

COVID AT THE MARGINS

A Discussion Series by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

FARMWORKERS IN THE PANDEMIC: ESSENTIALLY DISPOSABLE



Thursday, August 27 | 12:00 pm ET / 9:00 am PT

Watch at <https://www.facebook.com/presbyhunger>

Or join via Zoom: RSVP at sdopevents@pcusa.org to receive the link

PANELISTS



Antonio Tovar is Executive director of the Farmworker Association of Florida (FWAF), a statewide grassroots organization. Before moving to Florida, he was a journalist for United Press International covering Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America. Antonio was born in Mexico City. He studied Rural Development and Community Health at El Colegio de la Frontera Sur in Chiapas, Mexico and Anthropology at the University of Florida. Dr. Tovar's activism started in High School. In the labor movement he has been the Secretary and Treasurer of the Food Chain Workers Alliance (FCWA); he is Board member of Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC), and the Coalition of Agricultural Workers International (CAWI). He coordinates the Climate Justice collective at La Via Campesina North America, and the South Region at the US Food Sovereignty Alliance. Antonio's activism is complemented with his academic work; he has over 30 academic publications on workers' health and safety with multiple academic partners. He is a Fellow at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Interdisciplinary Research Leaders, and Board member of the Community-Campus Partnership for Health (CCPH).



Kathia Ramirez is an organizer and Food Justice Coordinator at CATA- Comité de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agrícolas or the Farmworkers Support Committee. She has served the immigrant and farmworker community in Southern NJ, Kennett Square PA and Salisbury MD for the past 41 years. CATA works around Immigration, Worker's Rights and Food Justice. Kathia was born and raised in Aztlan land, Los Angeles CA, but very proud of her Zapotec Indigenous Roots from Oaxaca Mexico. She has been part of the CATA team for 6 years. In her role, she works closely with community members who are interested in bettering our current food system and she manages our community gardens in each state we work in. Kathia represents CATA and our members in Alliances at the national level working in solidarity with social movements and at the global level to advance Food Sovereignty and Agroecology as an alternative to our Food System. Prior to working at CATA, she was pursuing her Bachelor's in Spanish and Latino Studies at Mount Holyoke College in Western MA. She has served as one of the USFSA- US Food Sovereignty Alliance Northeast Region Co-Coordiators since 2017 and on the board of the DFTA- Domestic Fair-Trade Association.



Erik Nicholson is National Vice President of United Farm Workers (UFW) where he has worked since 2002. The UFW is the largest and oldest US trade union for agricultural workers. He directs the UFW's efforts to develop strategies that improve the lives of farmworkers who produce food for US consumers, wherever these workers may be in the world. He is Chair Emeritus of the Board and one of the founding members of the EFI. All three major US farmworker unions serve on the board. Erik is the Chair of the Board of CIERTO, a UFW created non-profit dedicated to the identification, training and dispatch of agricultural workers in a clean and transparent manner. In addition to this work, Erik directs the UFW's national campaign to address conditions on dairy farms, an industry that has some of the highest injury and fatality rates in the US. Erik's work involved convening a nascent group of national and international retailers, along with dairy producers to develop a multi-stakeholder effort to improve working conditions at dairies across the US. He has overseen a number of regulatory and legislative efforts directed at improving the lives of farmworkers, including leading negotiations in Washington State on a binding set of rules to protect farmworkers from the COVID 19 virus. He participated in the national negotiations of the Farmworker Modernization Act which passed the House of Representatives late last year. Nicholson has a B.A. from Duke University and has been a featured presenter at several national and international conferences concerned with immigration and guest workers.