

PROSPERITY IN THE FIELDS:
MIGRANT FARMWORKERS AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

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By

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ABSTRACT

“Where does our food come from” is a popular question: the answer, the migrant farm worker. The migrant farmworkers who enable us to eat fresh produce during all seasons are typically mistreated, exposed to chemicals, and live in squalid conditions. Although these workers are integral to our food production system, they are marginalized and unable to get ahead. This vicious cycle of poverty for farmworkers leads me to ask: Are there ways that migrant workers can prosper, given their current conditions? What role can social capital play, if any, in helping them to collectively address their problems? It is this question that this thesis seeks to address. To do so, it uses case study and content analysis methodology of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a grassroots advocacy organization based in Immokalee, Florida, the tomato capital of the United States of America. I conclude that bridging social capital, developed over the Internet, has facilitated collective action for the CIW, which has led to improved economic conditions for the farmworker.

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Many thanks,
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INTRODUCTION

Growing up in Connecticut, I stopped at the farm stand every day after school. I was lucky enough to literally be able to see where the apple or peach I was eating had come from. Today, whenever I stare at the supermarket shelves, I ask myself a simple question: where did the food I am about to eat come from? These days, supermarkets sell not only food, but also information. Labeling of food products can lead to confusion for the consumer; what exactly does it mean for food to be “farm fresh” or “natural”?

Academics have addressed this question of where does the food we eat come from by positioning it into the larger issue of food security. Food, like oil and water, is a critical resource. As the world’s population is predicted to dramatically over the next decades, questions arise about how we will produce enough food to feed everybody. Academics have long debated answers to these questions. One camp strongly believes in the use of genetically modified crops (GMO’s). These crops can exponentially increase the yields of produce on the same amount of land. Yet this proposition is controversial, and has been spun in the media as the development of “frankenfoods” that may have less nutritional value and could possibly harm the environment. While these concerns have very little scientific merit, the European Union already has a ban on GMO’s.

One consumer response to concerns over food security and the use of GMO’s has been to adopt a diet of food that is locally sourced. While there is no agreed upon definition of “local food”, the main philosophy surrounding the movement is that consumers should make a concerted effort to eat foods that are sourced from local farmers. Businesses have also capitalized on this trend by offering farm to table menus, or listing where they source their products.

Consumers who eat local desire a connection to the farm. This desire has led to the tripling of farmers markets in America over the last fifteen years. Yet, there is an important factor that is often ignored in debates about food security and the local food movement - and that factor is the farmworker himself. As we attempt to produce more food than ever before, farmworkers will play a pivotal role, one not to be underestimated.

In America, we rely on migrant farm labor to produce enough food to feed our population. Yet, these workers live in deplorable conditions and make barely enough money to survive and feed their families. The National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS), sponsored by the Department of Labor, states that “adjusted for inflation, the average real hourly wage of farmworkers (in 1998 dollars) has dropped from \$6.89 to \$6.18” (1998). With such low wages fewer workers are choosing farmwork. Thus, the number of agricultural workers in America has been steadily decreasing, from 3.4 million in the beginning of the century to just over 1 million in 2010.

Not only do these workers barely get paid, the type of work they do is grueling, physically dangerous, the housing conditions are substandard, and they are at an increased risk level for pesticide exposure. Also, laws have been passed that routinely exclude farmworkers. The Fair Labor Standards Act, passed in 1938, which guaranteed minimum wages and overtime pay, excluded farmworkers. The 1936 National Labor Relations Act also excluded farmworkers from being able to collectively bargain and form unions.

Yet, despite these limitations, farmworkers have attempted to unionize themselves. The most successful attempt to have farmworkers organize and fight for better wages was through the United Farm Workers Union (UFW). The UFW, based in California, achieved success through

protests and boycotts during the 1960's and 1970's. Due in part to the success of the UFW, California established the Agricultural Labor Relations Board in 1975, which finally made it legal for collective bargaining. However, this achievement only pertained to California, and was not national. The success of the UFW led to the creation of other union organizations along the midwestern and west coast migration stream. Today, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) still organizes farmworkers in North Carolina tobacco fields.

However, on the east coast, unions failed to form. Since the completion of the transcontinental railroad in the 1850's, there has been a noted difference in the development between east coast and west coast agriculture. The west coast has big bonanza farms that operate all year long and specialize in only a few crops. The east coast has smaller farms and usually plants seasonally - which then requires the worker to be transient. Also, due to the success of the UFW, working conditions are much better for the workers in California. Yet on the east coast, conditions have barely improved for the worker since the end of WWII.

This leads me to ask: are there ways that migrant workers can prosper, given their current conditions? What role can social capital play, if any, in helping them to collectively address their problem? To address this question the thesis proceeds as follows: Chapter 1 contextualizes this research into the larger issue of food security. Chapter 2 provides a conceptual framework for the research. Focusing on the concept of social capital, I explore the relationships between social capital, collective action, and economic development. Research on social capital and marginalized communities has focused on communities in the developing world. I argue that the communities migrant farmworkers live in share similarities with these communities. Thus, can social capital be used to facilitate coordinated actions for migrant workers? Chapter 3 traces the

history of the migrant farmworker in America. Technological innovations, laws, and particular events have all influenced the development of modern day agriculture and farmworker demographics.

After setting up this background I present my case study on the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) in Chapter 4. A grassroots advocacy organization based in Immokalee, Florida, the CIW fights for improving farmworker conditions. They do this through two initiatives: prosecution of Modern Day Slavery cases, and the Campaign for Fair Food (CFF). The CFF asks large corporations to sign a Fair Food agreement. A Fair Food agreement between the CIW and a corporation, such as Taco Bell, ensures wage increases for the workers and, among other stipulations, an enforceable code of conduct in the fields. These agreements translate to better economic opportunities for the farmworker. In order to assess if social capital plays a role in the CIW's success, I analyze their blog posts for 6 variables of social capital identified by Grootaert (2004). I chose to examine online communication materials, as this is the CIW's primary mode of communication to their network partners and allies. After presenting my data, I conclude in Chapter 5 that bridging social capital, developed over the Internet, enables economic development to occur for farmworkers.

CHAPTER 1: THE BIG PICTURE

Today, books such as *Omnivore's Dilemma* and *Tomatoland*, are on the top of best seller lists, as discovering where the food we eat comes from has become an increasingly popular topic. In *Tomatoland: How Modern Industrial Agriculture Destroyed Our Most Alluring Fruit*, Barry Estabrook (2011) tracks the journey of a tomato, from its beginning in a University research lab, to its production on a farm in Immokalee, Florida, to its consumption at his local grocery store in Vermont. Estabrook's book nicely consolidates the issues inherent in the current way America farms and feeds its people. By asking where does the tomato on my grocery store shelf come from, Estabrook shows how the tomato has been genetically modified in order to speed production to meet demand. This one example speaks to the larger issue of food as a critical resource. As the global population grows, will we be capable of producing enough food to feed everyone?

Food Security

Food, like oil and water, is a critical resource. As the world's population increases, questions arise about how we will produce enough food to feed everybody. In his provocative book, *The Population Bomb*, Paul Ehrlich (1968) warns of a population explosion that could lead to mass starvation. While his dates for destruction have now passed, many of the issues he raises remain. While Ehrlich saw the solution in extreme population control methods, such as sterilization, today's food security advocates call for a more effective use of our scarce resources -- land, water, technology and labor.

Concerns about the future food supply are well merited. By 2050, the world is expected to have 9 billion people. Production of the basic staples, cereals (all forms of grain, including

rice, wheat, and maize), meat, and produce, is challenging because the amount of arable land available to farmers is on the decline. Absent more land, what are our options? We can't just increase the price of food, because price increases affect those who are most in need, and many will starve. As Lester Brown (2011b) points out in *The New Geopolitics of Food*:

In the United States, when world wheat prices rise by 75 percent, as they have over the last year, it means the difference between a \$2 loaf of bread and a loaf costing maybe \$2.10. If, however, you live in New Delhi, those skyrocketing costs really matter: A doubling in the world price of wheat actually means that the wheat you carry home from the market to hand-grind into flour for chapatis costs twice as much. (para. 1)

The concerns over fluctuations in the price of food are especially great in developing countries, where, on average, almost 70% of income is spent on food. Therefore, price fluctuations could make the difference of being hungry or being fed. Shortages of food have led to food riots, which generate dissent within a country (Chand, 2008). For example, in Egypt shortages of bread led to both the 1977 Egyptian Bread Riots, and to protests in 2007 and 2008. High on the list of priorities for Egyptians after Arab Spring is keeping the price of wheat low. In Arabic, bread is so important that the word for bread and life is the same – “aish.” Hence, manipulating food prices is not an appropriate solution for ensuring food security, especially in developing countries where the effects will likely be magnified.

Another proposed solution for increasing the quantity and yields per acre of food production is genetic modification. Genetic modification (GMO) and hybridization, popularized during the *Green Revolution* of the mid 20th century, enable farmers to increase crop yields on the same number of acres. During previous population boom scares, increasing yields of most

basic food staples with genetic modification helped ensure food security. Thus, most of the maize, wheat, and rice we eat today comes from a genetically modified or manipulated seed. Notwithstanding these technological advancements, today, worldwide crop yields are lagging behind population growth for the first time since the 1960's (Parker, 2011). To keep up with population growth, farmers and workers will have to increase their production of wheat and maize over the next 40 years by an amount equal to the increase that occurred over the previous 500 years (Parker, 2011). Scientists question whether a plateau has been reached and if higher yields will be possible in the future (Wisniewski et al., 2002).

Compounding the situation are the scientific and public debates about the benefits versus the consequences of using genetically modified crops. Scientific concerns have been raised over the impacts GMO's have on biodiversity and climate change. Genetically modified seeds are developed in order to increase yields and be more resistant to weather, pests, and diseases (Conner et al., 2003). For example, Monsanto produces Roundup Ready™ crops (such as soybeans and maize) that are resistant to the weed killer Roundup. Since GM seeds are designed to be resistant to pests and diseases, farmers do not have to spray as much pesticide. Reducing the amount of pesticide used on a farm can lead to a reduction in fuel use, as farmers do not have to take the truck out to spray as much pesticide as before. In turn, this reduction in fuel use impacts climate change (Brookes & Barfoot, 2005). However, attempting to quantify how GM seeds affect pesticide use has led scientists to different answers. One UK study noted that, in the first ten years of GM crop implementation, pesticide spraying did decrease (Brookes & Barfoot, 2005). This same study also argues that use of GM crops has contributed to a 10 billion kg reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (Brookes & Barfoot, 2005). Yet another study on GM

cotton and soybeans concluded that there was no change in pesticide use at the farm level (Fernandez-Cornejo & McBride, 2000).

Scientists are also closely studying the impact that GM crops have on biodiversity. Since Rachel Carson's (1962) seminal text, *Silent Spring*, environmentalists have studied the impacts of pesticides and other chemicals on biodiversity. Today, concerns have been raised that GM crops will also negatively impact biodiversity. The concern is that, by creating dominant strains of a crop, such as maize, that strain will wipe out any other strain it comes in contact with. A 2001 article published in *Nature* claimed that, in fact, GM maize was spreading into Mexico, and destroying the Mexican maize crops (Quist & Chapela, 2001). However, this study has since been refuted (Wisniewski et al., 2002). The worry about the Roundup Ready™ seeds that Monsanto sells is that immunity to Roundup will spread to other weeds, such as giant ragweed. Weeds that are resistant to pesticides lead to lower yields for the food crops, and require scientists to develop harsher, more effective pesticides (Wisniewski et al., 2002). Ultimately, time is needed for scientists to accurately determine the effects GM crops have on pesticide use.

