

**Tri-National Accord
U.S./Mexico Working Group**

**Minutes of Meeting on Migratory Farm Labor Issues
January 16, 2003**

Members of the Mexican Association of Secretaries of Agriculture and Livestock Development (AMSDA) and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) met in Mexico City to continue the dialogue on farm labor issues initiated at the Tri-National Accord meeting in Nogales, Arizona in May 2002. The U.S. delegation, comprised of six states representing the NASDA membership, was led by Commissioner Nathan Rudgers from the State of New York, and included NASDA President Patrick A. Takasugi from the State of Idaho. Dr. Enrique Salinas Aguilera, AMSDA President, and Secretary Lorenzo Hernández Arreguín, AMSDA Coordinator of International Affairs headed the Mexican delegation, comprised of nine states representing the AMSDA membership. The meeting was also attended by representatives of USDA and the U.S. Embassy in Mexico, as well as Mexican federal government officials from the Office of the President and the Secretariats of Governance and External Relations.

Both delegations explored concerns that arise at the state level regarding aspects of the migration of farm laborers between Mexico and the United States, including the supply and demand for farm labor, efforts by the two federal governments to address migratory issues during the past two years, wage remittances, identification documents, the welfare of migratory workers in both in transit and while working abroad, and the effect of security issues on freedom and frequency of movement of workers across the Mexico-U.S. border.

The meeting reached the following consensus conclusions:

1. Both delegations recognized the importance of having the Federal Governments reinstate their efforts to address labor issues, and agreed to raise this point both with their respective federal governments and at full meetings of their respective national organizations.
2. A joint work plan for the interchange of information on migratory farm labor issues will be presented for the consideration of the bilateral U.S./Mexico Working Group during the Tri-National Accord meeting in Montreal in April 2003.
3. Given the urgency now being attached to security matters, meeting participants recognized the important need for credible identity documentation, investigation of those identification methods for farm workers now in use, along with others that could be proposed, as an excellent starting point for collaborative attention. Participants expressed interest in knowing more about the Canadian guest worker program.
4. Participants committed themselves to immediately initiate their separate investigations of origin-destination patterns of migration connecting their own states to specific states in the neighboring country and committed themselves to share and allow access to the statistics gathered. Participants also agreed to document the numbers of workers involved, to the extent possible.
5. Both delegations agreed that the issue of farm labor availability, movement, and labor supply is of importance to both nations. The delegations agreed to present to their respective Boards of Directors the need to invest staff resources in the migratory farm labor issue, in order to advance toward accomplishing these agreements.