job-training (OJT) to allow for OJT in other agricultural occupations;
- ◆ Offer assistance with driver's education and with obtaining driver's licenses and auto insurance.
- ◆ Recognize the importance of English as a Second Language (ESL) and Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) programs as the most effective means of preparing farmworkers for other occupations.

**The Vocational English-as-a-Second Language (VESL)-to-Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)** program is part of the **Riverside County's WIB Caregiver Training Initiative (CTI)** Grant. The Caregiver training is offered in Spanish, English and VESL. The VESL has been used primarily on site at healthcare facilities to upgrade residential aide skills.

Individuals are referred to the local **Workforce Development Center (WDC)** via the CTI Interest Survey. They are assigned to special orientations conducted in Spanish and staff administers a pre-assessment test using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). Upon completion of the VESL, the participants are administered a post-assessment test to determine benefit and appropriate referral to CNA training.

The **Camp Fire's** curriculum developed for the VESL (81 hrs) is based on the 13 chapters of the training manual used by the training provider. Camp Fire engages the participants' children in Camp Fire Youth programs; sometimes held during the training. This provides a partial alternative to paying for babysitting or placing youth in licensed daycare.

The CNA training is structured to run 11 weeks instead of the regular 7-8 weeks. The instructor was specifically chosen to teach this class because of her patience and bilingual skills in English and Spanish

- ◆ Place farmworkers in apprenticeship programs to begin a career path into well-paying jobs;
- ◆ Encourage partnership building and collaboration;
- ◆ Use incumbent worker training to help the agriculture industry upgrade the skill level of the farm labor workforce and to empower workers to upgrade their earnings potential;

*“For the most part, the only way that an individual worker is able to increase his or her annual income is to extend one’s employment year by qualifying for work in multiple types of crops and tasks, making new employer contacts, and teaming up with other workers to resolve transportation, housing, and a host of related logistical problems.”*

*“Seasonal Farm Worker Cross-Training Needs, Opportunities, and Outlook 2001”:  
FIELD, SOAR Program, Dr. Andrew Alvarado*

- ◆ Establish mentoring programs to assist farmworkers;
- ◆ Establish internship programs in agriculture, as well as in other occupations and industries; and
- ◆ Establish incentives for employers, both inside and outside the agriculture industry, to consider farmworkers for career opportunities.

Finally, there were many recommendations for strategies to make One-Stop processes more streamlined and customer-friendly. Many of the group discussions concluded that unnecessarily cumbersome and complex processes hamper access to the One-Stop system. Many attendees expressed the view that One-Stop processes are sometimes inefficient and insensitive to farmworkers and others with limited English proficiency. It was recommended that the following strategies be pursued throughout the One-Stop system:

- ◆ A simplified “universal application” that will standardize the application process and eliminate redundant paperwork;

- ◆ “Uniform intake” of client information, avoiding duplication by One-Stop partners throughout a local system;
- ◆ Streamlining the eligibility process, allowing the eligibility certifications of partners, such as 167 Providers, to be sufficient documentation for other One-Stop services;
- ◆ Allowing local organizations and individuals to perform quality assessment of services throughout a community, including farmworkers when appropriate;
- ◆ Bilingual job fairs conducted by local systems (as in Kings County);
- ◆ A shorter assessment process;
- ◆ Integrated service delivery;
- ◆ Rotating reception areas among partners to ensure that reception staffing develops and reflects a comprehensive understanding of the services available at the One-Stop; and
- ◆ A demonstration by local areas of an overall commitment to customers in all segments of their respective communities.

## **BUILDING AND SUSTAINING PARTNERSHIPS**

*“Sec. 662.100(d) describes three other arrangements to supplement the comprehensive center.... In essence, this structure may be described as a “one right door and no wrong door” approach. One-Stop partners have an obligation to ensure that core services that are appropriate for their particular populations are made available at one comprehensive center, and through additional sites...”*

20 CFR 662 – Preamble

There were many comments on the importance of partnering with current and additional partners beyond those mandated by WIA, such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Migrant Education. An essential component of this recommendation would entail the formation of services and programs designed to meet the needs of farmworkers and the agricultural industry.