Supporters of GM crops tell another story. They claim that GM crops are necessary to ensure food security. Moreover, they argue that genetic modification simply speeds up a process that has been happening since Mendel. Farmers and scientists have long bred crops in order to create a strain that has all of the desired traits. For bananas, for example, those traits are flavor, meat to skin ratio, and shelf life once picked (Chapman, 2007). For the tomato, those traits are thickness of skin and size, and, unfortunately, not taste (Estabrook, 2011). As well, as evidenced by the increasing yields of tomatoes in Florida, breeding a stronger plant enables more food to be produced. But these examples also show how careful farmers need to be – the original strain of

banana is now extinct, and many worry that the current strain of banana we see in the grocery store is also succumbing to extinction (Chapman, 2007).

While scientists debate the pro's and con's of GM crops with respect to food security and the environment, the public debate is spun a different way. In the media, the debate over GM crops focuses on health risks and corporate motivations. Consumers in Europe have been particularly vocal about their dislike of GM foods. Gaskell et al.'s (1999) study reveals that European consumers oppose the use of biotechnology in food, whereas US consumers moderately support the use of biotechnology. European consumers opposition to the food industry's use of biotechnology, has led to a law requiring that individual GMO products receive authorization before they enter the market. EU regulations cover both food products and genetically modified seeds. Although consumer health concerns about GM products have yet to be validated by scientists, the negative rhetoric in the media, describing such products as "frankenfoods," has been pervasive (Conner et al., 2003). Adding to the negative rhetoric is the belief that genetically modified crops are simply profit maximizing tools for corporations. For example, a farmer planting Roundup Ready™ seeds needs to buy the pesticide Roundup. Both products are made and distributed by Monsanto, which gains profits from both the seeds and the pesticide use. Examples such as this shift the debate about GMO's away from food security issues and towards concerns over corporate domination (Conner et al., 2003).

Whoever wins the debate over GMO use, meeting the increased demand for food will be challenging, as today, food products have multiple uses. The increased demand for food staples such as maize, for example, stems not only from a growing population, but also from the needs of energy companies. A number of governments have enacted strict biofuel requirements in order

to reduce green house gas emissions. As a form of renewable energy, biofuels can be made from food products such as corn and soybeans. These policies create more demand for food staples, and thus shifts the supply of edible food away from consumers and towards energy companies (Parker, 2011). This repositioning of food as an energy component has dramatic consequences for the farmer. As Friedmann (1993) has noted, “farms have become suppliers of raw materials within a transnational agrofood sector dominated by some of the largest, most technically dynamic corporations in the world” (p. 30).

As farmers become suppliers to corporations and energy companies, less maize will be available as edible food, and the price of that food will continue to rise (Ewing & Msangi, 2009). These high prices will affect those in developing countries who are most in need. In 2007, *Foreign Affairs* published an article provocatively entitled, “How Biofuels Could Starve the Poor” (Runge & Senauer). The authors noted that 450 pounds of corn are required to fill up a 25-gallon tank of gas – but those 450 pounds of corn could also provide the number of calories a person needs for an entire year. Shifting food away from those in need threatens future food security.

Clearly, then, food security is a complex issue, but it boils down to the fact that food is a critical resource. Changes in our agriculture and food system need to occur in order to ensure that all inhabitants of the world can eat. Fortunately, the issue of food security has not remained in the shadows. Publications such as *Foreign Policy Magazine*, *Time*, *The Atlantic*, and *The Economist* have all run special issues focusing on the population boom and food security. Concerns over the future of food have led to protests, global conferences, and changes in consumer preferences.

The Local Food Movement

One consumer response to concerns over food security has been to adopt a diet of food that is locally sourced. Starting off with the question, where does the food we eat come from, “locavores” attempt to eat only local food. While there is no agreed upon definition of “local food”, the main philosophy surrounding the movement is that consumers should make a concerted effort to eat foods that are sourced from local farmers. Some supporters of the movement quantify the definition of local food in terms of how many miles away a food has been grown, while others, noting that it may not be possible to get locally grown coffee in Vermont, make an effort to buy other items that Vermont produces, such as cheese. In her study synthesizing beliefs about the local food movement, Coit (2008) identifies four reasons why consumers choose locally raised or produced food: “these are: 1) a sense of connection, 2) quality, 3) environmental impacts, and 4) political and social support for a particular type of agriculture” (p. 2-3).

Each of these four areas of concern are addressed by Michael Pollan (2007) in his best selling novel *Omnivore’s Dilemma*. In the final chapter, Pollan (2007) attempts to eat a meal using only food he has procured himself, in order to feel a sense of connection to his meal, ensure quality, and reduce the environmental impact. Going so far as to capture yeast out of the air to make his own bread, he also hunts a wild pig and forages for mushrooms. Yet the point of Pollan’s book is to not preach a purely self-sufficient, local type of food system. In fact, he notes how difficult, and almost impossible it is, to strictly follow a local diet. However, books such as Pollan’s have had a great impact on consumer preferences and restaurant menus. Realizing that “our current food system is structured in a way that often disconnects consumers from the source

of their food” (Coit, 2008, p. 3), consumer’s have expressed their desire to circumvent the current system . In fact, the number of farmer’s markets in America has tripled between 1994 and 2010 in response to consumer demand (Brown, 2011a, p. 176).

While consumers want to know where their food comes from, food marketers have also attempted to capitalize on the local food movement trend. Labeling and branding of food products can actually confuse consumers. For example, the FDA has not defined one popular buzzword - natural. Yet branding products with farm fresh, natural, or organic adds value. As noted in a Forbes Online article, “sales of organic food products in the United States have soared to nearly \$14 billion from less than \$1 billion in the last 14 years, and are expected to rise to \$17 billion in the next two years” (2004). According to Delind (2006), food marketing impacts both the consumer and farmer:

Farmers, on the one hand, are being encouraged to develop value-added products, niche markets, and new arrangements for the direct marketing of “green,” “socially responsible,” “fair trade,” or other such goods and services. Consumers, on the other hand, are being encouraged to want them. (p. 124)

Restaurants are also capitalizing on the local food movement. Countless restaurants now claim that they bring “farm to table” or, they list the source of their ingredients on the menu. Chipotle, one of the fastest growing “fast-casual” restaurant chains, was developed with this local philosophy in mind. Just the other day the Chipotle in Dupont Circle, Washington D.C., posted a special sign announcing that they were now sourcing pork from a local farm.

Given the confluence of people aspiring to eat local, and businesses seeking ‘local’ supply chains, “local food and eating locally [has] become both the symbol and substance for

structural change from which flows enormous social and environmental benefit” (Delind, 2006, p. 123). The popularity of eating local food stems from both the philosophy behind the movement and the added business benefits. This, coupled with the larger issue of food security, brings the question of ‘where does the food I eat come from’ into the public sphere. Yet while this question is addressed from numerous disciplines, the role of the laborer at the micro level of food production is rarely addressed. As we attempt to produce more food than ever before, farmworkers will play a pivotal role, one not to be underestimated.

The Farmworker

In America, recent immigration laws, passed by states such as Alabama and Arizona, have brought the issue of migrant labor to the forefront. In Alabama, where agriculture is a \$5 billion industry, the passing of HB56 was viewed as a direct threat to migrant farm laborers. After the law was passed, dozens of farmworkers fled the state, leaving valuable crops to rot in the fields. American workers find farm work, such as harvesting sweet potatoes, too difficult, and thus cannot replace the migrant laborers. As the rhetoric surrounding immigration escalates, it is important to understand the role the migrant farm worker plays in an integrated global food system.

While farmworker demographics have changed over the past few decades, the migration patterns have not changed since the early twentieth century. There are three flows of migrant labor within America. The National Center for Farmworker Health labels these the Eastern, Midwestern, and Western stream. The Eastern stream flows up and down the east coast, where a migrant laborer often starts the season picking tomatoes in Florida, and ends as far up as Maine. The tomatoes these workers pick account for almost 45% of the tomatoes sold in the United

States (Florida Tomato Committee, 2012). Thus, most Americans will eat a tomato picked by a migrant farmworker. Despite their importance to the industry, the workers picking the tomatoes are not adequately compensated, and most live below the poverty line. The National Agricultural Workers Survey (1998) notes that “adjusted for inflation, the average real hourly wage of farmworkers (in 1998 dollars) has dropped from \$6.89 to \$6.18” (p. vii). With such low wages fewer workers are choosing farm work. Thus, the number of agricultural workers in America has been steadily decreasing, from 3.4 million in the beginning of the century to just over 1 million in 2010 (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] Economic Research Service, 2011). Increasingly, migrant farmworkers need to take a second, non-farm job during the low season in order to make ends meet (National Agricultural Workers Survey [NAWS], 1998).

Living conditions for the farmworker are also sub-standard. Migrant farmworkers are typically mistreated, exposed to chemicals, and live in squalid conditions. Although these workers are integral to our food production system, they are marginalized and unable to get ahead. Both popular and academic literature has detailed the health hazards associated with farm work. In *Tomatoland*, for example, Estabrook (2011) documents how large vertically integrated produce companies repeatedly deny workers’ claims of pesticide exposure, and frequently do not provide the necessary training for handling these chemicals. Likewise, in *Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in the United States: A Review of Health Hazards, Status, and Policy*, Carol Sakala (1987) details the dangers of farm work, which include pesticide exposure, poor nutrition, dangerous working conditions, and lack of access to medical care. As she notes: “temporary agricultural laborers face severe health risks as consequences of the attendant living conditions of the occupation” (Sakala, 1987, 661).

A variety of factors lead to these conditions for workers. One is the lack of support groups provided to workers, such as unions. Another is the transitory nature of migrant work – a worker may only be at one location for a few months. Given these conditions, one need asks whether there is a path that will allow migrant workers to overcome these often-unacceptable conditions, and improve their life chances.

The local food movement and food security concerns have brought the question of where does the food we eat come from out into the open. The reactions to this question lead some people to subscribe to the local food movement. Others ask even more questions – how does my eating asparagus from Chile in January in America impact the environment? Does the food system and regulations we currently have in place contribute to world hunger? I ask a different question – what role does the migrant farmworker play? Given their critical role in food production, how can they get ahead under their current conditions? What options are open to them? Can they collectively address their problems, and if so, what role might social capital play? It is this question that this thesis seeks to address.

CHAPTER 2: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Migrant farmworkers in America live in communities that share many similarities with communities in developing countries. Members of these types of communities live and operate on the margins of society, and are caught in a cyclical poverty trap, which causes them to not be able to get ahead (Collier, 2007). However, notwithstanding the rise of development organizations after World War II, the question of how to lift developing countries out of poverty has remained unanswered. Nonetheless, some progress has been made both academically and in practice. What we now understand is that bottom-up development with strategies tailored specifically to a community, can lead to more successes than failures. In particular, the concept of social capital has been used to explain differences in development trajectories (Putnam, 1993; Woolcock, 1998; Narayan, 1999). Thus, to analyze the plight of migrant farmworkers, this thesis focuses on the concept of social capital, and the relationships between social capital, collective action, and economic development.

Social Capital

Originally coined by sociologists (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988), the idea of social capital was developed to differentiate between other forms of capital. Bourdieu (1986) differentiates between economic, cultural, and social capital, while Coleman (1988) explored the relationship of social capital to physical and human capital. Robert Putnam, a political scientist, helped to popularize the term social capital. In his book, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Putnam (1993) defined social capital as “features of social organizations, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (p. 167). He employed the concept of social capital as a variable

that helps explain why the development trajectories of North and South Italy greatly differed.

