



A Decade of Advancing
Responsible Labor Practices
and Worker Engagement



2024 Annual Report

Table of Contents

- 3 From the Executive Director
- 5 10 Years of Sustained Impact
- 12 Reach & Impact
- 13 Progress on Strategic Plan
- 16 News & Notes
- 18 Leadership
- 19 Our Donors

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About EFI

Equitable Food Initiative (EFI) is a nonprofit capacity-building and certification organization that works to improve the lives of farmworkers and drive business performance by integrating worker engagement throughout the supply chain. Committed to multistakeholder participation, EFI works with growers, farmworkers, retailers and experts to create assessment, training and organizational development programs that support continuous improvement and address agriculture’s most pressing challenges.

EFI’s mission is to bring together growers, farmworkers, retailers and consumers to transform agriculture and the lives of farmworkers.

For more information about EFI, visit equitablefood.org.

2024 Audited Financials will be available at equitablefood.org/financials after June 2, 2025.



From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As I write this reflection on our work in 2024, our board and staff are preparing to gather and celebrate completion of EFI’s first full decade as an independent nonprofit organization! EFI incorporated in California in January 2015 and formally spun off from Oxfam America as an independent entity three months later. It was founded with a mission to “transform agriculture and the lives of farmworkers” because stakeholders across the fresh produce supply chain realized that they needed to collaborate in order to address increasing labor, food safety and market challenges.

While I can’t claim that EFI has solved all those challenges in our first 10 years, I am proud of the work we have done to bring key actors together to drive continuous improvement across the produce industry. EFI has moved beyond our original scope of certification to meet agricultural employers wherever they are in their journey to improve labor practices.

Our rigorous certification program has successfully improved workplace culture for some 60,000 workers across 90 companies in five countries, provided direct training for nearly 5,000 workers, generated nearly \$25 million in worker bonuses and helped certified growers build stronger business relationships with their retail customers. But even combining EFI with all the other reputable programs, I doubt that certifiers or auditors could ever reach more than 10% of the agricultural workforce. This realization drove EFI’s determination to scale our impact by promoting the produce industry’s 2018 Ethical Charter on Responsible Labor Practices.

Because the Ethical Charter was written by produce companies and buyers themselves, we saw a great opportunity to help them uphold their commitments and provide support mechanisms to progress toward credible implementation. Since the Ethical Charter addresses the entire produce and floral supply chain, its principles transcend the jurisdictional differences between state and national labor laws and regulations: Full implementation would therefore create a de facto international “floor” on working conditions that has never before existed.

EFI is proud to have worked with industry leaders and advocates to begin that journey through the launch of the Ethical Charter Implementation Program (ECIP) and the rollout of our LAB (learn, assess, benchmark) software platform (see Page 13). By the end of 2024, ECIP had already reached nearly half of the suppliers selling produce in North America. Over time, as the criteria for engagement evolve, ECIP will start to generate meaningful improvement in working conditions on tens of thousands of farms around the world – our best shot at reaching the 90% of the workforce that will likely never experience the benefits of certification.



The real beauty of EFI’s evolution over the past decade and a half is that none of our achievements can be traced to any single person. True collective impact emerges from the willingness of multiple leaders to recognize a potential ‘whole’ greater than the sum of the individual parts.”

Peter O’Driscoll, Executive Director, EFI

From the Executive Director

Continued

Even as we scale ECIP, EFI has more work to do to “transform agriculture” for a more ethical and sustainable future. Growers cite the labor shortage as a top threat to their viability, so it’s not surprising that investment in labor-saving technology has exploded. Throughout history, the rapid and blanket introduction of automation has eliminated jobs and led to negative and unintended consequences for workers, employers and rural communities alike. Some of these consequences can be avoided by leveraging the invaluable experience, knowledge, skills and abilities of agricultural workers in the design and implementation of new work systems. EFI’s ongoing effort to document agricultural skills and create a formal credentialing system will codify the vast resources workers offer, presenting workers with more professional choices and the industry with a unique opportunity to maintain productivity with a more skilled workforce.