*“WIA also encourages participation in the One-Stop delivery system by other relevant programs, such as those administered by the Departments of Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and Transportation, as well as the Corporation for National and Community Service. In addition, local areas are authorized to add additional partners as local needs may require.”*

20 CFR 662 – Preamble

Some commenters identified a need for better coordination among current One-Stop partners, including:

- ◆ Coordinated outreach;
- ◆ Input from local community-based organizations for planning and policy development;
- ◆ The development of literature on other resources available to farmworkers;
- ◆ Collaboration among partners in all aspects of the delivery of workforce investment services;
- ◆ Access to One-Stop partners after normal working hours;
- ◆ A larger mix of partners that are specific to the needs of the community;
- ◆ One-Stop-partner-wide staff meetings;
- ◆ Partners educating one another and sharing information about their various areas of expertise;
- ◆ A sharing of job responsibilities among partners;
- ◆ Open communication among partners;
- ◆ Partners providing sufficient staff resources; and
- ◆ Working partnerships among One-Stops and faith-based organizations.

#### **CALIFORNIA HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION WORKNET CENTER IN STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA**

The California Human Development Corporation (CHDC) WorkNet Center in Stockton, California is one of eight (8) countywide one-stop service delivery WorkNet Centers chartered by the San Joaquin County Workforce Investment Board.

Chartered in January of 2001, the CHDC WorkNet Center formed a partnership between the CHDC (WIA 167 Grantee), the San Joaquin County Employment and Economic Development Department, San Joaquin County Office of Education Migrant Education and the State Employment Development Department creating a unique opportunity to leverage the services and resources available through all of the partner agencies. It offers a variety of services provided by other WorkNet partners, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Housing assistance through the San Joaquin Housing Authority.
- Human Services through the San Joaquin County Human Services Agency.
- A variety of educational programs including English as a Second Language through the Community College.
- Medical services through San Joaquin County’s Health Care Services Agency.
- Additional employment and training services through Goodwill Industries.

CHDC is also a WIA Youth Program operator for the local Workforce Investment Board and is able to leverage other youth funding to serve youth of migrant and seasonal farm worker families.

As one of the WorkNet Centers, the CHDC WorkNet Center is able to offer services that support families and children. One of the programs that is offered through San Joaquin County Health Care Services is the Healthy Families Program that includes low cost medical insurance. Working in cooperation with the Human Service Agency, families are able to access food stamps, medical services and other support services.

The WIB’s initiative created a specialized one-stop service center within its service delivery system that focuses on the needs of migrant and seasonal farm workers, as well as, the limited English-speaking and Spanish-speaking population in the San Joaquin County community.

Maria Rosado, the CHDC WorkNet Center Manager, “Our last customer satisfaction survey shows that 94% of our customers are satisfied with the services that they received at the center. Please stop by and say hi to our friendly staff. Nuestra Casa es su Casa!”

## **SERVICE PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

Many comments were made that can be categorized service program elements in nature, focusing on policies that form the operation of the One-Stop system. Recommendations ranged from the specific (granting all farmworkers work authorization) to the fanciful (unlimited funding for farmworker services). A comment heard frequently at all four Forums was that local systems should pattern their program designs after the North Central Counties Consortium (NCCC), Colusa County One-Stop.

### **Colusa County One-Stop Example**

This presentation by Stewart Knox, Director, shares many practical strategies focused at serving farm workers and agricultural businesses. Stewart's presentation really highlights how serving farm workers and agricultural businesses is not only good for the customers, but can also be good for program performance measures.

Presentation may be viewed at the following:  
[http://www.doleta.gov/regions/reg06/region6/post\\_forum\\_site/documents/colusa.ppt](http://www.doleta.gov/regions/reg06/region6/post_forum_site/documents/colusa.ppt)

Also, some recommendations were directed at the State. For example:

- ◆ The State Board needs to demonstrate its concern for agriculture, and local boards must follow suit.
- ◆ The State Board take actions that are based on the recommendations provided during the Forums.
- ◆ The State Board must engage local boards, administrators and service providers.
- ◆ The State Board must demonstrate its interest in local systems.
- ◆ The State and federal government must work together on developing practices and policies.

Some recommendations could be characterized as a call for local boards to play a leadership role in community advocacy and policy. For example:

- ◆ Local boards must develop in their communities a comprehensive understanding of issues facing the agriculture industry and the needs of farmworkers.