Differentiating between vertical and horizontal networks, Putnam (1993) contends that “the more horizontally structured an organization, the more it should foster institutional success in the broad community” (p. 175). Based on his analysis, he concludes that both social capital and horizontal network ties can facilitate economic development.

However, this seminal text has been criticized, by scholars such as Deepa Narayan (1999), who contends that social capital alone is insufficient. While social capital provides mutual support in helping communities fend for themselves, it does little to help such communities change their basic circumstances. For this purpose, communities need to reach out to the centers of power. To this end, they need to develop *bridging capital*. As defined by Narayan (1999), bridging capital is “cross-cutting ties between groups [that] open up economic opportunities to those belonging to less powerful or excluded groups” (p. 1). These cross-cutting ties are components of Putnam’s ‘vertical network’.

James Coleman (1988) also critiques Putnam’s (1993) assertion that a vertical network, “no matter how dense and no matter how important to its participants, cannot sustain social trust and cooperation” (p. 174). Coleman (1988) notes that the power dynamic inherent in hierarchical, vertical networks, leads to “a given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions [but] may be useless or even harmful for others” (p. S98).

Another critique of Putnam’s definition is that it is too broad. Scholars such as Krishna and Uphoff (2002) have further broken down the definition and defined two specific types of social capital: structural and cognitive. Structural social capital refers to networks and ties, while cognitive social capital refers to norms.

Social Capital and Collective Action

Notwithstanding these criticisms and elaborations of the concept, social capital remains an important tool in community development work. In particular, social capital is seen as being essential for carrying out collective action. In 1965, Mancur Olson argued that no rational person would contribute to the production of a public good. Therefore, logically, collective action for a common good should not exist. This ‘zero contribution thesis’, expanded upon by the economist Hardin (1982), and labeled the ‘tragedy of the commons’, has been critiqued by scholars such as Elinor Ostrom (1990), who notes that in real, everyday life, people do cooperate with each other, and public goods are produced. While identifying many variables that contribute to collective action, Ostrom (2000) notes that one important variable is “past experience and level of social capital” (p. 148).

Woolcock (1998) also sees social capital as a way to overcome the potential prisoner dilemma problems associated with collective action, because “actors - and the groups of which they were members – ha[ve] to be able to draw on both "embedded" and "autonomous" social ties” (p. 163). Conversely, Woolcock (1998) notes that often the lack of social capital within a society leads to development failures and “seemingly obvious opportunities for mutually beneficial collective action are squandered” (p. 152). Coleman (1988) also agrees that social capital can be both positive and negative. He contends that “a given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful for others” (Coleman, 1988, p. S98). Poteete et al. (2010) also notes that social capital may not lead to successful collective action. Changes in technology, demographics, ecology, or political regimes can contribute to failures of collective action. He argues that a thorough understanding of the

community and context is still crucial for development practitioners.

One type of community that has been extensively studied by economic sociologists is the immigrant community. Immigrant communities are small world networks with high levels of social capital (Buchanan 2002, Fawcett 1989). Within these small worlds, scholars are able to identify negative consequences of having high levels of social capital (Portes & Landolt, 2000). Portes and Landolt (2000) identify “four such negative consequences of social capital: exclusion of outsiders, excess claims on group members, restrictions on individual freedoms, and downward leveling norms” (p. 532). As a close-knit community that may be wary of outsiders, members of immigrant communities will also share values surrounding economic activity. Thus, economic activity is embedded within the community, as “economic activity comes to be coordinated by groups of people rather than carried out by isolated individuals” (Granovetter, 1992, p. 3). This coordination of economic activity, however, does not directly correlate with economic advancement for members of these communities. Portes and Sensbrenner’s (1993) note that the “immigrants’ economic destinies depend heavily on the structures of the community immigrants enter in which they become incorporated and, in particular, on the character of their own communities” (p. 1322). If a community has bridging capital, economic success is more likely. The more isolated a group is, the harder it is to achieve economic advancement. Theoretically there is a strong linkage between collective action, social capital, and economic change, but the challenges of implementation and measurement remain.

Social Capital and Development

To synthesize the research on social capital and economic development and the implications for development projects and policies, Woolcock and Narayan (2000) develop four

related aspects of social capital: those having to do with community, networks, institutions, and synergy. Their communitarian view focuses on local associations, and social capital among individuals and community groups. Their networks view looks at both inter and intra community relations, building upon Granovetter's (1973) notions of embeddedness and weak ties (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). The institutional perspective takes into account the top-down influence that political, legal, and institutional environments have on the community. Looking at the role social capital plays in development from these four perspectives allows practitioners to focus on different units of analysis, regardless of whether social capital is an independent, dependent, or a mediating variable. Each of these units of analysis leads to a corresponding policy prescription (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 239).

Building upon this differentiation, scholars have sought to develop a development approach that relates micro and macro levels to one another. Evans (2006), for example, argues from a synergy perspective that the dynamic between state and society and cooperation between public and private groups "should be a priority for those interested in development" (p. 1119). Grootaert and Van (2002) recommend an approach focusing on "supracommunal" institutions that provides a bridge between local level institutions and higher-level institutions. Woolcock and Narayan (2000) agree that these bridging ties between communities and institutions "hold the key to understanding the prospects for development in a given society" (p. 243).

Although Portes and Landolt (2000) critique the theoretical leap that has been made by scholars such as Putnam, who claim that social capital exists at the community and institutional level instead of at the individual level, they conclude that social capital "can be an important factor in the success of popular and economic initiatives" (p. 546). Economists offer another

critique of social capital by questioning how social capital can be monetized through investment. For example, Lin (2001) notes that “capital represents an investment process on the part of the capitalist” (p. 7). According to Lin (2001), the capturing of social capital through mechanisms and processes, “help[s] bridge the conceptual gap in the understanding of the macro-micro linkage between structure and individuals” (p. 3).

Notwithstanding these divergent theoretical perspectives of social capital, the concept has influenced many on-the-ground development projects. For example, in 1996 the World Bank launched the Social Capital Initiative in order to study how theories about social capital might be implemented in development projects. This initiative led to the publication of 24 World Bank Working Papers, and the book *The Role of Social Capital in Development* (Grootaert & Van, 2002). Using both qualitative and quantitative measures, these studies reveal the “pervasive role of social capital in accelerating poverty alleviation and rural development” (Grootaert & Van, 2002, Intro.). Included were studies analyzing the role of social capital in development, in contexts ranging from Indonesia, to Rwanda, to the Andes. Focusing on community and network ties, Krishna and Uphoff (2002), as part of the World Bank initiative, isolate social factors that contribute to the management of watersheds in an Indian community. The authors identify social capital, political competition and literacy as variables that also have statistical significance in higher levels of development performance. Fafchamps and Minten (2002) take a more economic and institutional approach, looking at exchanges between traders in Madagascar. Another study by Isham and Kahkonen (2002), which focuses on community-based water projects in Indonesia, notes that “social capital may affect how successfully users act collectively to craft and implement rules” (p. 157). Questioning whether social capital has an economic payoff, Knack

(2002) concludes that it does, especially for communities in developing countries. Grootaert and Van's conclusion (2002), rare in the field of development, is one of "bounded optimism" (p. 349) for the role that social capital can play in enabling economic development.

Measuring Social Capital

While social capital has been connected to economic development both theoretically and in practice, quantifying social capital is a challenge for researchers. Both qualitative and quantitative measures have been used to measure social capital. In their study "Mapping and measuring social capital through assessment of collective action to conserve and develop watersheds in Rajasthan, India", Krishna and Uphoff (2002) employ statistical methodology. In contrast, Colletta and Cullen (2002) relied on qualitative methods that entailed a literature review and six months of fieldwork, including village stays and participant observations. As well, early methodological work on social capital, based on the concept of social resources, incorporated content analysis of news paper articles (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977).

Today, scholars argue in favor of a mixed methods approach to measure social capital in light of their belief that "obtaining a single, true measure of social capital is probably not possible" (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 239). Despite these measurement challenges, both Putnam and Grootaert have pioneered survey designs that gauge levels of social capital. Putnam, the principal investigator of the Saguro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America, helped to develop the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey. This survey, which aimed to gauge civic engagement and happiness in America, was administered to communities throughout the United States in both 2000 and 2006. In their study, *Measuring Social Capital: An Integrated Questionnaire*, Grootaert (2004) identify six variables at the household level as measures of social

capital: groups and networks, trust and solidarity, collective action and cooperation, information and communication, social cohesion and inclusion, and empowerment and political action. The two surveys that they designed group questions around these variables: one is an expanded survey, the other consists of 27 core questions. To test their questionnaire, they conducted two pilot tests in Albania and Nigeria.

Migrant Communities in America

Communities in developing countries around the globe often share similar characteristics. Families usually exist on less than \$2 a day; have poor health; and lack access to basic services such as doctors and schools. Migrant communities within America share many of these characteristics. Often their housing conditions are substandard, their health risks are high given their exposure to pesticides, and schooling for their children may be unavailable. Sakala's (1987) review of migrant health hazards focuses on the occupational risks inherent in farm work, such as sun exposure and injuries, and the laws that have been put into place that impose "limits on worker power" (p. 661). Most importantly, migrant farmworker communities are—as in the case of developing regions anywhere—outliers from the center of economic activity. As outliers, migrant workers do not have any ties to other networks, and they therefore lack bridging capital.

On the other hand, migrants have strong bonding capital with ties to each other as members of the migrant network (Marcelli & Cornelius, 2001). Within the migrant network, social capital encourages more migration, and influences settlement patterns. As Massey et al. (1993) have found, "each act of migration itself creates the social structure needed to sustain it" (p. 449). These acts of migration are influenced by social capital, and "people who are

socially related to current or former migrants have access to social capital that significantly increases the likelihood that they, themselves, will migrate” (Palloni et al., 2001, p. 1263).

Most research on social capital and migrants focuses on this relationship, and not on what happens once the act of migration and settlement has occurred. Not all migrant farmworkers decide to settle in America. Many workers become transnational, splitting their time between their home and the receiving country. According to Castles (2000), “seeing migrants as members of transnational communities is a fundamental shift away from the idea of migration as a one-off event leading to assimilation” (p. 25). Migration is a process, which Massey (1986) divides into three phases: the sojourner phase, transition phase, and final settlement phase. A necessary condition for Massey (1986) of settlement for the migrant becoming complete is that migrants will have “developed widespread contacts with people and institutions in and out of the immigrant enclave” (p. 671).

This condition has not yet been realized for the migrant farmworker. Due to a confluence of factors, such as racial prejudice, language barriers, and their transitory lifestyle, migrant farmworkers live on the margins of American society. Although migrants live in communities that are not integrated via networks into society, they are rich in bonding ties and social capital.

Development organizations have made attempts to harness this social capital and turn it into collective action. For Rodrigues-Pose and Storper (2006), creating bridging ties is the main challenge. As they note:

Access to membership in communities that are nontrivial (in the sense that they are capable of sustained collective action) is costly, cognitively complex (requiring a lot of

‘local’ and complex information), and hence subject to high and ‘personalized’ entry barriers. (p. 2)

In the modern era, Cesar Chavez undertook the most ambitious effort to organize farmworkers with the formation of the United Farm Workers (UFW) in the 1960’s. Studies conducted during these efforts do not refer to social capital, but do attempt to understand why he was so successful. Jenkins and Perrow (1977) conducted a study that contextualized farm worker insurgencies within the political environment. Comparing the National Farm Labor Union (1946-1952) with the UFW, they concluded that the UFW was more successful due to the political climate. However, they did note --before the term social capital came into vogue-- that “the amount of social resources” available to an organization enabled a social movement to develop (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977, p. 250). As they point out, “collective action is rarely a viable option because of lack of resources and the threat of repression” (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977, p. 251). Therefore, external support is needed for the ‘powerless’ - a bridging tie - and the success of the movement is dependent upon “strong and sustained outside support” (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977, p. 251).

