

## **Affordable and Secure Food Act**

In the last year, food costs rose faster than any time in four decades. This year, a typical Thanksgiving meal cost Americans 20 percent more compared to 2021. Rising food costs squeeze family budgets and force impossible choices between food, groceries, medicine, and housing. Although there are many contributors to rising food prices, a key driver is the acute shortage of skilled farm labor. When producers lack enough workers, it restricts supply and increases labor costs. This not only drives up food prices; it also drives many farmers and ranchers out of business.

It is long past time we reform the H-2A visa program and bring undocumented farm workers out of the shadows to reduce food prices, support American growers, and secure our nation's food supply. The Affordable and Secure Food Act will:

- Establish a program for agricultural workers, along with their spouses and minor children, to earn legal status. Farm workers in the program may earn a path to a green card after 10 years of agriculture work.
- Reform the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker program by providing H-2A visas for year-round jobs for the first time, modernizing the application process, creating more wage certainty, and ensuring critical protections for H-2A farm workers.
- Establish a mandatory, nationwide electronic verification system for all agricultural employment, with high standards for privacy and accuracy.
- Lower the cost of and increase access to farm worker and rural housing.

The Affordable and Secure Food Act reflects years of close input from farmers and ranchers, agricultural workers, and labor organizations. All of them understand that our broken H-2A program hurts families, farm workers, and the agriculture sector in the U.S. while creating needless risk to America's vital food supplies.

*Supporting organizations include:*

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, International Fresh Produce Association, American Hort, Land O'Lakes, Inc., American Business Immigration Coalition-Action, Western Growers, National Potato Council, U.S. Apple Association, American Mushroom Institute, Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, National Farmers Union, and United Farm Workers.