



# MIGRANT FARMWORKERS

Did you know migrant farmworkers fill many gaps in Ontario's food system?



## FARMING

**Farmworkers** prep the soil, seed, tend & harvest the crops.



## PACKING

**Farmworkers** pack produce up for transportation.



## TRANSPORT

**Farmworkers** move the food to the food terminal, farmers' markets, organizations, restaurants or stores.



## RETAIL

Food can be sold by **farmworkers** at the market, or by stores, organizations and restaurants to customers.



## EATING\*

Consumers buy, prepare and eat the food.



## DISPOSAL

Food waste and scraps go to the landfill or are composted & sold back to the farms (to be properly managed by **farmworkers**).



\*Recent reports have shown "child-size" portions of food being rationed to adult migrant workers who test positive for COVID19 and are in isolation. **The very workers our food system depend on are going hungry.** (Windsor Star, July 2020)



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## Worker Statistics in Ontario...



Approximately 20,000, primarily BIPOC, migrant workers arrive in Ontario to work on farms, in greenhouses & food factories each year.

Living conditions on the farm are cramped. Beds can be as close together as 1.5 feet. Only one toilet & shower are needed for every 10 residents. Spaces are often divided by hanging sheets.

Many migrant workers have been shut out of emergency income supports during COVID19, which means they go hungry, lose their savings, can't pay rent & sacrifice essential healthcare.

Ontario migrant workers are reportedly 10x more likely to contract COVID19 than the general population. To date, over 1,600 migrant farmworkers have contracted the virus & 3 have died.

### CONTRACT

"Closed" work permits mean temporary foreign workers are tied to one employer which means switching (for any reason) is very difficult and risks deportation.



"Temporary" foreign workers aren't so temporary. Many workers return to Ontario for 8 months at a time, sometimes for decades.

Temporary foreign workers represent about half of all paid agriculture employees.