



House Farm Workers!

Working to support and promote the provision of safe, decent, and affordable housing for all Ventura County farm workers since 2004.

Recent Events

Here's a closer look at our education and advocacy activities during the past three months.

Supervisors Authorize \$1 million for Farm Worker Housing

As a follow-up to our *HFW!* Summit event in March of 2015, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a one-time \$1 million budget allocation to farm worker housing. On February 23, 2016, the BOS approved funding to go to three projects. The first is a project in Oxnard, developed by Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation. The other two projects are in Ventura and will be developed by the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura.

The funding from the Board of Supervisors is an opportunity for these projects to be more competitive as they apply for and leverage other funding. Collectively, the three projects will provide 106 new farm worker housing units.

"If we want our farm worker housing applications to be as competitive as possible [...] it is just essential that we play a role and step up and be a part of this kind of funding." --Supervisor Steve Bennett at the meeting

House Farm Workers! is appreciative of the Board of Supervisors' commitment to making sure our farm workers have a safe and decent

place to call home. Below, *HFW!* board member and Senior Developer at the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura, Karen Flock, speaks to the Board of Supervisors.



***HFW!* Young Advocates Committee has Launched!**

The Young Advocates had their first official meeting in January. Through social gatherings, storytelling and community engagement, the Young Advocates Committee encourages young people to become advocates for farm worker housing. If you are a young person who wants to get involved and make a difference in the lives of farm worker families, join us! The Young Advocates meet monthly. Contact our program coordinator for meeting dates and times at housefarmworkers@verizon.net.



"From Harvest to Home" Film Showings

We have recently made efforts to show our film at local high schools and universities, as a way to inform a broader audience and engage more young adults in farm worker advocacy. Thanks to La Reina High School in Thousand Oaks and the CSUCI Chicana/o Studies program for showing our film to your students! Interested in showing the film to your community group? Contact us!



Save the Date!

Our 6th annual "From Field to Fork" fundraiser will be held at the beautiful Walnut Grove at Tierra Rejada Ranch in Moorpark. Join us on Thursday, July 21, 2016 as we bring together the farmers that produce Ventura County's agricultural bounty, the local chefs who celebrate that bounty on their menus, and the farm workers whose labor makes it all possible. More information to follow.



Farm Worker Corner

At the age of 14, Jose Aguirre began working in the fields. In Mexico, his family grew corn and chickpeas. Looking for a better life, Jose's father brought him to the U.S. and told him they were going to work. Jose replied that he didn't know how to work. His father said, "You'll learn." And he did. First, they picked cotton in Arizona. In those days travel was easy between Mexico and the U.S.



In 1960 Jose obtained his permanent resident status and moved to Santa Paula. He joined the Limoneira crews picking lemons and oranges. He recalls that company housing originally cost just \$12 a month, and buses took them to the orchards and to shopping at Chino's Market. At Chino's, they could charge their purchases of groceries and goods, and Chino's would deliver their purchases to them at Limoneira. They paid their accounts once a month. After 20 years as a picker, Jose retired from Limoneira. He continued working another 12 years for Vega Labor as a contractor.

Now 81 and retired, Jose lives alone and takes pride in cooking for himself, and coming and going as he pleases. His wife died nine years ago, and in 2012 he moved to Rodney Fernandez Gardens, where he keeps his sparsely furnished apartment whistle clean. He is grateful for Social Security, which provides him enough money for food and necessities. Jose knows how to make a little money go a long way by foregoing extra purchases, such as a dining room table. Jose likes his quiet retirement and takes pleasure in walking to the park, visiting friends and relatives, and fishing at Lake Casitas, the piers and jetties. He feels safe at the Gardens, and appreciates the well-tended common areas and the places to sit in the sunshine.

- By Donna Hamer, *HFW!* Volunteer



Volunteer and Join a *HFW!* City Committee

House Farm Workers! has established committees that cover the unincorporated county, Santa Paula, Fillmore, Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo and Moorpark. These volunteer-driven committees are the heart of the organization and

have played a critical role in advocating on behalf of the farm worker community for the past 10 years. The city groups mobilize public support, engage public officials, and collaborate with other grassroots organizations to ensure affordable housing for farm workers.

Interested? Contact our program coordinator at housefarmworkers@verizon.net.

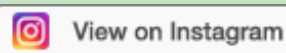
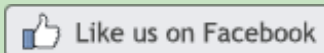
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Share our film, "From Harvest to Home"



From Harvest to Home

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Donations to *House Farm Workers!* are always welcome and are tax deductible. To donate, click on the PayPal donate button below:



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