EFI is starting our second decade in a strong position. We have expanded our suite of products and services to reach all agricultural employers, whether they are just starting on a journey to improve labor practices or are ready to go beyond certification to support training and credentialing their workforce. While the profile of agricultural labor will look a lot different in 10 years, I am confident that EFI will be a leading force in shaping that future as we continue to shift industry thinking from “labor as a problem” to “labor as an indispensable part of the solution.”

None of EFI’s achievements so far would have been possible without the support of our in-kind and funding partners, and in particular the visionary organizations that were early investors in EFI’s multistakeholder approach. Some of them told us 10 years ago that philanthropy would not sustain EFI indefinitely and that, if we were creating value for the industry, the private sector should pay for it. We took that advice to heart, and while we still depend on grants to fund early-stage program development, I’m proud to point out that fee-for-service earned revenue constituted over 50% of EFI’s income in 2024. Many thanks to all those who have made that progress possible! Please stay with us on this journey into the next decade.

Gratefully,

Peter O'Driscoll
Executive Director



“EFI has truly created transformation. First, a group of people who thought they had competing interests were transformed into partners working shoulder to shoulder to found an organization that moves forward everyone’s objectives. Next, the culture on farm after farm was transformed from being strictly hierarchical to a workplace where everyone’s views and input are valued.”

Maisie Ganzler, former Chief Strategy & Brand Officer for Bon Appétit Management Company and EFI board



Ten Years of Sustained Impact

Multistakeholder Collaboration Creates New Value Across the Supply Chain

EFI was born out of the growing recognition that something significant had to shift in stakeholder relationships to preserve and grow the fresh produce industry. For decades, farmworker organizations had clashed with agricultural employers to address low wages and challenging working conditions. Yet fewer than 1% of U.S. agricultural workers experience the legal protection of a union contract.

“Those of us in the farmworker union movement realized that we needed to expand the tools in our toolkit beyond unionization if we were truly going to be able to improve working conditions,” explains **Erik Nicholson**, former Senior Vice President of United Farm Workers and EFI’s first board chair.



Meanwhile, fresh produce suppliers were confronted with a labor shortage and a declining share of the food dollar. “When we saw that only about 9 cents of the consumer dollar was returning to the farm, we realized that we needed to adopt a model that leveraged money and interest further down the supply chain,” Nicholson adds. Conversations proceeded, and the farmworker unions engaged certification expert Michael Conroy, who encouraged the group to revisit their value proposition and consider the role that farmworkers play in food safety.

At first, the unions dismissed the idea, believing that food safety was squarely the responsibility of management. They quickly came to realize, however, that when farmworkers have the proper knowledge and understanding of risk management protocols they can create more value for the farm, well beyond their physical labor. Engaging workers could not only improve food safety measures but also help drive improved working conditions, operational efficiency and product quality.

“We recognized that we could shift the paradigm and conversation about the role that farmworkers play in the field,” Nicholson shares. That realization would become one of EFI’s main tenets and has defined its long-term influence on the agricultural industry. He continues, “EFI was the first to



2008

Exploratory Discussions Begin

2009

EFI Program Development Begins

2010

EFI Program Outline Developed by Participating Stakeholders

April 2011

EFI Launches, Incubated by Oxfam America

October 2011

Peter O'Driscoll Hired to Lead EFI Program

March 2012

EFI Pilot Phase Begins on Three California Farms

October 2013

Costco Wholesale Becomes EFI's First Retail Partner

Multistakeholder Collaboration

Continued

posit the value that workers create throughout the whole supply chain.”

At the same time, retailers were facing increased pressure from consumers and shareholders to prove that their supply chains were ethical and sustainable. Two retail buyers, Costco Wholesale and Bon Appétit Management Company, showed interest early on in supporting a new model that would create value across the supply chain and provide more assurance around working conditions and food safety. Both companies, soon joined by Whole Foods Market, helped shape the EFI certification standards and agreed to pay a premium on EFI-certified produce, the majority of which would be returned to workers for their additional work and diligence.

During an interview in 2019, **Jeff Lyons**, Senior Vice President of Fresh Foods at Costco who has since retired, explains the company's participation in and support of EFI: “Our mission statement and our code of ethics all deal with taking care of our employees, taking care of our members, but also respecting our suppliers, and that goes all the way down to the people that work in the field. We found that there was a void in the industry that was just not consistent with the culture that we have at Costco, and we got to work on it.”

