

In accordance with 20 CFR 653.107(d), the Indiana Department of Workforce Development is soliciting information and comments regarding the State Agricultural Outreach plan. Please send any information or comments to Tim Lawhorn, State Monitor Advocate, at tlawhorn@dwd.in.gov. Comments will be taken through 5pm EDT, September 14, 2012.

**State of Indiana
Department of Workforce Development
Agricultural Outreach Plan
Program Year 2012**

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development has developed its Agricultural Outreach Plan to describe the activities planned for providing services to the agricultural community, both agricultural employers and Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW), as described in 20 CFR Part 653.107, the WIA Title I final regulations, the Workforce Investment Act/Wagner-Peyser Act (WIA/W-P) Planning Guidance, the Unified Planning Guidance, and applicable WIA workforce development regulations.

Although the Wagner-Peyser grant does not contain funds targeted for Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) activities, the United States (US) Department of Labor Regulation 653.1 mandates that the State accomplish outreach to farm workers. The State does not have staff assigned to performing outreach services to farm workers. However, the State does meet its outreach responsibilities to MSFW with its financial support of the Consolidated Outreach Project (COP).

The Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives is the administrative agency for COP, which is a collaborative agreement among the Department of Workforce Development, Family and Social Services Administration, Indiana Department of Education, and Indiana Health Centers, Inc. to share limited resources to maximize outreach efforts. The COP program allows for a more efficient use of MSFW resources by minimizing duplication of effort in outreach by participating agencies.

The COP outreach staff provides the State with current information regarding the distribution of the MSFW population in Indiana and informs MSFW of the employment and training services the State has to offer them. COP staff is in contact with agricultural employers and provides Grower and Labor Camp profiles of current agricultural activity in the state. As of August 29, 2011, Indiana has approximately 57 licensed temporary agricultural labor camps (Source: Indiana Dept. of Health).

The State will continue to monitor and closely review the Minimum and Equity Service Indicators for WorkOne offices throughout the State in order to identify and correct performance issues early. The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) will work directly with WorkOne managers and Directors of Field Operation in the implementation of policies and MSFW-related training.

Outreach workers will be trained in local office procedures and services as well as the benefits and protections afforded MSFWs by WorkOne Centers. The program for such training shall be pursuant to uniform guidelines developed by U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) under CFR 653.108. The SMA will continue to be a source of assistance to vendor and staff regarding the MSFW program.

The State has a close working relationship with Transition Resources Corporation (TRC), WIA 167 grantee, to share resources to provide services to farm workers. TRC staff is co-located in our WorkOne Centers and this arrangement has been a benefit to both the State and TRC. From their initial cooperative agreement, TRC currently has staff out-stationed at WorkOne Centers in Kokomo, South Bend, Vincennes, and a new location in Bloomington. The SMA will foster a positive working relationship between the grantee and WorkOne staff whenever possible. Similarly, he will make Indiana's growers aware of, and encourage them to utilize TRC services for their farm workers at every opportunity.

The State will continue to work with the National Farm worker Jobs Program (NFJP) partner to determine areas for improvement of outreach services to MSFWs with the goal of reducing duplication of effort and resource maximization.

The State will review agricultural crop activity that overlaps and complements other crop activities in the State and with bordering States to determine if combining seasonal crop activity will provide the MSFW with longer periods of employment. Where overlap in crop seasons does not exist, the State will seek non-agricultural jobs for the farm workers.

Assessment of Need

Agriculture has always been historically significant to the Hoosier State, and it continues to thrive today. Indiana consistently ranks in the top 10 for total value of agricultural products sold in the United States as well as in the top 5 for corn and soybean production in the country. The agricultural sector alone accounted for 3.3 percent of the state's GDP in 2009.

A review of PY 2011's agricultural activity shows that there were approximately 62,000 farms, ranking Indiana 5th in the nation, according to the most recent data available from NASS. In addition to corn and soybean production, the State's

tomatoes (for processing), spearmint, and melon (cantaloupe/watermelon) production ranked 2nd, 3rd, and 5th, respectively, in the United States.