*“One of the most important agendas taken on by our Workforce Board is to advance our community’s education and dialogue on workforce issues.”*

Mr. Bruce Stenslie, Administrative Director, Ventura County WIB and Human Services Agency, stated in his comments to the Subcommittee on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competitiveness, The House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce

- ◆ Local boards in rural areas must focus more of their funding and other resources to provide services to agricultural businesses and farmworkers.
- ◆ Local boards in rural areas must ensure that their systems use up-to-date technology to overcome barriers in serving rural areas.
- ◆ Local board membership should include adequate representation of the agriculture industry.
- ◆ A good working relationship should be cultivated between agriculture employers and farm labor contractors.
- ◆ Local boards should provide leadership in obtaining funds from other State and federal sources to address the needs of their communities, including farmworkers and agriculture businesses.
- ◆ Local boards should market their program services to agricultural employers and encourage employer investment.
- ◆ Local boards need to pursue corporate funding.
- ◆ Local board membership should include representatives of the One-Stop clientele (e.g., farmworkers).

The remainder of the suggestions for improving access may be categorized as addressing the administrative policies of local One-Stop systems:

- ◆ Develop a uniform system for gathering data;

- ◆ Train One-Stop staff comprehensively, and keep them informed of services provided by the One-Stop delivery system;
- ◆ Provide One-Stops with bilingual and bicultural staff as appropriate to meet local needs;
- ◆ Recognize staff for their exemplary service to all members of their community;
- ◆ Ensure that local administrators simplify One-Stop operations, eliminating as much “red-tape” as possible (this may entail working with the State and DOL);
- ◆ Connect farmworker youth to WIA-funded and other partner services;
- ◆ Offer stipends to farmworkers to help them take advantage of opportunities while obtaining services such as training;
- ◆ Create an environment that rewards and encourages innovation and risk-taking (this may also require collaboration with State and DOL);
- ◆ The impact of local memoranda of understanding should go beyond simple compliance, ensuring operational collaboration and coordination of services.
- ◆ Encourage the workforce development community to advocate for farm workers; and
- ◆ Remove any unnecessarily stringent eligibility requirements.

During the course of the San Joaquin County Forum an inquiry was provided on an apparent interpretation provided by the State that individuals that resides in Mexico, regardless of immigration status, are precluded from WIA services. The State Board has worked with the DOL to clarify this matter .The DOL has provided the following:

Specifically, §188(a)(5) of the WIA states "Participation in programs and activities or receiving funds under this title shall be available to citizens and nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylees, and parolees, and other immigrants authorized by the Attorney General to work in the United States." Further, in defining "citizenship," 29 CFR 37.4 defers to the definition of "Discrimination on the Ground of Citizenship" in 29 CFR Part 37 (the Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the WIA of 1998, Final Rule), which employs identical language as that of WIA §188(a)(5).

Alien commuters are defined as "an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence or a special agricultural worker lawfully admitted for temporary residence under section 210 of the Act [Immigration and Nationality Act] may commence or continue to reside in foreign contiguous territory and commute as a special immigrant defined in §101(a)(27)(A) of the Act to his or her place of employment in the United States.

Provided that the individuals defined as "alien commuters" meet any of the categories in § 188(a)(5) of the WIA and/or are authorized by the Attorney General to work in the United States, these alien commuters should be allowed to access and be provided WIA services, provided they are otherwise eligible and the services are appropriate for their needs.

"Local Workforce Investment Boards should review their present plans and policies regarding the current demands on resources and ensure that any individual to be enrolled in WIA-funded services meets the local area priority of service policy. Local areas must ensure that any and all individuals who register for WIA services have a right to work and/ or are authorized to work in the United States, including those deemed 'alien commuters'."

## **FOCUS ON TRAINING**

While recommendations did not vary as widely as those for other themes, the comments regarding training were consistent throughout all four Forums. Some comments regarding One-Stop staff listed under “Administrative” could just as easily be listed under “Training,” such as:

- ◆ More training programs funded by partner programs should be accessed through One-Stops;
- ◆ Provide continuous training for all One-Stop staff and partner staff;
- ◆ Provide VESL training for One-Stop staff, and for the staffs of partnering service providers;
- ◆ Provide training for the trainers to ensure continuous improvement of services and relevance to the local community and economy;
- ◆ Encourage local administrators to invest in the continued education of their staffs; and
- ◆ Furnish One-Stop staffs with training in job-seeker skill analysis.