However, Thomas and Friedland (1982) critique Jenkins and Perrow’s (1977) idea that the political atmosphere was the most important factor in the farmworker movement. Thomas and Friedland (1982) propose that structural factors, and the targeting strategy of the UFW, contributed to the success of the union. Today, the UFW is no longer the successful organization it once was (La, 2006). The cause of this decline will be analyzed more in depth in the next chapter, but as the political environment changed, bridging ties were weakened.

Today, only a few studies have been conducted that analyze social capital and migrant workers in America. One of these, *Left Out: Trust and Social Capital Among Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW)*, by Chavez et al. (2006), analyzed the levels of trust and social capital among migrant seasonal farmworkers in Idaho. Through conducting focus groups, along with a logistic regression analysis, the authors conclude that, even in marginalized groups, race and ethnic distinctions matter in the “acquisition and usage of social capital” (Chavez et al., 2006, p. 1026). MSFW’s have significantly lower levels of trust “not only toward whites but also vis-a-vis the broader Hispanic community” (Chavez et al., 2006, p. 1026). In developing development strategies, development practitioners must recognize a potential for a lack of intra-group solidarity, and therefore prioritize bonding capital in the first instance over the development of bridging capital.

One noteworthy organization that has succeeded in capitalizing upon both bonding and bridging capital is The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). This grassroots advocacy organization fights for higher wages and better working conditions for farmworkers. Employing savvy marketing techniques and targeting fast food restaurants and grocery stores such as Whole Foods, the CIW has been able to capture the attention of the media. In analyzing these tactics, Williams and Loret de Mola (2007) argue that the CIW, although a non-religious organization, “is more effective in bridging ethnic and regional differences among immigrants and in generating ‘political capital’ that seeks to affect political and social change” (p. 233). Drainville (2008) has also conducted a study of the CIW, viewing it as a concrete example of “globalization from below” (p. 357). However, academics have yet to conduct research that seeks to understand the economic impacts, if any, for the farmworkers. It is this gap in the research that I will

address. Because social capital has been shown to have economic impacts, I will examine whether and how it has played a role in this particular community.

CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Migrant farmworkers have not always been an integral part of our food production system. Since the early 1800's, specific laws, events, and innovations have changed the agricultural production system and shaped the labor supply. Large farms that specialize in only a few crops have replaced family owned and operated farms. Today, farmers rely on access to cheap labor in order to harvest and plant their crops. This chapter traces the history of the migrant farmworker in America.

The 1800's to WWII

In his 1782 *Notes on Virginia*, Thomas Jefferson stated: "those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God". For the founding fathers, living on a farm and supplying your family with all the food they needed for the year was an honorable livelihood. Thus, as America grew, small family farms dominated the landscape. During harvest time, neighbors would pitch in to help gather the crops. Farming was not a business - it provided sustenance for the family.

The 1800's were a period of transformative change in America. The rapid development of mechanized agricultural equipment during the Industrial Revolution impacted the amount of land that farmers could plant and harvest in a season. As farms grew in size, a shift occurred away from family farms and towards large-scale commercial agriculture. Farmers began buying tools such as the John Deere Tractor (1847), the Cotton Gin (1794) and the McCormick Reaper (1834). As noted on the United States Department of Agriculture's published timeline of important agricultural events: "the growing use of factory-made agricultural machinery increased farmer's need for cash and encourage[d] commercial farming" (2000). Because farmers could produce more, they could sell their surplus to other families - and even to businesses.

The industrial revolution also led to shifts in the labor supply. As factories and cities developed, low skill labor moved from the countryside to the city. The creation of cities also contributed to the need for large-scale commercial farming – otherwise, how were city residents going to be fed? As low skill labor moved to factory jobs, farmers lost their main supply of seasonal labor due to competition. Farm work is rarely a permanent job because demand for workers comes and goes with the growing season. Factory jobs offered workers a steady stream of income and job security. In order to cope with a loss of labor, farmers needed to find new solutions.

Another significant innovation during the mid-1800's was the completion of the transcontinental railroad, which finally connected the east coast and west coast markets. This connection proved to be pivotal in the development of agricultural production in America. Each coast began to develop differently so as to respond to the changes in both supply and demand. In the west, the Homestead Act of 1862 gave any applicant a title to an area of roughly 160 acres. These size-able plots of land on fertile farmland lent themselves to commercial farming. Further, consolidation among families occurred, which made the plots of land even bigger. Thus, out west, there was a shift away from family farms and towards commercial farms. On commercial farms, farmers specialized in planting and harvesting only a few crops. They soon began planting staple crops to meet a mass demand, leading to the rise of the corn and wheat belts.

In contrast, on the east coast, land was simply a scarce resource. The land that was available to farmers was usually small and rocky. Commercial farming on the scale out west was impossible on the east Coast. As Hahamovitch (1997) states:

Northeastern farms were transformed by mechanized staple production in the West, not

because northeastern growers emulated its example, but because they lost their markets to the volume and cheapness of western grain. (p. 19)

To retain their livelihoods, farmers turned to “‘truck farming,’ the growing of vegetables and berries for ‘truck’ - or trade - in urban markets” (Hahamovitch, 1997, p. 5). This small-scale farming was not designed to compete with Western production, but to sustain the eastern cities.

During this agricultural upheaval, mass migrations were occurring all around the world. Mass migration from Europe to the US occurred due to both the Irish potato famine and the crop failures in Germany. On the other coast, California received an influx of Chinese immigrants from China due both to the plethora of railroad construction jobs, and the allure of the gold rush. As railroad jobs dried up, Chinese immigrants began working on the big bonanza farms. These large-scale commercial farms required an abundance of low skilled labor. However, although many Americans had gone to California during the Gold Rush, white wage earners were extremely unwilling to work on the large farms (Daniel, 1981, p. 26-27). Therefore, farmers had to find alternative solutions; in fact, some farmers in California even thought about recruiting slaves from the South. However, the opposition to this strategy proved fierce, and the plan never came to fruition. Farmers, in a similar position to those today, struggled to find low skill labor to harvest the crops. While the number of Chinese who worked in the fields in the mid 1800’s was always a very small percentage, the controversy about their role began to escalate both in the press and in the political arena:

As the mainly urban-based agitation for the exclusion of the Chinese from California gained momentum during the late 1870’s, agrarians took full advantage of the opportunity it afforded them to attack large-scale agriculture as a magnet for undesirable immigrants.

Where large-scale farming was entrenched, they argued, labor could be neither dignified nor independent. (Daniel, 1981, p. 31)

Partly in response to the threat of immigrants taking American jobs, Congress began to pass laws restricting immigrants. In 1870, the Naturalization Act limited citizenship to white people and Africans. In 1882, in response to California politicians, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which provided a 10-year moratorium on Chinese labor immigration. The law also denied Chinese residents alien citizenship. Still threatened by the Chinese and their desire for jobs and land acquisition, the US government, in 1882, passed the Greary Act (a ten year extension of the Chinese Exclusion Act), which also required Chinese residents to carry their papers. If a Chinese resident were found without papers, he or she could face deportation, or a year of hard labor.

The Alien Contract Labor Law, which was passed in 1885, made it illegal to bring foreigners into the US under a labor contract. This law specifically targeted employers who were hiring cheap labor from countries such as Mexico. In 1913 and 1920, the Alien Lands Act was extended with the added stipulation that the Chinese and Japanese could not own property in California. The farm owners were particularly worried that the Japanese, who were good savers, would buy land, start their own farms, and take away the good workforce. Japanese workers were particularly popular among farm owners as they were extremely loyal.

To streamline laws about immigration, Congress developed quotas and passed two important laws in both 1921 and 1924. The 1921 law limited annual European Immigration from a certain country to 3% of the number of citizens from the country already in the U.S. in 1890. The 1924, the Johnson Reed Act dropped the quotas to 2%, with a provision that reduced all total

immigration to 150,000 in 1927.

While Congress didn't shy away from passing legislature that in today's time would be considered racist, some events occurred between 1929-1939 that were illegal. Framed by the press as the "Mexican Repatriation", half a million Mexicans were pressured to leave the US. It has since been revealed that these "pressures" may have been the deportation of legal US citizens (Balderrama, 2005). This period has been glossed over by history books, but more historians are investigating these incidents of forced repatriation, many of which occurred in California (Hoffman, 1974). This incident, which Hoffman (1974) equates to the treatment of the Japanese during WWII, speaks to the complicated relationship between Mexico and the U.S. As Hoffman (1974) notes in his forward: "much of the feelings of alienation from Anglo-American society among Mexican-American adults today stems from the belief that they are still not wanted except as they serve U.S economic desires" (p. ix). Eighty years later – do his words ring any differently?

While immigration laws and racial prejudices affected the makeup of the labor force, labor laws affected the wages and conditions for farmworkers. The most important of these laws was the 1936 National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). This act provided workers the right to bargain collectively and to form unions. However, due to lobbying pressures from the American Farm Bureau Federation, agricultural workers were not protected by this law. This is still the case today. In conjunction with the passing of the New Deal, Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938 (FLSA), the aim of which was the same as the previous law passed in 1936. The Fair Labor Standards Act established minimum wages, overtime pay, record keeping requirements, and youth employment standards (Grossman, n.d.). Again, agricultural workers

were excluded from many of these new requirements.

The Great Depression led to the public's recognition of the plight of the farmworker. Steinbeck's popular 1939 novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, vividly depicted the plight of many farmers. The images produced by the Farm Security Administration (FSA), even appeared on the front pages of newspapers. Yet this recognition diminished quickly once the country was at war. As Hahamovitch (1997) notes, "at their moment of greatest power during the Second World War, farmworkers who successfully struck for higher wages found themselves replaced by foreign workers imported on American battleships by the U.S. government" (p 13).

At War: WWII and The Bracero Program

During WWII the labor supply was in flux. At the outset of the war, American farmworkers enlisted, leaving farmers with few workers, and no way to supply all the necessary food the country needed for war. Throughout the west coast farmers also lost a significant percentage of their workforce due to the Japanese internment. The farmworker replacements to which Hahamovitch refers to were actually Mexican workers who entered the U.S. via the controversial Bracero Program. The Bracero Program, also referred to as the Mexican Farm Labor Program, operated between 1941-1964 and was originally designed to provide farmers with laborers during WWII. The braceros traveled throughout 24 U.S. states, harvesting everything from beets to lemons to lettuce.

The Bracero program stipulated the wage levels and length of employment for the Mexican workers. However, these conditions were negotiated between growers and the Mexican government. Initially, the U.S. government participated in these negotiations, but then ceded control to the growers. However, the U.S. government did provide the transportation for over 5

million braceros during the span of the program (Bickerton, 2001, p. 897).

As the first bilateral immigration agreement between Mexico and the U.S., the Bracero Program was initially seen as mutually beneficial, and it strengthened the ties between the two countries. U.S growers were able to have a seemingly never-ending supply of cheap labor, which kept prices low during wartime. The Mexican government hoped that workers who traveled to the U.S. would come back to Mexico with a more advanced skill set and knowledge of technological innovations.

Yet the program was controversial. The Mexican government worried that mass immigration to the U. S. would occur. Therefore, in order to ensure braceros returned to Mexico, a bracero had to contribute a certain percentage of his income to a special fund. The bracero would only receive the money in the fund once he returned and lived in Mexico. In 2011, these monies were finally returned to the braceros, after they filed a class action lawsuit. American workers were also worried that the program was a ploy to get the cheapest labor possible - and that American workers, once back from the war, would not be able to survive on such low wages.

