

I am a PhD candidate at Vanderbilt University, researching a dissertation focused on farm labor and related topics in Oregon agriculture. Farm labor is one of the most essential jobs in our economy - we would literally starve without farmworkers - and one of the most difficult and dangerous, and - contrary to popular belief - it is also highly skilled. It is also one of the most poorly compensated, and farmworkers experience disproportionate rates of poverty.

Farm labor has traditionally been a highly racialized sector of the US economy. The fact that farmworkers have long been excluded from basic labor rights and protections, including access to overtime, is directly related to the racialized nature of this work. Providing farmworkers with overtime pay is a basic step towards treating these essential workers with the respect they deserve and justly compensating them for their contributions to all of our well being.