With retailer power behind them, the farmworker union groups ap-



proached groups like the Center for Science in the Public Interest, Consumer Federation of America and Pesticide Action Network to join the work and dialogue. Together, this multistakeholder group of “strange bedfellows” aimed to ensure that all parts of the fresh produce supply chain benefited from the fair treatment of workers, providing safer produce to consumers and protecting the environment and long-term viability of the land. The group had to think differently, consider the whole system, and adjust attitudes toward the other players in the supply chain.

The collaborative work ultimately led to development of the EFI Standards and the EFI Leadership Team training model.

“Because it was truly multistakeholder work, being part of EFI’s board and Standards Committee provided many challenges and took many hours and dedication by a highly creative, cohesive and committed team. The experience benefited the rest of my work in California food and ag policy, helping me to deeply understand experiences, challenges and perspectives across agriculture. And, with no doubt whatsoever, what EFI has accomplished on behalf of farm labor in industrial-scale produce production is unparalleled.”



Margaret Reeves, Senior Scientist (Environmental Health and Workers' Rights), Pesticide Action Network



“EFI is a win-win-win! An innovative approach that is good for farmers, good for farmworkers and absolutely good for the consumer.”

Congresswoman Julia Brownley, California's 26th District

Upskilling and Collaboration Among Workers and Managers

The evolving recognition of farmworker value in the supply chain, which drove the multistakeholder collaboration, also directly shaped EFI's Theory of Change: If the workforce is properly trained and incentivized to collaborate with management in developing a safe, stable and dignified working environment, then new value is created for growers and buyers.

EFI ensures a properly trained workforce by establishing collaborative worker-manager EFI Leadership Teams on each certified farm. These teams receive several days of training focused on problem-solving, effective communication and understanding EFI Standards. Crucially, they learn to represent workers across processes and areas, facilitate collaboration between workers and management, and drive continuous improvement and ongoing compliance verification to maintain their EFI certification.

Integration of knowledge and a breakdown of organizational silos begins with the first meeting of an EFI Leadership Team, and the shared training creates unique opportunities to understand different perspectives and form mutual respect. In team meetings, workers are encouraged to speak from their skills and experience and represent the total workforce, while managers learn more about other areas of the operation and recognize opportunities for continuous improvement and innovation from worker input.

While third-party evaluations and academic studies confirm the positive impact of EFI Leadership Teams on business performance and working conditions, the true effectiveness and advantage of these teams was most evident during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within

July 2014

EFI Awards First Certification in California

March 2015

EFI Awards First Certification in Mexico

April 2015

EFI Becomes an Independent Nonprofit

August 2015

EFI Awards First Certification in Canada

March 2016

Whole Foods Market Becomes a Retail Partner

November 2016

10,000 Farmworkers on EFI-Certified Farms

August 2017

EFI Launches New Logo and Label

October 2017

EFI Awards 25th Certification

March 2018

1,000 Farmworkers Trained

June 2018

\$5 Million in Farmworker Bonuses Distributed

Upskilling and Collaboration
Continued

hours of state and federal mandates being issued to limit the spread of the coronavirus, farms used their trained EFI Leadership Teams to help redesign schedules, housing, transportation, health checks and social distancing measures. EFI staff worked with certified growers and their EFI Leadership Teams to define best practices in these areas and shared them widely with the industry throughout the first year of the pandemic.

Vic Smith, CEO of JV Smith Companies, also notes the importance of the communication networks that the EFI training and Leadership Team had created. "The ability for these already-established teams to be communicating and solving problems immediately as this issue gained traction has been critical in our ability to not only protect our workers but continue to deliver food to customers."

Workers cite numerous benefits from the EFI training and the existence of Leadership Teams, including how skills learned in the training are applied in their families and communities. When management responds positively to the input and requests by workers through the Leadership Teams, workers notice, and the cycle quickly fosters a more trusting and collaborative organizational culture.

