

Citizenship and Ag Labor Supply

Potential Implications from Immigration Reform

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Farmworkers, Employers, and Advocates All Push for Immigration Reform



United Farm Workers

¡Sí, Se Puede!®

Congress: Farm workers need legal status NOW

Farm workers across America are pushing Congress to give farm workers legal status before the end of the year. Farm workers have proven themselves essential to America's communities, economy and food supply over and over again - putting their lives at risk to keep America fed.

The International Fresh Produce Association:

Workforce Reform in 2023

Key conversations have restarted in the 118th Congress to ensure the country has labor on the farm and in the supply chain while broad immigration reform efforts remain a priority for both parties. IFPA continues to act to keep this in focus through the following actions:



IFPA supports immigration reform that protects our current workforce through an earned pathway to legal status.

The National Council of Ag Employers:

7

Support coalitions advocating for immigration reform to ensure the inclusion of an effective future flow foreign worker visa program.

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- **CAW Status:** Undocumented & working in ag \geq 180 days in last 2 years (85% of undoc crop workers; 37% of crop workforce)
 - ⇒ Spouse and children eligible for CAW dependent status
 - ⇒ Lasts for 5.5 years & renewable indefinitely
 - ⇒ Renewal: can work in any industry, but need to work in ag \geq 100 days/year (\sim 83% of undoc; \sim 80% of LPRs)
- **LPR Status:** CAW & working in ag \geq 100 days/year for each of the next:
 - 4 years if working in agriculture \geq 10 years prior to enactment
 - 8 years if working in agriculture $<$ 10 years prior to enactment

This Study: Potential Effects of a Path to Legal Immigration Status

Research Questions and Results Preview

1. How do undocumented crop workers differ from LPRs in terms of...
 - ⇒ Having & believing they can get a non-farm job: ↓
 - ⇒ Farm Wages & Weekly Hours: ↓
 - ⇒ Annual farmwork days: ↑
 - ⇒ Planning to continue doing farmwork as long as able: Similar
2. Would granting LPR status to undocumented workers impact labor costs?
2. How could the FWMA better address farmworker shortages?
 - ⇒ Path to citizenship for undocumented in other sectors

Contributions

1. First evidence on differences in non-farm labor market outcomes
2. Estimates of short- and medium-run labor supply elasticities by legal status
2. Policy implications and recommendations

Data and Methods: National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS)

The only nationally representative survey of US ag workers (crop only)

The NAWS includes detailed information on...

- Workers: immigration status (U_i , N_i) & other (age, education, english,... \mathbf{X}_i)
- Farm job controls: task, crop, payment type (\mathbf{Z}_i)
- Farm outcomes: intentions for staying in ag; farm wage, hours, days (y_i)
- Non-farm outcomes: having, perceived ability to get; NF wage, hours, days (y_i)

We explore differences across immigration statuses in a descriptive analysis:

$$y_i = \alpha + \beta_U U_i + \beta_N N_i + \rho' \mathbf{X}_i + \gamma' \mathbf{Z}_i + \lambda_t + \lambda_r + \varepsilon_i$$

Results: Non-Farm Extensive Margin

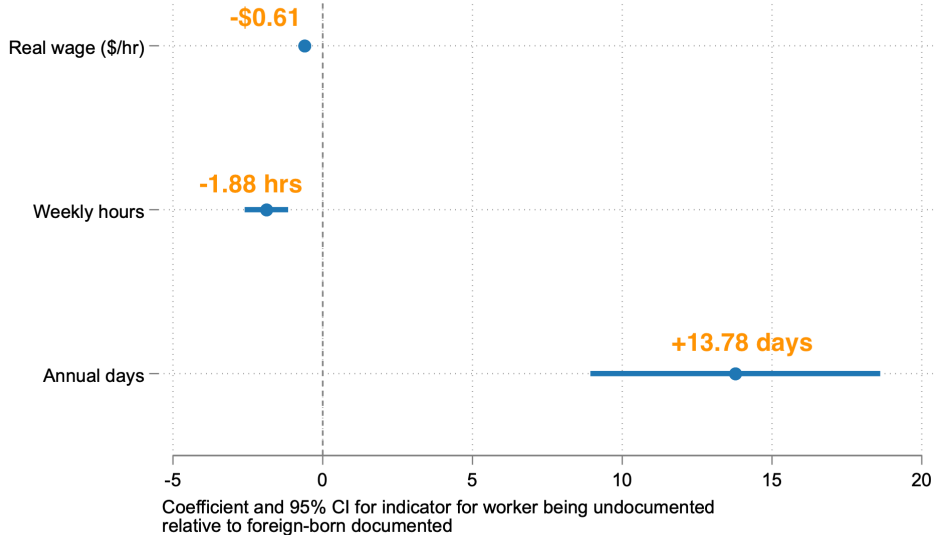
Comparing undocumented farmworkers with legal permanent residents



Plot shows coefficients and 95% CIs for indicator for worker being undocumented, relative to foreign-born documented

Results: Farm Employment

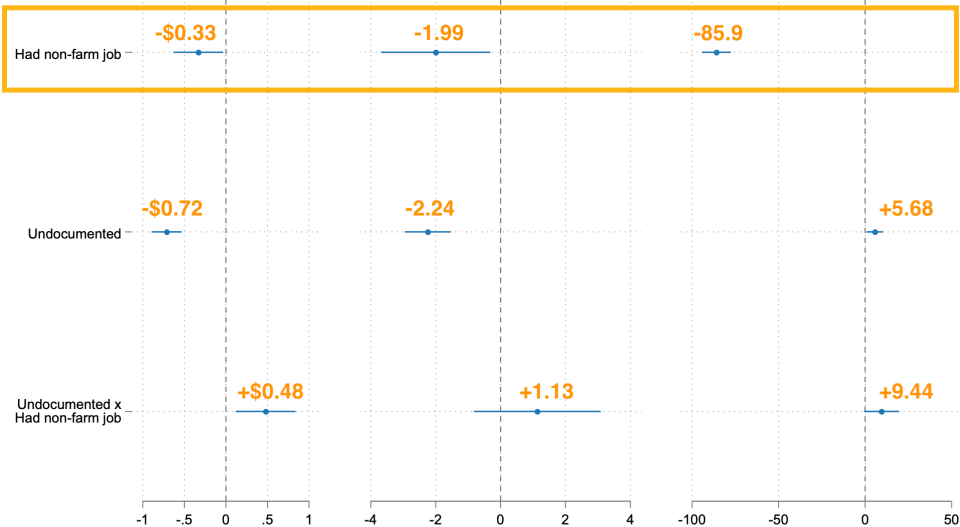
Comparing undocumented farmworkers with legal permanent residents



Real farm wage (\$/hr)

Weekly farm hours

Annual farm days



Discussion, Policy Implications, and Considerations

Key Take-aways:

1. Compared with LPR's, undocumented workers...
 - ↓ likely to have and believe they can get non-farm jobs
 - ↓ farm wages & weekly farm hours; ↑ annual farm days
2. Non-farm jobs associated with ↓ hours/week and days/year on farms

Policy Considerations:

1. FWMA would improve workers' quality of life, but would likely increase costs for farm employers while failing to address long-run worker shortages
- ⇒ Alternatives include extending provisions to workers in other industries, future undocumented workers, and H-2A

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