A Time of Social Movements: The 1960's, Cesar Chavez, and The UFW

After WWII, changes began to occur in the fields. In California, the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU) attempted to organize farmworkers and called a strike for the very first time. Officially organized from 1946-1952, the NFLU, while ultimately unsuccessful, laid an important foundation for Cesar Chavez. One of the main factors undermining the success of the NFLU was the bracero program, which had not yet been cancelled (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977). If a bracero joined a strike, the grower would simply replace him with another bracero. There were

also few incentives for a bracero to participate in a strike. Their contracts already stipulated wages and length of employment. Another issue was the government's growing concern about undocumented Mexican workers remaining in the U.S. In 1954, the Border Patrol and INS officials launched Operation Wetback. In California and Arizona, these officials went door to door to check citizenship status, and forced undocumented Mexican workers to return home.

As the 1960's began, awareness about the plight of the farmworker reentered the public sphere. Edward R. Murrow's (1960) documentary, *Harvest of Shame*, became the *Grapes of Wrath* of the modern era. Airing after Thanksgiving Day, the documentary focused on the living conditions of migrant farmworkers. Murrow (1960) ends the piece with these timeless lines:

The migrants have no lobby. Only an enlightened, aroused and perhaps angered public opinion can do anything about the migrants. The people you have seen have the strength to harvest your fruit and vegetables. They do not have the strength to influence legislation. Maybe we do. Good night, and good luck.

The 1960's was a time when social injustices were corrected. Fueled by the civil rights movements, farmworkers also began to organize and fight back against low wages and working conditions. The most famous and successful organizer of farm laborers was Cesar Chavez, whose rallying cry of "si, se puede" inspired Barack Obama's "Yes We Can" campaign slogan. Chavez was able to capitalize on the groundwork that had been laid during the 1950's. The remnants of the NFWA had been reconstituted into the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), with support provided by the AFL-CIO. In 1961, the AWOC led a successful lettuce strike in California. Meanwhile, in 1962, Chavez and Dolores Huerta co-founded the National Farm Workers Association, which eventually became the United Farm

Workers (UFW).

Cesar Chavez was born in 1927 to Mexican immigrant parents. Chavez left school at the age of 12 in order to become a farmer and provide for his family. Although he attended over thirty schools before he left, the two things that remained constant in his life were his family and religion. Deeply religious, his faith inspired him to become a community organizer and guided his fundamental beliefs. Working with the Community Service Organization (CSO), Chavez was mentored by both Saul Alinsky and Fred Ross. This experience cemented his desire to become a community organizer focusing on farmworkers. A proponent of non-violence methods, Chavez literally began the UFW by entering peoples' homes and having discussions with them. He noted that, "if people give you their food, they'll give you their hearts" (Chavez, 2008, p. 20). Chavez understood that asking people to pay a membership dues was daunting, especially for farmworkers. As he said: that although "people wanted union recognition, . . . the real issue, as in most cases when you begin, [is] wages" (Chavez, 2008, p. 22).

In 1964, the Bracero Program officially ended. Chavez viewed this as an accomplishment, because the end of the bracero program enabled the organizers to have more bargaining power with the growers. Politicians were also glad to end the program, because they estimated that reducing the supply of Mexican laborers would lead to more American jobs. However, the replacement of workers by American labor failed to materialize (Thomas & Friedland, 1982). Further, the termination of the program did not lead to a change in the legal status of farm labor as hoped - growers were still hiring undocumented workers.

The period from 1965-1972 is viewed as the peak of the UFW activities (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977). In 1965, the UFW led a successful strike against the grape growers in Delano,

California, which was referred to as the Delano Grape Strike. Although the strike was first organized by the AWOC, Chavez and Huerta quickly joined - and soon the two organizations merged to become the UFW. The strike lasted five years, and eventually led to contracts being signed by the grape growers and farmers guaranteeing wage rates. The reason for the strike has been debated in academia. Jenkins and Perrow (1977) argue, that the success was only made possible by the political environment and awareness of social justice movements in the public. Thomas and Friedland (1982) take a much more nuanced approach, arguing that “the success of the organization in achieving a measure of stability previously unknown in agriculture cannot be fully understood without analyzing how it responded to the structure it encountered and, conversely, how those responses shaped its future possibilities” (p. 4).

The Delano Grape Strike is one of the most successful cases of farmworkers organizing, acting collectively, and achieving higher wages. When the AWOC and NFWA combined forces during the initial days of the strike, they both understood the positive and negative aspects of striking against the grape growers. The decision to strike was a nuanced, strategic decision. First, workers who harvested grapes were as close as one could get to an aristocracy for farmworkers as possible (Thomas & Friedland, 1982). At the end of the harvest, grape vines need to be tied correctly, which requires a higher skill set than that of basic pickers. Farmers who worked on grapes thus had a higher skill level, and more job stability. The UFW organizers noted that migrant workers posed a particular challenge to organizing, so they decided to focus on a type of produce where worker stability was high. Grapes, although divided into table grapes and wine grapes, are a well-branded good. The first step for Chavez was to target well-known wine makers. Once that was done, table grape producers were the next targets. This proved to be more

of a challenge, due to the lack of branding, but Chavez and the members of the UFW persevered. After a few years, they ended up seeing results. Consumers chose to buy other fruit instead of grapes – and the drop in demand was felt on the farm. Grape growers were now willing to negotiate. Ironically, looking back on the strike, Chavez noted that the choice of striking in Delano was simple for him: “my wife’s family lived there, and I have a brother. And I thought that if things go very bad we can always go and have a meal there” (Chavez, 2008, p. 132-133).

There were also legal victories in the 1960’s. In 1965, The Immigration and Nationality Act repealed the origins quota, focusing instead on the goal of family reunification. In 1966, an amendment to the FLSA was passed that finally expanded coverage to some farmworkers, and gradually raised the minimum wage to \$1.60. However, the FLSA still did not cover overtime for farmworkers, or farmers that worked on farms that had less than 7 employees.

The 1970’s saw different types of successes for the UFW. The lettuce strike of 1969 failed because – as Thomas and Friedland (1982) had argued, demand for the product was inelastic, and it was not branded. Yet the public still boycotted table grapes, and was aware of strikes in the fields. In 1975, the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) was established, with the goal of ensuring “peace in the fields of California by guaranteeing justice for all agricultural workers and stability in agricultural labor relations” (ALRB, 2007). With the passing of this act, which extended the NLRB from the Great Depression, farmworkers were able to legally collectively bargain. This was one of the greatest victories for Chavez – but it was only passed at the state level, and not nationally.

The 1980’s to 2001

The success of the UFW brought about the passing of two significant laws during the start

of the 1980's. The first was the 1983 passing of The Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA). This federal law was designed to better regulate and control the farmworkers' working conditions. It requires that workers be provided with pay stubs, and housing and transportation that meet safety requirements. Farm labor contractors were also required to register with the U.S Department of Labor. This law still stands today, yet violations are rarely prosecuted.

The other law that had a significant impact on farm labor was the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. This law “legalized 1.2 million foreign farmworkers, 90 percent of whom were Mexican” (Martin, 2006, p. 5). Chavez had fought hard for amnesty to be included in the legislation. The large number of farmworkers affected was due in part to the devaluation of the Mexican peso, which prompted more workers to enter the U.S illegally in order to find work. However, the law also stipulated punishments for employers who hire undocumented workers. This sweeping immigration reform act alleviated burdens for employers, but did not change the working and living conditions for farmworkers. After the law's passage, the immigration debate focused in on undocumented workers. The 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act strengthened border enforcement and made it harder for workers to gain asylum. Also, income requirements for sponsors of immigrants were put in place.

Despite these laws, the 1980's signaled the end of the golden years for the UFW. The hard fought successes that ensured higher wages for farmworkers also contributed to farmers reevaluating their costs. With a higher price of labor, farmers sought to lower their costs through the mechanization of the industry. As noted by Martin (2006), “the fledgling United Farm Workers union pushed the wages of some California farmworkers to twice the federal minimum

wage, spurring a wave of harvest mechanization” (p. x).

One particular mechanized tool that began to dominate the California landscape was the tomato harvester. This machine was developed with considerable thought as to how a farmer would use it on his farm. Engineers, horticulturists, agronomists, and irrigation specialists anticipated how a farmer would make changes to the planting schedule, cultivation, and irrigation (Rasmussen, 1968). The mechanic tomato harvester revolutionized California’s tomato industry, and reduced the number of workers in the tomato fields. Interestingly, the tomato harvester is not used in the tomato fields in Florida, despite its success in California. The key difference is that tomatoes harvested in California are used for canned tomato products, and thus the growers do not care about appearance. In contrast, consumer tomatoes (those grown in Florida) need to retain a beautiful skin, and thus need to be hand picked by workers (Estabrook, 2011).

At the peak of the UFW’s success in the 1970’s it had over 50,000 members. By the 1980’s, the Union was in crisis. The period from 1975 to 1980 was transitional, and “with the end of the Vietnam War, social activism declined” (La, 2006, p. 145). In a more conservative political era, Chavez’s beliefs went against the popular rhetoric. Not only were social movements no longer in vogue, but Unions were also increasingly unpopular. In an effort to take control, Chavez made increasingly erratic decisions, causing rifts between other unions, such as the Texas Farmworker Union, which had developed out of the UFW. The UFW also began to shift their focus away from union organizing and towards the larger Hispanic movement, or *Le Movimiento*. Yet, the movement was troubled by the continuing problem of undocumented workers. Today, the UFW still exists, but in a limited capacity.

The success of the UFW during the period of social movements in the U.S., spurred the creation of other farmworker organizations. For example, Obreros Unidos, in Wisconsin, organized a cucumber boycott. The Texas Farm Worker Union was also organized, although it never had much support or success. The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) was also organized during this time, operating in the Midwestern migrant stream. Today, the FLOC is fighting against big tobacco. It is noteworthy that all these organizations worked with migrants in two streams: the Western and Midwestern. Very few attempts to organize workers in the Eastern stream have been successful.

Post 9/11 to the Present

Today, immigration continues to be a controversial topic. After 9/11, people's fears about immigrants, legal and illegal, increased. The response was The Patriot Act, which made the securing of our nation's borders a priority. Politicians focused in particular on how to secure our border with Mexico. Estimates are that a significant percentage of the undocumented immigrants who pass over the U.S./Mexican border are agricultural workers. However, it is extremely difficult to verify this claim statistically. The most comprehensive statistical work comes from two places – the Pew Hispanic Center and the National Agricultural Workers Survey, which is produced by the Department of Labor.

The Pew Hispanic Center estimates that in 2010 there were 11.2 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S.. According to this data, Mexican immigrants made up more than half of the illegal population – with an estimated population of 6.5 million. The Pew Hispanic Center also found that undocumented immigrants are clustered in a few states – California, Texas, and Florida – all states with large agricultural industries. However, the Pew study does not break the

numbers down by types of employment. The National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) does examine percentage of the agricultural workforce that is unauthorized, as well as the percentage that are migrants. In 1998, the NAWS estimated that 52% of farmworkers were unauthorized, 56% of farmworkers were migrants as they held one or more jobs, and 81% of farmworkers were foreign born. Of those who were foreign born, 95% were Mexican.

What history shows is that, despite federal regulations, illegal immigrants will still labor in the fields. Today, if a farmer cannot find workers in his state, he has to apply for workers via the Guest Worker Program. The H2A Visa, part of the Guest Worker Program, is specifically aimed at temporary and seasonal agricultural workers. However, paperwork is costly and complicated, and it is estimated that there are only 30,000 workers a year on this type of visa. In comparison, the USDA estimates that there are 1.2 million farmworkers in the U.S..

