

# Training Overview

Growers seeking Equitable Food Initiative (EFI) certification engage farmworkers, managers and other staff in a Leadership Team, which receives customized training to build skills and assume its role ensuring compliance with the EFI Standards. After certification, the Leadership Team engages the entire workforce in ongoing verification, providing customers and consumers with an added layer of assurance about worker and food safety.



## Objectives:

- Provide an overview of EFI's audit and certification process as well as its standards on labor-management cooperation, labor practices, food safety, responsible pest management and processing and packing facilities.
- Explore the purpose and structure of the Leadership Team and its role in the broader organizational context.
- Strengthen essential skills of farmworkers, supervisors and managers across work processes in communication, problem-solving and meeting coordination to foster collaboration in finding solutions that ensure continuous improvement and compliance with EFI Standards.



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The EFI training is both motivating and supportive of our work. [After the training] we come back with a lot of energy, confidence and interest to fix things. We have the backing of the certification and the standards to tell us how to do things and mark a path for us."

– **Elizabet Carino Ibarra, Leadership Team Member, Worker Health & Safety, AgriBeans for Alpine Fresh**

# Approach and Methodology

EFI's approach to workforce development recognizes that each person selected to represent workers and managers on the Leadership Team brings a unique and valuable set of skills and experiences to the role. EFI delivers participatory, multilingual trainings for participants with a wide range of cultural backgrounds, schooling and literacy levels, skill sets and life experiences. The 40-hour curriculum is often delivered in two separate visits, but every effort is made to adapt the training schedule to meet the needs of each farm operation.

## Chapter Content

## Objective

### Overview of the EFI Program and Standards

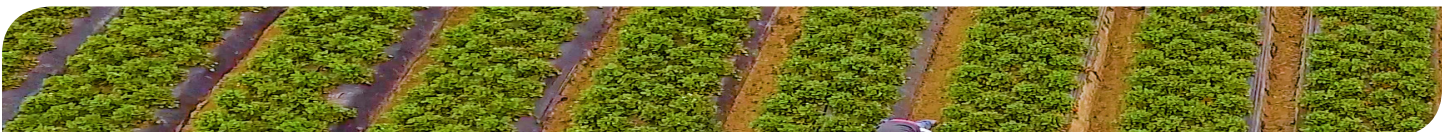
The training begins with activities to deepen understanding of EFI's history, philosophy and vision and the diverse stakeholders involved. Leadership Team members learn how EFI's certification program works and begin to explore its comprehensive standards.

- Understand EFI's vision, purpose and process.
- Explore the contributions and benefits of EFI's diverse stakeholders: growers, farmworkers, retailers and consumers.
- Discuss the grower's intent in pursuing the EFI Program and the importance of developing a collaborative approach to labor practices, food safety and responsible pest management.

### Purpose and Structure of the Leadership Team

Participants are guided in understanding the intent of a representative Leadership Team, its relationship with management and workers across processes and areas, and its key role in achieving and maintaining EFI certification through ongoing verification and continuous improvement.

- Form an effective, representative Leadership Team.
- Provide a context of farmworker and supervisor opportunities to improve the standards in daily work.
- Explore the role of the Leadership Team as a vehicle for collaboration, compliance and continuous improvement, not as a replacement for management structures and roles.
- Acquire skills for organizing and conducting productive meetings.



## Communication and Conflict Resolution

Team members explore concepts and methods of effective communication, including listening skills, consensus building, identifying common interests and addressing differences through respectful dialogue and problem-solving.

- Strengthen interpersonal communication skills critical for maintaining effective relationships in the workplace.
- Develop skills for resolving differences and addressing conflicts.
- Practice effective communication as a means of fostering trust and teamwork.

## Problem-solving Skills

The Leadership Team begins working on real issues related to the EFI Standards. Using a data-driven problem-solving cycle, the team identifies issues, gathers and analyzes information and proposes viable alternatives that may be implemented to ensure compliance.

- Engage resources across processes and areas of the farming operation to identify and address problems or issues affecting compliance with the EFI Standards.
- Acquire skills for group problem-solving and decision-making based on common interests.
- Develop implementation plans for compliance and continuous improvement.
- Strengthen skills for assessing the effectiveness of solutions implemented.

## Teaching Coworkers About the EFI Program and Standards

Leadership Team members explore their role and methodologies for informing and training coworkers on the EFI audit and certification process, the standards and the workforce's key role in ongoing verification and continuous improvement.

- Participants acquire effective techniques for communicating with coworkers about EFI.
- The Leadership Team designs a strategy for informing and teaching coworkers and engaging them in the shared task of ensuring compliance.



# Materials & Support

## EFI Training Binder for Leadership Teams

EFI provides each team member with a training manual that covers the complete curriculum, along with additional training materials and key EFI Program documents. These materials are available in English and Spanish.

## Attestation and Certificates of Completion

Upon successful completion of the core Leadership Team training, EFI will provide an Attestation, which the grower and team will be required to present during audits as evidence of compliance with Labor Management Cooperation indicators. EFI will also provide an individual Certificate of Completion to each Leadership Team training participant.

## Support and Follow-up

EFI facilitators will work with the Leadership Team on a process for ongoing support. This may include electronic communications with management and the team following the training. The grower may also schedule a follow-up visit for support and refresher training, which is designed around the needs and priorities of the Leadership Team.

“We have been able to use the skills that we learned in the training to support the company and solve little problems before they turn into larger ones. We’ve been able to work as a team and identify problems that might not be directly in our area, but will help support the workers and the company.”

– Marcela Jiménez, Compensation and Benefits Manager, MangoPack for Alpine Fresh

