

Farm Labor – Moving Forward

*Presented at the 2018 Southeastern Apple Growers Meeting By:
Mark Williams, Agribusiness Henderson County & Bert Lemkes, General Manager, Tri-Hishtil*

Efforts continue regarding ag labor and immigration reform, but the number of farmers is small, so our industry must step up and everyone do his or her part for solutions.

ACT Now!!!

- 1) **A**ddress the main needs and issues, sharing these talking points using your words:
 - a. A matter of our economy - agriculture can't continue without adequate labor
 - b. A national security issue - will determine where the U.S. gets its food supply
 - c. Not opposed to border security – Good immigration policy is the best tool for it
 - d. Not opposed to E-verification - Reform plan should be in place before enforcement
 - e. Not asking for amnesty – only a worker permit program with conditions and controls
 - f. Document workers who are here and deport any with a criminal background
 - g. Workers must pay taxes and not commit any serious crimes
 - h. Restrict work permits to the ag industry – allow to move from farm to farm
 - i. Must assure current workers have ability to gain legal permit to work without having initial “touchback” requirement to gain that status
 - j. Does not take jobs that U.S. want or are willing to perform – 1st option to US citizens
 - k. Should be a market driven program based on need, not one driven by caps
 - l. Allow families to stay together – adds to stability
 - m. Needs to be simple and affordable with minimal red tape – unlike current H-2A
 - n. Real stories need to be told - make it personal, with memorable examples
- 2) **C**ontact your Washington representatives and their staff:

Congressman Mark Meadows (NC-11)

Washington DC office (202) 225-6401

Chad Yelinski, Legislative Director chad.yelinski@mail.house.gov

Wayne King, Deputy Chief of Staff/District Director Wayne.King@mail.house.gov

200 N. Grove Street Suite 90 | Hendersonville, NC 28792 Office P: (828) 693-5660

Congressman Patrick McHenry (NC-10)

Washington Office (202) 225-2576 or Hickory Office (800) 477-2576

2334 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515

U.S. Senator Thom Tillis

Charlotte office (704) 334-2448 or Washington, DC office (202) 224-6342

Email: <https://www.tillis.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-me>

U.S. Senator Richard Burr

Winston-Salem office (800) 685-8916 or Washington, DC office (202) 224-3154

Email: <https://www.burr.senate.gov/contact/email>

Contact the member of Congress and Senate representing your area if different from the above

- 3) **T**alk, don't yell - Be respectful and factual (educate)