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UNDERSTANDING DOMESTIC FAIR TRADE FOR AGRICULTURE OF THE MIDDLE

January 2016-December 2017

**University of WI – Madison, Center for
Integrated Agricultural Systems**

PIs: Mike Bell, Brad Barham, Michelle Miller



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Overview

- Return on labor is insufficient for both owners and hired labor
- Ag labor markets shaped by urban labor markets
- Midscale businesses are positioned to form coalitions with hired labor
- Fair trade strategies to be explored
 - Certification
 - Negotiation
 - Coalition building
 - Public policy
- Best practice examples
- Participatory



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Community-based project team

- **Michael Bell (Sociology)**
- **Brad Barham (Economics)**
- **Larry Burmeister (Ohio University-Anthropology)**
- **Michelle Miller, Kelly Maynard, Cris Carusi (UW CIAS)**
- **Alexia Kulwicz (Extension School for Workers)**
- **Travis Doyle (Agroecology)**
- **Laura Frye-Levine (Sociology)**
- **Sarah Lloyd (Wisconsin Farmers Union, dairy farmer)**
- **Becky Glass (Labor Network for Sustainability)**
- **Erika Inwald (Domestic Fair Trade Association)**
- **Rick Adamski (dairy / beef farmer),**
- **Rufus Haucke (vegetable farmer)**
- **Steph Tai (UW Law School)**
- **Carolina Sarmiento (UW School of Human Ecology)**
- **Peter Hurst (consultant on international agricultural labor)**
- **Rosalinda Guillen (Community to Community Development, DFTA)**
- **Ernesto Velez Bustos (Centro Campesino, DFTA)**



Agriculture of the Middle



- Return on family and community labor a limiting factor for economic success
- NC1198 workgroup
- Annual meeting
October, Minneapolis

<http://www.agofthemiddle.org>



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Case studies

- Organic Valley and supply chain partners
- \$15 hour campaigns in California and New York
- **CSA vegetable farms in the Upper Midwest**
- **Milk with Dignity campaign in the Northeast**
- **Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship**
- Good Food Procurement policies
- Others?

CSA farms are proactively addressing labor issues



Card-sized handout for hired workers to review

- Farmers and hired labor helping team to id issues and potential cases
- Self-surveyed n=60
- 83% retain paid workers
- Larger farms pay higher wages
- 20% retain year round employees
- Distinction between interns (greenhorns) and apprentices (field-tested)



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Second Annual Northeast Gathering on Domestic Fair Trade

Friday August 12, 2016 8:30 am-12:00pm
UMASS, Amherst,
Room: N211 Integrated Learning Center

Who should come?

Farmworkers and farmers. Any food system workers: processors, manufacturers, worker organizers, farmer organizers, cooperative organizers, visionaries, and allies.

Consider attending if your work (paid or volunteer) involves fairer wages, safer work, fairer prices, ethical trading, making the food system environmentally, economically, and socially just, sustainable, and humane.



CATA

El Comité de Apoyo a Los Trabajadores Agrícolas
The Farmworker Support Committee



**PIONEER VALLEY
WORKERS CENTER**



NOFA-NY
NORTHEAST ORGANIC FARMING
ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK



dfta

DOMESTIC FAIR TRADE
ASSOCIATION

Pre-registration is appreciated. Please contact Liz Henderson
at elizabethhenderson13@gmail.com or Louis Battalen at louis@topoftheforest.com.



Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship is the first accredited program for farming in the United States



- 76 Master dairy graziers
- 28 active Master-Apprentice pairs
- 11 Journey dairy graziers
- 80 Apprentice candidates



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ILO & FAO – Decent work

productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity

International Labor Organization - **four pillars of decent work**

- Employment creation and enterprise development
- Social protection
- Standards and rights at work
- Governance and social dialogue

Food and Agriculture Organization – **assessing work quality for self-employed farmers**

- Time used and avoidance of excessive hours during the peak season.
- Returns to labor time
- Volatility of farm income
- Assets consumed/used
- Access to producer organizations
- Occupational safety and health hazards
- Access to social protection mechanisms



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2014 American Community Survey - Do farm workers earn less or get lower wages than food service? Initial results:

- **Competitive labor market conditions across sectors.**
- **Improve farm worker welfare by raising wages overall in the economy or focusing on other types of social policy**

UW Prof. Brad Barham & ERS Economist Thomas Hertz

Study compares farm laborers in crops/livestock with restaurant/food service workers.



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dfta

DOMESTIC FAIR TRADE
ASSOCIATION

United for Health, Justice, and Sustainability

**National Conference on Domestic
Fair Trade December 8-11, 2016
Portland, Oregon**

- Pre-conference workshop on ILO / FAO decent work in agriculture
- Friday supply chain tours
- Saturday Keynote Blain Snipstal
- Join us as sponsor and participant

**Racial Justice and Fair Trade in Our
Food and Agricultural System**



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Early impacts

- **Catalyze conversations between groups**
- **Contribute a framework for organizations to work within**
- **Support and validate good works in the community**
- **Connect work inter-locally**



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For more information:

Michelle Miller

mmmille6@wisc.edu

608-262-7135

<http://www.cias.wisc.edu>

<http://www.agofthemiddle.org>



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Life-after-research-grant

- Document worker & business stories, surveys
- Conceptualize “decent work” framework & metrics for US, small & midsize ag
- Measure impact on structure of agriculture
- Extension, tech assistance, professional development
- Create space for civil discourse