**Leadership Teams:
Driving Business
Improvement and
Better Working
Conditions**

Third-party evaluations* have found that EFI's Leadership Team model impacts business performance by:

- Engaging workers at every level, which leads to stronger internal controls, to improved monitoring for compliance and prevention – and eventually to increases in productivity, safety and quality.
- Helping managers to recognize the importance of learning more about other areas of the operation and begin making links across different practices and disciplines.
- Freeing workers to drive innovation by sharing their valuable experience, knowledge and perspective.
- Identifying areas where formal procedures were lacking, and establishing robust policies and processes to improve labor conditions, food safety and pest management.

And the Leadership Team model creates improved working conditions by:

- Promoting improved communications across the organization and breaking down traditional silos.
- Providing skills and a place for conflict resolution, problem-solving and giving voice to workers that previously felt disempowered.
- Removing fear of retaliation and creating a culture of respect.
- Providing opportunities for women to have a voice, particularly around sexual harassment.

* Equitable Food Initiative Impact Evaluation Report, BSD Consulting, November 2019.
 * Making the Business Case for Improved Farm Labor Conditions: Evaluating the Equitable Food Initiative Leadership Teams Model, Christy Getz and Ron Strohlic, March 2017.
 * Agricultural workers' participation in certification as a mechanism for improving working conditions: The Equitable Food Initiative, Journal of Applied Communication Research. Heather Zoller, Ron Strohlic and Christy Getz, 2019.



Bernardo Reyes, Field Supervisor, Stemilt Growers

In the beginning, as a supervisor, it was difficult to hear solutions and ideas from the workers, because I thought I knew more than them. But when I started to hear their ideas and see things that were getting past me, I started to give them more freedom to give us solutions. The group started to feel more motivated, we started to see more production and employees were coming to work happier. I started to feel that the group was working, and I saw that the management started to function in a different way."

There's more communication now, both in the EFI group with the members and with the employees. I've noticed change. For example, at the beginning, I was a little afraid to communicate with the people because, well, I don't believe it's easy for anyone to speak, and less so when there are a lot of people. And so, I've been learning how to handle this a little more."



Munay Alcazar, worker safety and food safety for Stemilt Growers



July 2018
Ethical Charter on Responsible Labor Practices Released

July 2019
30,000 Farmworkers on EFI-Certified Farms

September 2019
Ethical Charter Implementation Program Pilot Begins

August 2019
3,000 Farmworkers Trained

September 2019
\$7.5 Million in Farmworker Bonuses Distributed

March 2020
EFI Leadership Teams Help Redesign Processes for Safety During Pandemic

April 2020
EFI Compiles and Shares Best Practices in COVID-19 Safety Across the Industry

May 2020
EFI Is Featured in a Cover Story of Costco Connection Magazine



“Through our work with EFI, we have created an openness of communication and the freedom for workers to express their thoughts and feelings to higher management. They do not have a fear of retaliation; in fact, when they speak up, we will applaud workers instead of telling them not to report such things.”

Amalia Zimmerman-Lommel, Director of Social Responsibility, GoodFarms



“When managers and workers come together as part of the Leadership Team, the workers will often have the best solutions to the problems the team is collaborating on. And when the workers hear from management how much their expertise is valued and how management wouldn’t have been able to come up with a good solution without them, they feel a greater sense of ownership and pride for the good of the company.”

Alma Rivera, former Social Responsibility Compliance Manager, Alpine Fresh, Inc.

Impact Beyond Measure

It is difficult, if not impossible, to truly measure the impact that EFI has had on the lives of farmworkers, the farming operations that it has certified and the fresh produce industry more generally. “EFI has created a ripple effect of cultural changes for businesses, farms, communities and families,” states **Ernie Farley**, partner with GoodFarms and EFI board chair from 2018 to 2024. “It’s hard to define where it ends, so it’s impossible to measure the true impact.”



EFI’s goal is to shape how the fresh produce industry views and engages its labor force. When the EFI certification program began, agricultural employers questioned whether training and engaging a seasonal, diverse, transient workforce was possible. It quickly became clear that relying on a highly trained team of workers to build trust and communicate with the full workforce in a relatable way was key to understanding and driving compliance with the EFI certification standards across the organization. In one evaluation study, a supervisor noted, “There is a clear change in language: from ‘because they told us’ to ‘it’s our shared responsibility.’”