Today, the tide has once again shifted towards fear of undocumented immigrants. Just as in previous historical periods, states have enacted tough legislation to secure their borders and deport illegal immigrants. In 2011, both Arizona and Alabama passed some of the strictest laws in the land. Perhaps taking a cue from the legislation passed against Chinese immigrants in the 1800's, HB56, the Alabama Immigration Law, requires individuals to carry identification at all times. The Alabama lawmakers were not shy about announcing the intended targets of this law – Hispanic agricultural workers.

In this heightened political climate, organizations have struggled to once again bring the plight of the farmworker to the public. Congress failed to pass the Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits, and Security Act (AgJOBS) in 2003. Attacks on the labor supply, via laws such as HB56, have left farmers watching crops rot in the fields. Requirements of using E-Verify have

caused similar effects. In a 1982 speech, Chavez said:

Instead of promoting humanity's fundamental aspirations – equality and participation – our immigration policies and the practices of many U.S. employers have endorsed the twin plagues of humanity: exploitation and discrimination. (Chavez, 2008, p. 170)

Notwithstanding these challenges, one might ask whether new organizations can learn from the past and help to organize farmworkers by tapping into their rich networks, that are bonded by social capital?

CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDY, THE COALITION OF IMMOKALEE WORKERS

The current political climate has made organizing farmworkers highly challenging. Notwithstanding the legal and political obstacles, farmworkers have organized to fight for their rights. However, although Chavez had hoped that the UFW would become a national organization fighting not only for farmworker rights but also for all Hispanics, an organization on this scale has failed to materialize. Existing organizations remain rooted in their local communities. Thus, the UFW still operates in California, and the FLOC is based in the Midwestern migrant stream. Migrant ministries also exist in various farmworker communities throughout the country.

The organization analyzed in this thesis is the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). Immokalee, Florida, is considered to be one of the first points of entry for migrant farmworkers entering the United States. Thus, Immokalee has a fairly diverse population of Haitians, Guatemalans, and Mexican workers. The 2010 Census shows that 75% of Immokalee's population is Hispanic or Latino, while 65% identifies themselves as Mexican. Although the Census provides a good benchmark, it doesn't account for illegal immigrants, and migrant farmworker movements. In Immokalee, the largest employment sector is agriculture at 24.2% (Census, 2010). The top employers in Immokalee are involved in all stages of agricultural production - from planting and harvesting, to packing and shipping (Hoover's, 2012). The main agricultural crops are citrus and tomatoes.

A tomato picker in Immokalee, Florida is paid by the piece. Today, "the average piece rate is 50 cents for every 32-lb bucket of tomatoes picked, a rate that has remained

virtually stagnant for more than three decades” (Coalition of Immokalee Workers, n.d.). Since 1980, the piece rate has only increased by 10 cents. If it had kept up with inflation, the piece rate would be \$1.06 per bucket (Coalition of Immokalee Workers, n.d.). Earning so little for a day’s work helps explain why many farmworkers are living below the poverty line. Although it is nearly impossible to gauge the average farmworker salary by industry and location, the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) makes an estimate. For 2005, the NAWS states that the average farm worker salary is \$10,000-12,499 per year, hovering right around the 2007 poverty line of \$10,210 set by the Federal Poverty Guidelines. However, this survey is unreliable because it also includes wages of managers and supervisors, and does not specify what particular type of farm work a farmworker does. The 2010 Census reveals that almost 16% of Immokalee’s population makes less than \$10,000 a year.

Working conditions on the east coast are notoriously worse than those on the west coast. To begin with, tomatoes are difficult to pick. As mentioned in Chapter 3, tomatoes in California can be harvested with a mechanical harvester because they are used for canned tomato products. However, on the east coast, the harvested tomatoes are distributed throughout the entire country to be sold in grocery stores, or served by fast food chains. Therefore, the tomato needs to look appealing and not have any bruising or cuts, which can occur with mechanical harvesting. The workers need to pick the tomatoes carefully yet quickly. To ensure quality, growers have organized into the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange (FTGE). This agricultural cooperative, which represents almost all of the tomato industry in Florida, enables the growers to organize,

and collectively bargain. Conceived as such, the FTGE is hardly concerned about helping farmworkers (Estabrook, 2011). Hahamovitch sums up (1997) the confluence of factors contributing to farmworkers' hardships within the eastern migrant stream:

Conditions remain dismal, therefore, not because poverty is an inevitable feature of modern agriculture or because crew leaders trap migrants into a new sort of debt peonage. They are dismal because the federal government intervened on behalf of growers, undermining farmworkers' bargaining power and relieving growers of the need to recruit labor by improving wages and conditions. (p. 203)

The Coalition of Immokalee Workers

The CIW was founded in order to overcome the dismal conditions that Hahamovitch (1997) describes. Headquartered in Immokalee, Florida, the CIW's guiding statement is Consciousness + Commitment = Change. The CIW was established in 1993 "as a small group of workers meeting weekly in a room borrowed from a local church" (Coalition of Immokalee Workers, n.d.). This initial step of organizing was a challenge, because it is still illegal for farmworkers to collectively bargain. In the early days of organizing, members focused on change at the individual and community levels. At first, the workers employed strategies influenced by Cesar Chavez - work stoppages, hunger strikes, and, in 2000, a 230-mile march from Ft. Myers to Orlando. Today, the CIW's approximately 4,000 members are migrant farmworkers, who travel the eastern migrant stream. Yet, Immokalee remains the center of organizing due to the focus on the tomato industry.

The turn of the millennium also saw a turn in the direction of the CIW's organizing strategy. The conscious shift in strategy led the CIW to hone in on two specific areas: Modern Day Slavery and the Campaign for Fair Food (G. Asbed, personal communication, March 30, 2012; Coalition of Immokalee Workers, n.d.). By focusing on these two issues, the CIW hopes to improve farmworker conditions for its members in Immokalee, Florida. To be successful, the CIW had to bring these issues into the public sphere, moving beyond the local community in Immokalee. While these global initiatives are those most often in the spotlight, the CIW is at its core a local organization. The organization holds weekly meetings in Immokalee, has a worker center there, and even sponsors alternative spring breaks for university students to come visit and learn.

The term "Modern Day Slavery" provides an historical frame for the conditions under which farmworkers live. With the help of lawyers, the CIW has encouraged farmworkers, who have escaped and come to the CIW for shelter, to bring their cases to court. In 1997, the first case, U.S. vs. Flores, was successfully prosecuted. Miguel Flores and Sebastian Gomez were each sentenced to 15 years for slavery, as well as other charges. The two men were in charge of a 400+ person workforce, where they physically abused the workers and even shot at the workers who attempted to escape (Coalition of Immokalee Workers, n.d.). Today, the CIW continues to provide assistance to workers so they can prosecute such cases. The CIW has also made a traveling Modern Day Slavery Museum. This museum, which is housed in a trailer in which farmworkers had been held captive at night, has traveled extensively throughout America. Inside, the viewer learns about the plight of the modern-day farmworker, and the conditions under which some of

these workers have been forced to live. To achieve success for the Modern Day Slavery initiative, the CIW has reached out and built a network of lawyers willing to work on these cases.

CIW's other initiative is the Campaign for Fair Food. This initiative began in 2001 when the CIW — inspired by the specific targeting Chavez and the UFW had taken against grape growers — decided to boycott Taco Bell. For the CIW, the economic reasoning behind the boycott was simple. As high volume purchasers of fresh fruits and vegetables, large food corporations can leverage buying power to bring down prices. In turn, these low prices exert downward pressure on farmworker wages. Coming up with the simple demand of “one penny more per pound”, the CIW focused the issue on economic payoffs for the worker. The “Boycott the Bell” Campaign finally ended in 2005 when Taco Bell signed an agreement with the CIW. For the CIW, the agreement:

Established several crucial precedents for farm labor reform, including:

- The first-ever direct, ongoing payment by a fast-food industry leader to farmworkers in its supply chain to address sub-standard farm labor wages (nearly doubling the percentage of the final retail price that goes to the workers who pick the produce);
- The first-ever enforceable Code of Conduct for agricultural suppliers in the fast-food industry (which includes the CIW, a worker-based organization, as part of the investigative body for monitoring worker complaints);
- Market incentives for agricultural suppliers willing to respect their workers' human rights, even when those rights are not guaranteed by law;

- 100% transparency for Taco Bell's tomato purchases in Florida. (Coalition of Immokalee Workers, n.d.)

The success of this initial campaign resonated throughout the social justice community. By the end of the campaign against Taco Bell, 92 labor groups, student organizations, churches, and other groups had endorsed the boycott (Sasson, 2006). The boycott had even attracted the attention of such politicians as former President Jimmy Carter. The success of this campaign led the CIW to hone in on other large food companies - such as grocery stores, distributors, and food service providers. To date, ten companies — Taco Bell, McDonald's, Burger King, Subway, Whole Foods Market, Bon Appetit Management Co., Compass Group, Aramark, Sodexo, and Trader Joe's — have all signed on to a Fair Food Agreement. As of April 2012, the CIW is currently ramping up efforts to induce Publix and Chipotle to sign the agreement.

The agreement signed in November 2010 with the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange was a significant achievement for the CIW. As previously noted, the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange is an agricultural cooperative of 13 growers in Florida, who represent almost 90% of the Florida tomato industry. Unfolding in a two-step process, the agreement extends the CIW's Fair Food Principles to almost the entire Florida tomato industry. The agreement calls for "a strict code of conduct, a cooperative complaint resolution system, a participatory health and safety program, and a worker-to-worker education process" (CIW Press Release, 2010). As noted in the interview I conducted with Greg Asbed (2012), the implementation of this program once again shifts the direction of the CIW. To achieve its goals, the CIW is reaching out to legal experts and

developing a rapidly expanding working group to focus solely on this. Asbed hopes that both the farmworkers economic and working conditions will improve dramatically as the program gets underway (personal communication, March 30, 2012).

Methodology

The CIW's two pronged strategy focuses on improving working conditions via prosecution of modern day slavery cases, and improving economic opportunities via the Campaign for Fair Food. As my research question focuses on farmworkers being able to get ahead economically - I will limit my investigation to the Campaign for Fair Food. I hypothesize that by developing bridging social capital, between the CIW and its allies, the CIW has been able to obtain success in the various boycotts of food corporations. During the course of this research, the CIW and Trader Joe's finally came to a fair food agreement. I will therefore study how, during the campaign against Trader Joe's, the CIW used social capital to facilitate success.

In *Measuring Social Capital: An Integrated Questionnaire*, Grootaert (2004) identify six variables at the household level that indicate social capital: groups and networks, trust and solidarity, collective action and cooperation, information and communication, social cohesion and inclusion, empowerment and political action. In order to wage a campaign, the CIW utilizes their online network, by regularly updating their website with press releases and blog posts. According to Greg Asbed, 98% of the CIW's communication occurs via the Internet - the rest is face-to-face communication in Immokalee, Florida (personal communication, March 30, 2012). Because the Internet is the CIW's primary mode of communication, I will analyze online communication

materials about the campaign against Trader Joe's to test my hypothesis. Although the CIW does maintain an active Facebook page, Asbed repeatedly mentioned the importance of the website, which is why I will analyze website communications (personal communication, March 30, 2012). I will code each post, following the methodology of Foss and Waters (2007) and Krippendorf (1980), for the 6 variables of social capital proposed by Grootaert (2004). I hypothesize that two of these variables — groups and networks and information and communication — will have the strongest presence in the data. In order for the CIW to have bridging social capital, it needs to communicate and inform a diverse, expansive, network. These indicators will show the extent to which the CIW has utilized social capital in organizing a successful action.

