**Interview an Agricultural Worker**

**Class activity for Chapter 5**

***Food, Farms and Community***

**Material Requirements: None**

**Time Requirement: 45-60 minutes**

This activity can take two forms: if you have a small class or a thriving local agricultural community, it may be possible to assign students to interview agricultural workers. As a class, you may come up with lists of questions to ask interview subjects, which might include asking about hourly wages, healthcare coverage, retirement programs, on-the-job injuries, overtime pay, and whether they enjoy their job or not. It might also be useful to preface interviews with a discussion that elucidates students’ knowledge, and preconceptions about agricultural labor and the people who do it. Have any of the students worked on a farm? Do students see agricultural labor as the sort of job uneducated people do? Do they view the work associated with feeding others to be highly valued in today’s society? What expectations do they have about agricultural laborers’ backgrounds, both educational and socio-economic?

After students do their interviews, it may be useful to have them offer brief presentations or participate in a roundtable discussion about what they learned from their interviews. This activity can be particularly interesting if your region has a significant population of migrant workers, provided they are willing to take part in the interviews and students can gain access to them.

If having students do individual interviews of agricultural workers is not feasible, you can reach out to workers and attempt to put together a panel to engage with your students in class. As with individual interviews, it may be worthwhile to discuss questions students might ask ahead of time so as to best engage the panel of workers. In this context, it will also be useful to debrief the panel after it the class discussion. Revisiting students’ expectations of agricultural laborers and their perceptions of the value of their job can be enlightening.