The insights, resources and successes of the EFI certification program have inspired other efforts to engage and improve conditions for agricultural workers in new ways. During the past 10 years, EFI has partnered with numerous organizations, agricultural employers, workers and funders on topics including responsible recruitment, trauma-informed auditing, consumer trends, workforce development, sustainability, work process redesign and sexual harassment. Aiming to serve as a thought leader in the industry and inspire change, EFI has turned research, experience and partnerships into actionable industry resources, including articles, reports, webinars, courses, tip sheets and interactive online tools.



Building on the model of collaboration, the staff and board of EFI have acted as catalysts for action on pivotal issues. EFI has partnered with recruiter CIERTO Global and created a certification program for farm labor contractors, with the Regenerative Organic Alliance to include labor standards in its certification, and with technology investors to integrate farmworker insight into their design and implementation plans. Development of the Ethical Charter Implementation Program (ECIP) represents EFI’s most significant contribution so far to produce industry collaboration.

In 2018, following the industry’s release of the Ethical Charter on Responsible Labor Practices, EFI quickly initiated dialogue to make it a meaningful tool for the industry. Drawing on a proven ability to unite stakeholders across the supply chain and recognizing the need for accountability, EFI encouraged retailers to identify and focus their procurement on growers and suppliers who are willing to demonstrate their alignment to the Ethical Charter’s principles, and to avoid those who are not. EFI also

recognized an opportunity to help agricultural employers strengthen the labor management systems they need in place to adhere to the Ethical Charter.

As EFI enters its second decade, it aims to increase impact by supporting the entire produce industry to implement the Ethical Charter, standardizing the documentation and credentialing of farmworker skills through formal credentials and helping to ensure that worker voice is at the center of technology development and adoption. EFI has become a key driver of responsible labor practices in agriculture, fostering collaboration and developing impactful programs that integrate worker knowledge. Its dynamic approach and commitment to continuous improvement will guide the organization as it continues to drive meaningful change across the industry. As Nicholson states, “With the goal of transforming agriculture, we don’t always know what the work will look like until we actually get out there and start doing it. Then we realize what is needed, and we continue to build.”

May 2020
EFI Awards
40th
Certification

August 2022
EFI Convenes
a Multistakeholder
Advisory Group
to Oversee
ECIP

October 2022
\$15 Million in
Farmworker
Bonuses
Distributed

January 2023
56,000
Farmworkers
on EFI-
Certified
Farms

September 2023
4,500
Farmworkers
Trained

October 2023
ECIP Officially
Launches to
the Industry

March 2025
\$25 Million in
Farmworker
Bonuses
Distributed

April 2025
EFI
Celebrates 10
Years as an
Independent
Nonprofit

Reach & Impact

(as of 12/31/24)

4,723

Workers trained

38% women

75
Farms
certified

63,465

Workers on farms with
EFI-Trained Leadership
Teams

\$24M
paid in worker
bonuses since
2014



Progress on Strategic Plan

Strategic Pillars

Strategic pillars define EFI's work and the activities that will deliver on our mission.

Drive Market-Responsive Continuous Improvement

Certify Industry Leaders

Build and Credential Skills for Farmworkers and Managers

Organizational Sustainability
Sustain the People, the Culture, the Financing and the Systems Needed to Implement EFI's Work

In 2024, EFI completed the third year of its current 5-year strategic plan, and with the progress that has been made, the EFI team is well positioned to begin defining new strategic priorities for 2027–2031. In implementing the plan, EFI has expanded its suite of products and services over the past several years to reach agricultural employers at every stage of their journey, whether they are just starting on a path to improve labor practices or are ready to advance beyond certification and support deeper training and credentialing of their workforce.



Drive Market-Responsive Continuous Improvement

Create marketable products that fulfill EFI's mission by engaging new populations of workers and types of organizations, and by delivering consulting projects that fund EFI's mission-aligned work.

EFI's main focus in this strategic area has been the Ethical Charter Implementation Program because it offers the real opportunity to reach the vast majority of fresh produce suppliers and their workers. Based on the Ethical Charter, which was authored by produce companies and buyers themselves, ECIP helps the industry align to the responsible labor practices they defined.



ECIP

Drive Market-Responsive Continuous Improvement

Continued

EFI serves as facilitator of ECIP, coordinating a multistakeholder advisory group to oversee the program and providing the interactive, online ECIP LAB platform that is the program's main tool.