There were also the following recommendations specifically addressing the training needs of farmworkers and agricultural employers:

- ◆ Ensure employer groups have a role in assessing One-Stop clients for training;
- ◆ Establish training programs of longer duration for higher-skilled occupations;
- ◆ Offer farmworkers a wider variety of training options;
- ◆ Encourage local administrators to apportion more funding for training rather than non-training services;
- ◆ Encourage local One-Stop systems to provide farmworkers with adult basic education (ABE) and GED programs;
- ◆ Develop training programs for those who do not speak English;
- ◆ Encourage local One-Stop systems to provide ESL and VESL geared to specific occupations or business sectors;
- ◆ Provide training assessments in other languages besides English;

- ◆ Eliminate required set time frames for core or intensive services before obtaining training services.
- ◆ Provide training that is customized to meet individuals’ needs and skill levels;
- ◆ Provide incentives to farmworkers to pursue educational goals;
- ◆ Provide like-skills training; and
- ◆ Establish open entry/open exit training programs.

Those program providers, such as the Colusa County One-Stop and WIA §167 (NFJP) program administrators have been effective in training farmworkers during cyclical/seasonal periods of employment by instituting open entry and open exit training programs.

A number of recommendations favored providing farmworkers with access to academic and lifelong learning services through the One-Stop system. Such services would include:

- ◆ Training in computers and high technology;
- ◆ Centralized training/academic centers for farmworkers (e.g., Farm Workers-U);
- ◆ Leadership training for farmworker youth;
- ◆ Community Development Classes;
- ◆ Career counseling and mentoring programs for farmworkers;
- ◆ Small business training and opportunities;
- ◆ The participation of, and collaboration with, the University of California, California State University, and California Community College systems; and
- ◆ The use of up-to-date technology (e.g., teleconferencing, video conferencing) to provide farmworkers with access to courses.

## **IDENTIFYING REMAINING BARRIERS**

This section addresses the recommendations regarding other existing barriers that confront farmworkers, which an ideal One-Stop system would alleviate, such as:

- ◆ The lack of affordable housing;
- ◆ The lack of adequate schools;

- ◆ The need for mobile medical services;
- ◆ The need for medications;
- ◆ Discrimination resulting from cultural differences;
- ◆ The need for educational services for all ages;
- ◆ The negative effects of the “work-first” mentality;

Training and Employment Notice No. 4-02, for reason of concerns for the laid-off low-skilled airport screeners, the U.S. Department of Labor, Assistant Secretary, Emily Stover DeRocco, provided the following:

*“WIA does not require any waiting time between when core services, commence and when intensive services and training services are made available. When an initial assessment (staff- assisted core service) of an individual clearly indicates that the individual is unlikely to find reemployment without additional assistance, the individual may move directly to intensive services for further assessment, career counseling and development of an individual employment plan. Any of these intensive services may be used to document the need for training services. A discussion and consultation may then take place. It is feasible for this to occur in one visit to the One-Stop Career Center. Further testing in support of determining an individual’s ability to successfully complete a particular training course of interest to him/her can follow.”*

***EDD Directive, WIAD 02-11, WIA Technical Assistance Eligibility Guide***

***“Local areas cannot adopt a “work first” approach in developing local procedures and eligibility criteria for the three tiers of service.*** The adult and dislocated worker programs are not “work first” programs. Locally developed procedures and criteria must be designed to provide employment and training opportunities to those who can benefit from, and who are most in need of, such opportunities [WIA Section 195]. The appropriate mix and duration of services should be based on each participant’s unique needs.”

- ◆ The shortage of training providers;
- ◆ The need at all One-Stop sites for active outreach to migrant seasonal farmworkers;
- ◆ The need for legal resources among farmworker communities;
- ◆ The need for classes on U.S. culture, customs and laws; and

- ◆ The shortage of resources to address the problem of spousal and domestic abuse;

**Organizacion en California de Líderes Campesinas**

Lideres Campesinas is the first and only grassroots farmworker women's advocacy project in the nation. Its work has been recognized with a Crime Victim Service Award from the U.S. Department of Justice and the Marshalls Domestic Peace Prize from the Family Violence Prevention fund.

Líderes coordinates innovative domestic violence prevention, AIDS education, sexual harassment in the workplace, child labor laws, and leadership program that educates and trains women farmworkers to conduct peer-on-peer education. Líderes also trains women farmworkers on pesticides and worker exposure, as well as worker rights and employer responsibilities. Additionally, Lideres’ curriculum focuses on orienting farmworker women to the culture, customs, and laws of the United States.

What began as a graduate student survey of women farmworkers is now a network of 12 different women's groups, including three indigenous Mixteco groups. Líderes' peer-on-peer education has reached thousands of immigrant women in rural California, and is expanding its training to other states.