Data

The first stage of my research was conducting an interview, which has added a qualitative component to my research. On Friday, March 30, 2012, I spoke with Greg Asbed, one of the founding members of the CIW. We talked on the phone for 30 minutes, during which I described my research, and he consented to being interviewed. Please see Appendix A for a transcription of the interview.

For the quantitative component of my research, I searched the CIW website for the term “Trader Joe's”, which returned 131 search results. Of those 131 results, I analyzed 75, as the remainders were either duplicate posts, or were irrelevant to the specific action against Trader Joe's. The results included both blog posts and press releases, but I will refer to each result as a “post.” Following basic textual content

analysis procedures, I color coded each blog for the six specific variables as shown below (Krippendorf, 1980)

Because the terms identified by Grootaert (2004) are difficult to quantify, I relied on the context of the post in order to code. Also, the term did not need to be explicitly stated. For example, if a group pledged their support to the CIW, and this was mentioned in a post, I coded it as both groups and networks, and trust and solidarity. Therefore, this research is subject to personal interpretation, and there may be challenges in replicating this study. Appendix A shows a sample post that has been coded. After coding all of the posts, I tallied the results. For each variable I recorded the frequency, the number of posts in which it was mentioned, and then calculated the percentage of posts that had the term, and the mean.

Color	Variable	Total	# of Posts	%	Mean
	Groups and Networks	176	68	90.67%	2.59
	Trust and Solidarity	70	48	64%	1.46
	Collective Action and Cooperation	171	70	93.33%	2.44
	Information and Communication	117	63	84%	1.73
	Social Cohesion and Inclusion	71	44	58.67%	1.61
	Empowerment and Political Action	9	9	12%	1.00

Analysis

The two variables with the highest frequency are: collective action and cooperation, and groups and networks. Although the category ‘groups and networks’ was mentioned

more often in total, ‘collective action and cooperation’ was mentioned in a higher percentage of the posts. The variable least frequently mentioned, and that which received the lowest percentage, is ‘empowerment and political action’. In the discussion that follows, I will break down each variable, starting with the least frequently mentioned, and analyze how each has contributed to the CIW’s success.

Empowerment and political action.

Although empowerment and political action was the least frequently mentioned variable, I was not surprised by this result. As previously mentioned, the CIW has a targeted strategy for political action – which involves the prosecution of modern day slavery cases. With the Campaign for Fair Food initiative, the CIW promotes non-violent protests, and does not use political or violent threats as a strategy. In fact, the CIW very rarely enters into the political sphere, and remains focused on signing agreements with corporations, and not with the government. I believe that, if this research had focused on modern day slavery cases, this variable would have been more significant.

Trust and solidarity.

Although trust and solidarity is a key component of building network relationships, this variable was mentioned less than social cohesion and inclusion. However, mention of trust and solidarity did occur in more posts than social cohesion and inclusion. Trust is a key component of building relationships and the creation of social capital. However, there is a difference between implicit and explicit trust. Having a website is already a step to building trust, and doesn’t need to be explicitly stated. For Greg Asbed, having a web presence establishes a certain level of credibility for the CIW and its cause, so it does

not need to be overemphasized. In the interview, Greg repeatedly mentioned how important having a web presence is in the modern communication era. As he noted, if the CIW did not have a website, it would not be viewed as a credible organization (G. Asbed, personal communication, March 30, 2012). Having a website legitimizes the CIW's cause, allowing the organization to communicate with allies, relay information, and document its struggles. Thus, while trust is a critical component, it does not need to be explicitly stated in each form of online communication.

Another reason for the minor references to trust and solidarity is the direction of the communication. The posts I analyzed pertained to the CIW reaching out to groups and networks and providing them with information. The posts do not specifically target new supporters - they are calls to action for those already involved. However, when the communication direction is reversed, partner organizations such as the Community/Farmworker Alliance (CFA) and Just Harvest USA specifically mentioned trust and solidarity. For example, the CFA's "about page" describes the organization's mission as: "A local coalition of community members that organizes in solidarity with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers in their Campaign for Fair food" (CFA-NYC, 2012). Solidarity is a buzzword in social movements, so it is interesting to note that the CIW does not use this type of rhetoric. As the data reveals, much more of the focus is on action – performing collective actions and not just supporting a cause with words.

Social cohesion and inclusion.

The relatively low usage of the terms social cohesion and inclusion came as no surprise. Although farmworkers represent a diverse population, the CIW itself presents

itself as a unified organization, and not an organization that is rooted in a specific race. The CIW does not fight for racial equality; it fights for farmworker equality. Having a consistent front is necessary for gaining the trust of supporters and allies.

In the case of the CIW, inclusion can refer both to inclusion within the organization itself as well as to the inclusion of food corporations who have signed Fair Food agreements. When analyzing the data, I found that the CIW made references to including Trader Joe's in the club of organizations that have signed Fair Food agreements. When I asked Greg Asbed about the difficulties entailed in the campaign against Trader Joe's, he was hesitant to refer back to them. Instead, he wanted to focus on the progress of the CIW's Campaign for Fair Food, and the growing number of corporations who have signed the agreement. It is this type of forward-looking, inclusive language that shapes this particular organization. Once a corporation has signed the Fair Food Agreement, it is welcomed and included into the folds of the CIW.

Information and communication.

Ranking in the middle of the variables, in both frequency and percentage of posts, is the variable for information and communication. I had anticipated that this variable would have been more prominent in the data. The explanation of its position might relate to the differences in explicit and implicit communication insofar as each post is itself a form of communication. In my data collection, I focused on explicit mentions of information: who to contact, where and when to meet, etc. In the posts that were focused on specific actions against Trader Joe's, approximately half were posts providing information, and the other half were recaps. Although these recaps did not feature any

new, additional information, they still informed the larger CIW network as to what was happening. These recaps also showed the reactions not only of customers, but also of store managers when confronted with the CIW information. All this information is crucial to waging a successful campaign. While the website provides the major portion of the communication, the CIW also utilizes listservs, word of mouth, and communications from partners and allies.

Groups and networks and collective action and cooperation.

The two variables occurring the most are ‘groups and networks’ and ‘collective action and cooperation.’ In support of my hypothesis, groups and networks was the most mentioned variable (176 tallies), while collective action and cooperation was the variable that appeared the most frequently in a post (93.33%). Only five out of the 75 posts I analyzed made no mention of collective action or cooperation.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Putnam (1993) defines social capital as “features of social organizations, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (p. 167). For the CIW, network connections helped facilitate coordinated actions. At the same time, collective action would not have occurred had the CIW not maintained close-knit networks across the country.

When speaking with Greg Asbed, I asked what the CIW’s strategy has been for expanding its network connections. His response focused in on three specific ideas: student and youth groups, religious groups, and the Internet. As part of my data collection, I recorded the name of any group or organization mentioned in a post. Of these 53 results, a majority were religious groups and student groups, in keeping with the CIW’s targeting strategy. Please see Appendix B

for a list of all the organizations mentioned, classified by seven categories: Fair Food, Religious, Student, Workers Rights, Misc., Food Related and Media.

A few examples show the reach of the CIW's expanding network. The CIW has specifically helped develop the Student Farmworker Alliance (SFA), which is also headquartered in Immokalee, Florida (personal communication, March 30, 2012). The SFA works with the CIW, and "is a national network of students and youth organizing with farmworkers to eliminate sweatshop conditions and modern-day slavery in the fields" (SFA, 2012). Just Harvest USA is another organization founded with help from the CIW that helps coordinate campaigns on the west coast. As mentioned previously, the Community Farmworker Alliance, organized in New York, is a local coalition that organizes in solidarity with the CIW. Interfaith Action of Southwest Florida, also headquartered near Immokalee, "facilitates education for faith communities, including dialogue between farmworkers and non-farmworker people of faith, and animates people of faith to take action for justice in the agricultural industry" (InterFaith, 2012). All of these networks, and many more, provided support in coordinating a successful action against Trader Joe's.

How The Action Came Together

The CIW, along with its allies, built a specific plan of action for the campaign against Trader Joe's. Each action that the CIW organized had to be well attended not only by farmworkers, but also by those that supported the cause. The campaign against Trader Joe's was a national initiative – protests were held throughout the country. In fact, until early 2012, Trader Joe's did not have a single store in Florida. Notwithstanding its unfamiliarity with the Trader Joe's shopping experience, the CIW specifically targeted

Trader Joe's for a variety of reasons. First, Trader Joe's caters to a shopper who is well educated. As Asbed noted, grocery stores these days do not only sell food products - they sell information. Consumers want to know if their food is organic, natural, sustainable, etc. Trader Joe's targets those consumers who want not only information about their food, but also want good value. Hence, if Trader Joe's focused only on value, it would be no different than Wal-Mart (G. Asbed, personal communication, March 30, 2012). Thus, the CIW began to appeal directly to the Trader Joe's customer by providing information about the origins of the tomatoes they were purchasing. By protesting right outside the store, the CIW confronted consumers directly. For Trader Joe's, the question was not whether it was going to sign the Fair Food Agreement, but rather when.

The action against Trader Joe's began in 2009, with the first protest outside a store during the CIW's National Supermarket Week of Action. While protests were waged every now and then in 2010, the real focus that year was on the Modern Day Slavery Museum, and its tour of the east coast. The momentum against Trader Joe's picked up in 2011. In February 2011, the Northeast Encuentro took place in New York City. Hosted by the Community/Farmworker Alliance, the Encuentro is a weekend long event for the CIW and its allies, entailing celebrations of recent victories, workshops and strategy sessions about the Campaign for Fair Food, and planned actions. The Encuentro brings together many of the CIW's northeastern allies, and sets a year-long agenda. In 2011, the closing activity was a march from the Union Square Trader Joe's to the Chelsea Trader Joe's in New York City.

This march kicked off the campaign against Trader Joe's. Right afterwards, fuel was added to the fire when Trader Joe's published a controversial statement on its website. The "Note to Our Customers on Florida Tomatoes and the CIW", was the first time Trader Joe's had engaged with the CIW, and, interestingly enough, the memo was only published online. In response, the CIW published numerous blog posts refuting every single point made in the note.

The next two big activities that the CIW organized were specifically targeted at Trader Joe's: they included the "Trader Joe's CA Truth Tour" in July 2011, and the "Trader Joe's Northeast Tour" in August, 2011. Both of these weeklong actions required CIW members to travel across the country from Florida, and active engagement from their networks. In California, Just Harvest USA aided in organizing the event, and the CFA was instrumental in organizing activities during the Northeast Tour. During these tours, CIW members met with allies, spoke at Universities, and held protests outside various Trader Joe's stores.

By October 2011, religious leaders were signing letters asking Trader Joe's to sign a Fair Food agreement. Over 100 Rabbis and religious leaders in Southern California offered their support by signing public letters. The CIW also organized another Supermarket Week of Action that was Coast to Coast, and a 400+ person march on Trader Joe's headquarters in California. Finally, in February 2012, right before a massive protest was planned for the first Trader Joe's opening in Florida (on Immokalee Road, no less) the CIW and Trader Joe's came to an agreement.