After several years of conversations and a pilot program, ECIP was officially launched in fall 2023, and by the end of 2024, ECIP had already reached nearly half of the suppliers selling produce in North America.

ECIP LAB offers customized components for produce suppliers and growers, with future components planned for farm labor contractors and workers. The platform teaches employers about the principles of the Ethical Charter, shows them how to develop the management systems necessary to uphold those principles, then tracks their continuous improvement over time. With user data from the LAB platform, ECIP ranks produce growers and suppliers based on the degree to which they have engaged these tools, which allows buyers to send a powerful market signal by doing more business with "engaged" suppliers – and less with those who choose not to participate. A separate report on ECIP and its first program year can be found at equitablefood.org/ecip.

EFI and its buying partners are also exploring how the LAB platform can be adapted to address labor risk in other supply chains beyond the fresh produce industry.

Certify Industry Leaders

Offer cost-effective products and services that bring value to all supply chain stakeholders and are in demand in the marketplace, delivered in a streamlined and efficient manner, and set EFI apart as the certifier of choice for leading produce growers in the Americas.

To reduce unnecessary duplication and cost, EFI launched a custom audit approach in early 2024 to allow farming operations to audit only to social standards if they could provide a current food safety certificate from another credible program. The streamlined approach quickly became popular with growers who preferred or were required to conduct food safety audits other than through the EFI Program.

The EFI team worked with farming operations to launch another iteration of the program in early 2025 that will further streamline audits. The EFI certification audit will continue to ensure workers' role in building a strong food safety culture, but it will no longer include technical food safety standards, which will further reduce expenses and redundancies. This strategic shift allows EFI to dedicate resources to its core strengths of continuous improvement and worker engagement and to better meet grower needs.

The certification program brought in new supplier companies in 2024, along with a first-ever commitment from a consumer goods company to pay the EFI premium (see Page 16). In addition, more than \$4 million was paid in worker bonuses this year, bringing the program total to nearly \$25 million since the premium began.



Build and Credential Skills for Farmworkers and Managers

Create an industrywide framework for skill-building and credentialing to provide career ladders for agricultural workers and managers.

A focus of work in this strategic area has been to develop a pilot program in California to document, assess and credential agricultural skills through a formal system recognized by labor groups, employer associations and state agencies alike.

EFI worked with Jobs for the Future, a national leader in workforce development, to conduct more than 150 interviews and focus groups with frontline farmworkers and supervisors. The goal was to develop a first-of-its-kind catalog of agricultural skills that can be integrated into the U.S. Department of Labor's O*NET database, the primary source of occupational information in the country.

The latter half of 2024 was spent preparing to bring together leaders from California government, organized labor, employer associations, academia, training providers and farmworker groups to develop a road map for standardizing and formalizing the credentialing of agricultural skills. The convening, scheduled for March 2025, will establish a clear action plan and define EFI's role moving forward.

This work, despite its challenges, promises major impact by creating new career opportunities for farmworkers, fostering a more stable and professional workforce for growers and promoting a more sustainable produce industry, thereby better fulfilling EFI's mission.



Defining Agricultural Skills to Create Credentialing Programs and Career Ladders for Farmworkers

Tier I: Foundational competencies

Communication, collaboration and problem-solving. Incorporated into EFI's certification program training and model.

Tier II: Commodity-specific skills

Planting, care, harvesting and packing of specific crops.

Tier III: Technical skills

Mechanization, automation and digital tools.



News & Notes

GoodFarms Celebrates 10th Anniversary of First EFI Certification

July 2024 marked the 10th anniversary of the first EFI certification, which was granted to GoodFarms, a supplier that subsequently certified its entire supply chain and has generated more than \$12 million in bonuses for its workers. GoodFarms' first certificate was awarded while EFI's training and certification program was still a project incubated under Oxfam America. Workers, managers and owners at GoodFarms can be credited with playing a large role in the successful formation and launch of EFI and have remained committed to continuous improvement in both farming operations and the EFI certification program. GoodFarms demonstrates that social responsibility can be successfully implemented at the field level, creating long-term positive benefits that are both sustainable and profitable.