The combined effects of agricultural exports alone supported an estimated 34,800 jobs statewide. About 18,100 of these jobs were on farms or in food processing activities. Purchases in the agriculture supply chain and the household spending of farm workers and other industry employees accounted for an additional 16,700 jobs.¹

PY2011's MSFW activity featured an average of 323 workers per quarter that utilized Employment Services (ES). That number remained quite consistent during the period with a low of 322 during 1st Quarter CY2012 to a high of 326 during 4th Quarter CY2012. However, the number of MSFW contacts by ES staff ranged from a low of 5 during the 1st Quarter of CY2012 to a high of 1,607 during the 4th Quarter, CY2011 harvest period, but averaged 699 contacts over the PY 2011. Correspondingly, there was only estimated to be approximately 100 farm workers in the State during the 1st Quarter CY2011 and approximately 4,000 during the 3rd Quarter CY2011. Additionally, there was a total of 5828 hours, or 728.5 days, of MSFW-related activities conducted by outreach staff during PY2011.

There were a total of 1,912 agricultural job openings during PY2011 for an average of 478 openings per quarter.

For the coming year, Indiana's agricultural activity is expected to experience continued growth. According to Timothy Slaper, Director of economic analysis at the Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC) in Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, "The growth of foreign markets for agricultural products has only enhanced the significance of this sector in the Hoosier State." Similarly, as the world's population multiplies and the fortunes of developing countries improve, the demand for agricultural products will continue to rise, according to Tanya Hall, economic research analyst at the IBRC.

Additionally, corn and soybean prices are projected to set a new record, following record prices in 2011. The one concern is that Indiana has been negatively impacted by a wet spring and dry summer; so many farmers have a smaller crop to sell and cannot fully benefit from these high prices.² Corn is expected to gain the most acreage, and these acreage gains will come at the expense of soybeans and other oilseeds, which in turn will push up soybean prices.³

Outreach Activities

Data supplied by the WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee, Transition Resources Corporation, indicates they anticipate serving

¹ Indiana Business Research Center – Indiana University Kelley School of Business.

² Corinne Alexander, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics, Purdue University.

³ Ibid.

approximately 500 farm workers. Tools to conduct outreach include: personal contact, and program presentations, printed materials and brochures, videotapes and DVDs. They also publicize in local newspapers and provide promotional materials like bandanas and work gloves. They also engage in pesticide trainings to farm workers.

The level of W-P funding provided to Indiana Health Centers to be used for outreach activities during the fiscal year is expected to be \$30,000. The number of full-time outreach workers ranged from 3 in the first half of 2012 to 10 in the 3rd Quarter of 2011 and can be expected to remain approximately the same for the coming program year.

Services provided to agricultural employers and MSFWs through the WorkOne delivery system

Services to MSFWs through the WorkOne delivery system are delivered via bilingual (English and Spanish) case managers in selected offices to assist both job seekers and employers in requesting employment-related assistance.

Services may include:

- Job search and placement assistance;
- Career counseling and planning;
- Labor market information;
- Supportive services referrals;
- Financial aid information;
- Group/individual counseling;
- Short-term pre-vocational training;
- Literacy/English as a Second Language assistance;
- Occupational skills training;
- On-the-job training;
- Skill upgrading;
- Job readiness training; and
- Emergency services.

In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107, and as prescribed by Region V ETA, the Monitor Advocate participated in the preparation of the agricultural plan and has been afforded the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan. Such review indicates that the plan has been prepared properly, omitting none of the prescribed requirements and properly describes the activities planned for providing services to both agricultural employers and migrant seasonal farm workers.

Summary of the MSFW Complaint System Activity

The State had few complaints filed by migrant and seasonal farm workers during PY 2011. The State continues to provide coordination and referral of complaints to the responsible enforcement agencies.

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