

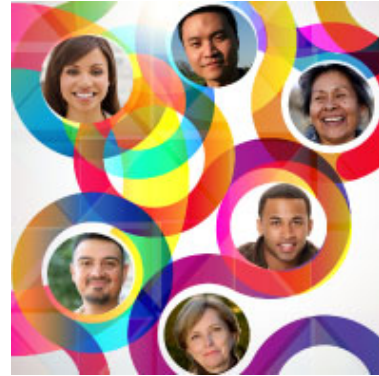
RuralCONNECTIONS

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THE HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES

BY SABRINA TUTTLE

Each immigrant wave has had varying effects upon US population and landscapes, and upon how rural areas developed and diffused from urban areas and small towns, into remote areas, from east to west through the late nineteenth century, a continuous, complex phenomenon, which can be difficult to articulate. The middle of the 20th century showed the opposite demographic trend, as large numbers of people moved from rural areas and small towns into cities. Until the 1970s, when a rural reversal of population began. [Read More.](#)



IMMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION POLICY IN THE WEST

BY JIM PEACH

US immigration policy is in need of a major overhaul. The current convoluted and complex laws governing immigration are not aligned with economic reality or national policy. This assessment of US immigration policy is widely shared by those who favor more immigration and those who are opposed to more immigration. Pressure on Congress to pass some form of 'comprehensive' immigration reform is intense. No one can predict with certainty whether or not Congress will pass significant immigration legislation in 2013 or 2014 but we can be reasonably confident that any such legislation will not end the immigration debate. Immigration policy in the US has always been controversial. [Read more.](#)



RURAL LATINOS: Adaptations and Contributions

BY REFUGIO ROCHIN

Rural Latinos have been a topic of my research and teaching since 1971, starting with my academic appointment to the University of California, Davis. At UC Davis until 1994, I taught, co-founded Chicana/o Studies, consulted, advised and researched Latinos, and also co-founded International Agricultural Development. I covered a range of topics on Latinos, from their farming and employment to the related demographic transformations of small towns. In 1994 I joined the faculty at Michigan State University and pursued more research on rural Latinos and communities



throughout the Midwest. In 1998 I became the Founding Director of the Smithsonian Institute's Latino Center. It wasn't until the deaths of my father in 1994 and my mother in 1999, that I began to factor my family background into my professional experience. Thus, I offer a personal account of rural Latinos, partly through the lives of my parents, to explain their adaptations to and contributions in America. Who are rural Latinos, how did they arrive, and what are their experiences and issues? [Read more.](#)

STRENGTHENING LATINO SMALL BUSINESSES & ENTREPRENEURS IN WASHINGTON

An Overlooked Strategy for Community Economic Development

BY JOSE GARCIA-PABON

Between 2000 and 2010, Washington State experienced a 54.9 percent growth in the Latino/Hispanic population (from 441,500 to 684,000) compared to only 14.2 percent growth for the total population, making Latinos the largest and fastest growing minority in the state. In the last several decades, every county in Washington has seen an increase of Latinos; however, many are concentrated in eastern rural Washington counties (Franklin, Adams, Yakima). Despite this growth and their increased visibility and social, cultural, and economic contributions, Latinos (particularly first generation Latino immigrants) face significant and unique challenges such as educational attainment, health issues, small businesses and farms failure, discrimination, poverty, cultural and linguistic barriers, and others. In this article, I explore the contributions and challenges of Latino entrepreneurs in Washington State and the efforts of the Latino Community Studies and Outreach program at Washington State University to provide technical support and assistance. [Read more.](#)



AN OVERVIEW OF FARM LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES

BY PHILIP MARTIN and DOUGLAS JACKSON-SMITH

Hired workers comprise 33 percent of people employed on farms but do an estimated 60 percent of the work performed on US farms. Most hired farm workers were born abroad, usually in Mexico, and most are believed not to be authorized to work in the US. Changes in Mexico-US migration flows and more restrictive immigration laws and policies have increased the vulnerability of US agriculture to labor supply shocks, which could increase costs and threaten the ability of some farmers to harvest labor-intensive crops. Three major types of workers provide labor for US farms: farm operators, unpaid family workers, and hired workers. Numerically, hired workers are estimated to make up one-third of the total farm workforce, up from 25 percent in the 1950s. The total number of people working in the farm sector dropped by roughly 70 percent between 1950-1990, but has stayed roughly the same since that time. While farmers and their family members are numerically still the most common source of farm labor in the US (two thirds of all workers), the proportion of hired workers providing labor has increased throughout that period. [Read more.](#)



This article is based on a [NARDeP](#) policy brief (Martin and Jackson-Smith, April 2013).

THE CHANGING FACE OF CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE:

Identifying Challenges and Providing Opportunities for Southeast Asian and other Minority Farmers

BY JENNIFER SOWERWINE and CHRISTY GETZ

Over the past few decades, the farming landscape of California has become more diverse, as increasing numbers of immigrant and minority farmers try their hand at agriculture. For example, there has been nearly a 20 percent increase in Latino farmers from 2002 to 2007 in California and 75 percent of those report Latino farms are beginning farmers (USDA Ag Census, 2007); a reflection of previous farm workers beginning to establish their own small family farms. In addition, since the late 1970s and early '80s, several thousand Southeast Asian refugee farmers, escaping their war-torn countries of Laos and Vietnam, have settled in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys, growing and marketing more than 100 varieties of Asian produce. In Fresno County alone, almost half of the family farms (4,000) are operated by "minorities," and more than half of those are Asian (54 percent), the majority of which are refugee farmers from Laos. [Read more.](#)



LOCAL AND IMMIGRANT FARMER EDUCATION IN HAWAII

BY JARI SUGANO, S. FUKUDA, S. SWIFT, ET AL

An increasing number of socially disadvantaged farmers are entering Hawaii's agriculture industry with little to no experience in commercial agriculture. They operate in rural and remote areas of Hawaii. They cultivate diverse and culturally important crops primarily for local food production. Ongoing educational support from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH CTAHR), Cooperative Extension Services is essential for the sustainability of these under represented, developing agricultural areas due to their small acreage, remote locations, lack of access to farm resources, and limited English literacy. The change in Hawaii's agriculture industry prompted a need for an educational program involving responsible and sustainable farming, business and risk management, and environmental protection stewardship. UH CTAHR developed a grassroots oriented program, Local and Immigrant Farmer Education (LIFE), in under-served farming communities to assist these producers in dealing with the many facets of crop production. [Read more.](#)



IMMIGRATION AND AGRICULTURE:

What Next?

BY PHILIP MARTIN

Over half of the workers employed on US farms are unauthorized, and federal and state governments are debating how to crack down on unauthorized migration and how to deal with unauthorized foreigners in the US. The status quo makes farmers uncertain that they will not have sufficient labor, workers uncertain if they can continue to live and work in the US, and communities unsure how to deal with mixed families of unauthorized parents and US citizen children. There were over 40 million foreign-born US residents in 2011, including 11 million or over a quarter that were not authorized to be in the US. The number of immigrants or persons born outside the US continues to increase, but the number of unauthorized residents has fallen since peaking at 12 million in 2007. The US has been debating about what to do about these unauthorized foreigners for the past decade. In April 2013, a bipartisan group of eight senators introduced the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act



(S 744), which was approved on a 68-32 vote in June 2013. [Read more.](#)

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In this issue of *Rural Connections*, hear from experts on the issues of immigration and policy, university researchers on the impacts of immigration in the West, and read a personal account of rural Latinos.

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