First Farmworker of the Year Named

In partnership with The Packer, EFI launched the first-ever Farmworker of the Year Award, calling for nominations of farmworkers who demonstrated the values of commitment, continuous learning and support of their community and colleagues. Nominees were highlighted through articles, podcasts and social media content throughout the year. The winner, Maria de Sagrario Iglesias, has worked for FirstFruits Farms for 35 years in a variety of roles. Those who nominated her noted that she shares her extensive experience with many of her coworkers and that her commitment to others extends to frequent volunteer work.



Illustration Contest Produces Beautiful Results

EFI held an illustration contest encouraging farmworkers to submit artworks that reflected EFI's core values and could be used in training materials. Submissions highlighted numerous perspectives of farm work, and first place was granted to Veronica Jiménez for her artwork, "Una Trabajadora."

First Consumer Goods Brand Commits to Pay EFI Premium

In October, baby and kid food brand Once Upon a Farm announced its commitment to source and pay premiums on 7 million pounds of produce from EFI-certified farms. The announcement was groundbreaking as it was the first consumer goods company to commit to pay the EFI premium, which funds worker bonuses.



EFI Brings Buyers and Suppliers Together to Celebrate ECIP Adoption

More than 100 industry members came together during the International Fresh Produce Association's Global Show to celebrate the six major buyers, 261 produce suppliers and 1,213 growers who had subscribed to ECIP LAB as of the end of October. Twenty-six supplier companies were lauded for showing exceptional leadership in engaging with ECIP LAB.

EFI Recognizes Hispanic Heritage Month

EFI encouraged fresh produce industry members to recognize Hispanic Heritage Month and highlight the important role of Hispanic communities in the agricultural system. This campaign, similar to EFI's resources for Farmworker Awareness Week and sun exposure, provided a communications toolkit with stories, videos, resources, statistics and ideas for engaging workers.



4th Walmart Foundation Grant Received

EFI was awarded a \$1.2 million grant from the Walmart Foundation to support its role as facilitator of the Ethical Charter Implementation Program. The funding marks the fourth grant EFI has received from the Walmart Foundation to promote responsible labor practices across the produce supply chain. This grant will enable EFI to accelerate industry adoption and make ECIP a more effective tool by adding new components for farm labor contractors and workers on the ECIP LAB platform.



Sustainability Course Launches

EFI developed a three-day virtual course to share tools, resources and a foundational understanding of sustainability in the produce industry to help produce companies coordinate and share their sustainability initiatives. The short, intensive course was customized so that each participating company could design a sustainability road map based on industry trends and organizational priorities.



“The sustainability landscape continues to change, but this course served as an excellent barometer for us to understand our current sustainability status, network with others and reinforce our direction and specific sustainability priorities as being relevant to the industry as a whole.”

Stephanie Teclaw, Director of FSQA, Regulatory and Sustainability, RPE, LLC



Leadership

2024 Board of Directors

Ernie Farley, Chair
Partner, GoodFarms

Preston Witt, Vice-Chair
Director, Supplier Code of Conduct Compliance, Costco Wholesale Corporation

Reyna Lopez, Secretary
Executive Director, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste

Carol Schrader, Treasurer
Independent Consultant

Natalie Camacho Mendoza
Board Member, Farmworker Justice

Michael Conroy
Independent Consultant

Pete Donlon
Vice President, Misionero Vegetables

Eva Greenthal
Policy Associate, Center for Science in the Public Interest

Thomas Gremillion
Director of Food Policy, Consumer Federation of America

Martin Guerena
Sustainable Agriculture Specialist, National Center for Appropriate Technology

Hana Ivanhoe
Advocacy and Campaigns Manager, Oxfam America

Erika Navarrete
Vice President, United Farm Workers

Margaret Reeves
Senior Scientist, Pesticide Action Network North America

Fernanda Suárez
Director, Sustainability and Social Impact, NatureSweet

Baldemar Velasquez
President and Founder, Farm Labor Organizing Committee

2024 Staff

EFI's success is deeply rooted in the expertise and dedication of its long-tenured staff; therefore, as we celebrate our 10th anniversary, we recognize the years of service each member has contributed to the organization, some extending back to when EFI was a project of Oxfam America.