Lideres continues to be a strong link between farm worker communities and the workforce development system. Contact Lideres at (909) 865-7776

## V. Conclusion – Next Steps

The forum discussions demonstrated the eagerness of workforce development professionals to serve all members of their respective communities. However, California’s workforce investment system is currently faced with uncertainty and budgetary constraints.

*“California needs more money – not less. One-Stop career centers around the state are in dire fiscal straits as a result of federal spending reductions. Most of the local WIBs report significant staff layoffs and hiring freezes at the One-Stops, reduced operating hours, and closings of centers. Many areas are forced to scale back Rapid Response teams. This is at a time of private and public sector downsizing, when demand for services is dramatically increasing and traffic in One-Stops has already reached historic levels.”*

*Critical Workforce Issues for California, California Workforce Association*

If this system is to address the needs of California’s communities, then clearly it must develop and implement effective strategies to provide services for California’s largest industry, agriculture, and its workers. Moreover, these challenges can only be addressed through a comprehensive system based on partnerships and collaborations that involve federal, state, and local entities. The process of establishing those partnerships must begin with an ongoing dialogue. To this end, the Farm Worker Forums were developed and implemented.

As noted earlier in this report, the recommendations herein can be seen in the context of their overall applicability throughout California’s workforce investment system. In particular, the following recommendations should be seriously considered by all of California’s local boards and One-Stop systems:

- ◆ Engage regional industries to help develop the needed workforce for California’s dynamic regional economies, even as the economy itself responds to changing demographics, global competition, emerging industries, and

issues concerning natural resources (e.g., water supply).

- ◆ Assess current programs to determine if they meet the needs of the local community, such as:
  - Services for workers with limited English proficiency (e.g., bilingual staff, printed materials in languages other than English, ESL and VESL resources);
  - Outreach methods;
  - Transportation (e.g., location of One-Stop sites, mobile services);
  - Helpful and cross-trained staff; and
  - Hours of operation.
- ◆ Establish and enhance partnerships among programs that share common objectives and populations, in order to coordinate services and to leverage resources (e.g., co-enrollment in different programs, establishment of affiliated One-Stop sites, etc.).
- ◆ Encourage federal, state, and local partners to invest collaboratively in developing systems, policy, program strategies, and information (e.g., labor market information, industry practices, and regional economic issues).
- ◆ Identify skill shortages and upgrade the skill levels of regional workforces, to the mutual benefit of employers and workers.
- ◆ Encourage local boards to reexamine their policies and practices: are they making good use of their local flexibility to better serve their communities and regional economies?

The forum planning team looks forward to continuing the efforts highlighted in this report, as well as others, including:

- ◆ The Imperial County Workforce Investment Board’s Agricultural Roundtable, which was facilitated by CalWIB; and
- ◆ The Tulare County Workforce Investment Board’s partnership with Proteus, Inc., which allowed Tulare County to provide Spanish-language orientation and job readiness programs.

These efforts daily show how well a collaborative approach can serve the diverse needs of local communities.

### *Next Steps*

CalWIB and the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment Training Administration, Region 6 (DOLETA) will continue to seek and share effective strategies for serving farmworkers and the agricultural industry. Additionally, CalWIB's Farmworker Work Group will provide policy recommendations to the Board regarding the farmworkers, agricultural employers, and rural communities. Potential areas of future focus may include farmworker youth and further outreach to the agriculture industry.

The Farm Worker Forums planning team will consider follow-up measures based on recommendations from the forums and will continue to facilitate local discussions. CalWIB and DOLETA welcome input and recommendations from the workforce development community. Please contact Javier Romero of CalWIB at (916) 324-3277 or Juan Regalado, DOLETA Region 6 Agricultural Services Specialist, at (415) 975-4669 with any questions you have or information you wish to share.

Please visit the DOLETA Region 6 Farm Worker Forum Web site at [http://www.doleta.gov/regions/reg06/region6/post\\_forum\\_site/main.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/regions/reg06/region6/post_forum_site/main.cfm) for periodic updates on best practices and upcoming events.

VISALIA

Tulare County

Workforce Investment Board

Tuesday, April 23, 2002

INDIO

Riverside County

Economic Development Agency

Thursday, May 16, 2002

STOCKTON

San Joaquin County

Workforce Investment Board

Thursday, June 20, 2002

SALINAS

Monterey County

Workforce Investment Board

Wednesday, June 26, 2002