Lilian Autler (2016–2024)
Organizational & Workforce Development Manager

Kevin Boyle (2010–present)
Organizational & Workforce Development Director

Shaleena Capers (2020–present)
Finance Manager

David Cea (2021–2024)
Workforce Development Specialist

Karla Cook (2020–present)
Certification Manager

Madelyn Edlin (2022–present)
Product Marketing Manager

José Guillama (2021–2024)
Workforce Development Specialist

Kenton Harmer (2013–present)
Market-Based Impact Director

Star Huff (2016–present)
Operations Manager

Alice Linsmeier (2012–present)
Organizational & WFD Manager

Gabriela Lopez-Barry (2023–present)
ECIP Manager

Adriana Martinez (2023–present)
Interim Director, Strategic Partnerships & External Relations

Alexandra Martinez (2023–present)
Sr. Digital Marketing & Sales Associate

Candace Mickens (2015–present)
Finance & Operations Director

Diona Monroe (2018–present)
Data Manager

Sky Navarro (2021–present)
Certification Program Associate

Peter O'Driscoll (2011–present)
Executive Director

Ana (Lulu) Rivera Collazo (2019–present)
Training Manager

LeAnne Ruzzamenti (2016–present)
Marketing & Communications Director

2024 Leadership Team Committee

The Leadership Team Committee is a standing committee of EFI's board of directors made up of farmworkers and production managers from certified farms who have completed EFI's Leadership Team program training. The group provides input and recommendations to the EFI Board of Directors.

Claudia Acosta
Abundant Harvest Organics

Magaly Alfaro Avalos
NatureSweet Invernaderos Tuxca

Erika Castro
Windset Farms®

Jorge Luis Flores García
El Milagro de Baja

Edgar Alejandro Cárdenas Calvario
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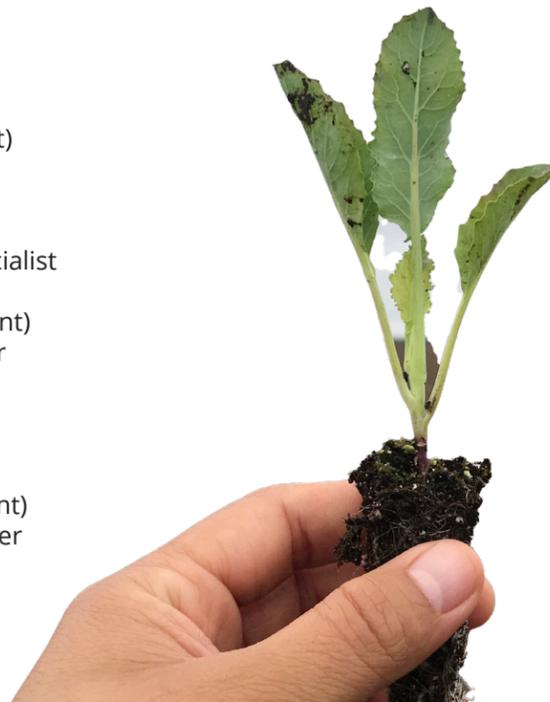
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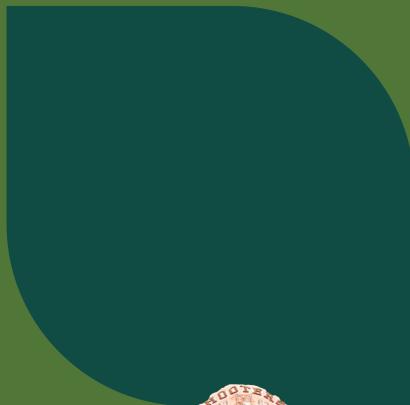
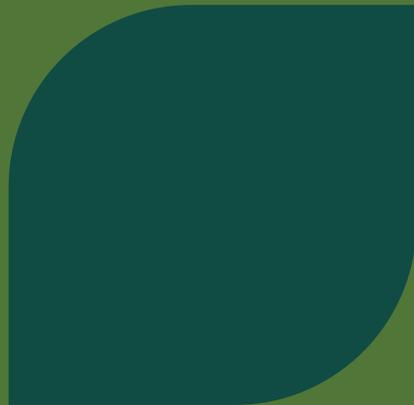
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