The national coordinated action against Trader Joe's would not have been successful without a network of allies. By targeting religious and student groups, and communicating freely via the Internet, the CIW built social capital and was thereby able to achieve success. Their success, however, was contingent upon collective action. The protest in October 2011 outside Trader Joe's headquarters shows the prevalence of social capital in the CIW. California is a long ways away from Immokalee, Florida, and the plight of the farmworker on each coast has been shaped differently over time. Nonetheless, connections remain. California was the site of the CIW's first action against Taco Bell. However, as Greg Asbed noted, the CIW would not have ever conceived of such an action without the benefit of the Internet (personal communication, March 30, 2012). Being able to connect to the farmworkers and organizations in California, which shared the same interests in improving farmworker welfare, was a critical component of the CIW's success. The CIW knew that if its members traveled all the way to California, people there would show up and support its cause.

More than ten years later, these networks and connections still exist. Recounting the protests in California outside Trader Joe's headquarters, Greg Asbed noted that people kept coming up to him and saying a remarkably similar thing - "I protested with you guys back during the 'Boycott the Bell' campaign, and even though I am no longer a student, I am back out here supporting you guys" (personal communication, March 30, 2012).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Due to a confluence of historical factors, it has been notoriously difficult for migrant east coast farmworkers to organize. However, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers has been able not only to organize workers, but also to improve farmworker conditions. Tackling the problems of both farmworkers' working and economic conditions, the CIW focuses on two initiatives: Modern Day Slavery and the Campaign for Fair Food. The CFF encourages large food corporations to sign fair food agreements, which stipulate penny per pound wage increases, and codes of conduct in the field, among other things. To date, the CIW and ten major food corporations have signed Fair Food Agreements.

The CIW promotes economic development by employing a bottom-up approach. By reaching out to the centers of power - the food corporations - via their expanding national network, the CIW has bettered workers' economic opportunities. Bridging social capital has significantly contributed to the organization's success. As defined by Narayan (1999), bridging capital is "cross-cutting ties between groups [that] open up economic opportunities to those belonging to less powerful or excluded groups" (p. 1). The CIW has worked since its founding in 1993 to create these ties. By specifically targeting student and youth groups, as well as religious organizations, the CIW has amassed a network of partners and allies.

When the CIW calls an action against a large food corporation, it can count on people showing up. In New York City, the CIW has organized marches, protests, letter writing campaigns, and even bike rides and a "Race for Farmworker Justice" - from one Trader Joe's location to another. Among the actions against Trader Joe's that I studied, almost all had more than 100 participants. Acting collectively, the network the CIW has developed can turn out en

mass for actions. This collective action enables food corporations to take notice, and contributes to the signing of Fair Food Agreements.

Building such a network to foster collective action would have been impossible without social capital. As Putnam (1993) notes, the features of an organization such as trust, norms, and networks are elements of social capital, and those features facilitate coordinated actions (p. 167). The features of the CIW that most strongly contribute to its social capital were their network connections and collective action. However, the norm of inclusion and being a credible organization were important components as well. The CIW accepts all farmworkers as members, and does not racially discriminate. The members of its network share the CIW's mission, and thus act in solidarity. Social capital is clearly a key component of the CIW's success.

Another feature associated with social capital is effective communication. For the CIW, good communication is what ties its networks together, and ensures a successful action. Without it, the CIW would have remained an isolated, marginalized community. It would have been rich in bonding social capital, but would lack bridging social capital.

Technology enables the CIW to utilize its social capital. The Internet is the primary mode of communication for the CIW. If social capital is a truck, the Internet is the road upon which the truck drives. Technology has enabled the CIW to build its networks out from its headquarters in Immokalee, Florida. As Greg Asbed notes, without the advent of the Internet, the CIW would not have achieved the success it has today (personal communication, March 30, 2012). Hence, the success of the CIW and new technology would appear to go hand in hand, although Asbed is hesitant to state that the internet *caused* the CIW's success, or vice versa. As he notes, all the work done on the ground in Immokalee is critical to the CIW's success - the Internet did not

magically make the CIW successful (G. Asbed, personal communication, March 30, 2012).

Although the Internet helped tremendously, other factors, such as the social capital established through various modes of interaction were the critical variables. Furthermore, one should not forget that the CIW tapped into groundwork laid by Chavez and the UFW fifty years ago.

In my interview, I asked Greg Asbed where he saw the CIW five years from now, and whether or not he pictured its model spreading to other agricultural industries and states. For him, the CIW is, and will always be, an institution rooted in Florida and Immokalee. As he emphasized:

Wouldn't it be great that this was happening in other states, other crops - but it's not simple. It took us 15 years to get to this place - we were fighting in the streets of Immokalee and now we are here. Every step of the way was necessary, and even though they weren't all in this direction it was all necessary to get us here today." (G. Asbed, personal communication, March 30, 2012)

Asbed's response speaks to one of the key takeaways from this research - that it is not easy, or even possible, to replicate development projects. Often, excitement over a successful development project leads practitioners to immediately envision "scaling-up" or replicating that project in a new community. But, as he notes, the process took time - it took building both bonding and bridging social capital.

The CIW hopes that the tomato industry in Florida will survive, and that farm work can once again be an economically viable job. Asbed views the Fair Food agreement with the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange as having the potential to save the tomato industry in Florida. The tomato industry is currently in a state of flux - due to weather conditions, and increased

competition from Mexico. The CIW views the Fair Food agreement as a type of branding - and a way for Florida tomato growers to differentiate their product and charge premium prices, which will then be returned to the workers.

This research has raised additional areas for further research. One important topic pertains to how technologies are being used by advocacy organizations not for fundraising purposes, but rather for network building. Another area for further analysis is of social capital within the CIW itself. As previously mentioned, Grootaert (2004) developed a survey to measure levels of social capital. In order to measure the bonding social capital within the CIW, the survey might be distributed internally to members of the CIW. However, such an effort would require travel to Immokalee, and familiarity with the language of the workers.

In conclusion, I would emphasize that, as a society, we have a long way to go before we, like Thomas Jefferson, view farm work as the profession chosen by God. However, by effectively utilizing social capital, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers has improved working conditions and economic opportunities for migrant farmworkers on the east coast.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW WITH GREG ASBED

CV: Hi Greg, could you begin by describing the first steps of organizing, and how the CIW transitioned from a local to a global organization?

GA: When we started organizing we were very local and our vision was local - focused on the growers. When we defined our fight - to improve working conditions - it was aimed exclusively at changing the power dynamic among the farmworkers and crew leaders and farmworkers and growers.

The main thing with the crew leaders was to eliminate violence - specific things we did was organize a march. With the growers it was trying to get them into dialogue - to talk about the conditions in the field. Our primary focus for several years and for our organization was entirely within Immokalee. The first thing outside was a hunger strike outside of Immokalee directly in Naples. Then there was the march in florida at the end of that period from Fort Meyers to Orlando. The march opened us up. In the beginning there was very little alliance building and relationship building - just allies at that point. A few things happened to change that.

The first was that our analysis changed. We began to ask - what makes farmworkers poor? A big picture of the industry was necessary. At the farmer level, we needed to see outside the farm gate. There is a lot of power and influence at the other end of where the truck stops, over what happens in the farm. The picture of the landscape blew up. At the same time, you had the advent of the internet - not a tool many people used. When the internet and the information age, which seemed to dawn at the same time, the turn of the millennium, we were certainly able to communicate fairly effectively and it was inexpensive - a benefit that saved us entirely.

There was no need and no ability before to get connected and communicate. But both our vision and the capability we had at our finger tips changed. We saw young people who wanted to learn about more just economic systems, the protest in Seattle happened. A lot of people were involved in wanting to change - now were able to hook up with people - and we saw this with california especially.

So once we defined a new target, a new way of understanding why poverty happens at the farmworker level, we saw these new sets of layers, and we also were able to talk to and move new allies. We started communicating with people across the country - we didn't have to be face to face anymore - which was a huge change. When we decided to roll dice and go across the country, go to california - at least there were people who were with us in L.A because we were able to communicate with them beforehand.

CV: Did the shift in analysis and use of the internet come hand in hand?

GA: I feel like they were largely separate events - but I doubt it in the same sense too, and so it was important to us understanding the industry as a whole - being able to get research online - I don't think it was entirely distinct, not existing in different chambers, but it was simultaneous, and that was crucial.

If we had had the idea ten years before that to go after retail purchasers - it would have been much more difficult if not impossible to do that. How we communicate with 98% of the people who care about what we do is all online - it's almost never face to face with people - 2% of the network is here, in Immokalee. To have to travel to communicate would cost so much more - so hard to imagine without email and telephones.

CV: Do you think there is any downside to the 98/2% split - do you lose anything without being able to communicate face to face with people?

GA: No downsides to the 98/2% split - it's just the way the world is - people don't need to know you face to face now. Would I love to be able to bring the 98% to Immokalee and have them be in contact with the workers- yes! There's no doubt that the networks that we have are made of nodes of people that have come to Immokalee in the past. 30 allies did the fast (in March) along with workers - the people who were there doing the fast, because of that fast, will forever carry the campaign for fair food with them. It is such a unique experience that can't be replaced in the virtual. But no, we have the ability to reach so many more people and we are credible - having the website increases our credibility. We have to jealously guard that credibility - people wouldn't believe information and they wouldn't get it from us if we weren't credible.

CV: How have partnerships developed?

GA: It's not entirely random with partnerships. There are people who come to us just through the message in the bottle approach - people, some who come across our website and through their own motivation get involved.

Then we have the strongly functional partnerships, student and youth that we have tried to organize to establish strong partnerships with, and the faith community - in the same way we have made a concerted effort to organize among all faiths, a community in other sectors. The SFA is a concerted strategic work, and day to day work and creation. Aim is to communicating with and developing larger and larger and stronger and stronger networks of patterns. We will

continue doing that and working on more broad outreach. Essentially the approach is targeting student and youth intentionally and outside more broadly.

CV: Trader Joe's is my main case study, can you speak about the perseverance of the CIW and what finally caused them to sign?

GA: It was a much more difficult campaign than it should have been and could have been with Trader Joe's. Clearly they have a market in people getting the lowest prices for a product - they have few products per category - so they concentrate on their buying power. Therefore, they have more weight because they only buy one product and can get lower prices. But if that was their only model they would be like Walmart. Yet, they are very much a company that caters to more educated elite shoppers - people who are open to the flow of information. In looking at this from the flow of information age, and the information behind the food - the 21st century grocery store doesn't sell just food, it sells information. TJ's customers are more apt to be more highly educated, and pay attention to the story behind the food.

CV: Yes, they actually base where to open their stores on the education level of the cities population.

GA: Given all of that, it struck us as inexplicable that they would fight us as hard as they did. It was a fortunate thing that they were based in the area that they were based in - an area that has a strong base of allies - southern california. For four years southern california had hosted the taco bell campaign. There were a lot of young people involved - they would come up and say, "I was in college during the taco bell thing and you guys came and talked to us then", and now that

they are older and out of school, they are still interested, and the social energy is very much alive - that energy was very helpful.

In the northeast and east we also have a lot of allies - especially faith allies in the Jewish community in NYC and Boston. They absolutely took to the campaign - very strong overlap with allies and the market. We were very strong in relationships - and they were particularly vulnerable. Because of their approach of the market, it really was just a question of time, and really just keeping the pressure on - we had 40 protests set to go right before they signed. TJ's came to Florida and opened up on Immokalee road, and that was sort of the last straw. People across the country took offense to that. The people across the country, asking, "what was Trader Joe's thinking?" So all of those things together, this was not not going to happen, it was just a matter of time.

CV: What do you see as the immediate goals for the CIW, and what do you see 5 years down the road from now?

GA: 5 years from now we hope the campaign for fair food is winding down and the fair food program is in the place, where it has established itself as a trusted and strong institution within the tomato industry, and if that's the case, we hope that the tomato industry will survive. The future of the Florida tomato industry is not written in stone, they are facing furious competition. There is full on production from Mexico and Florida, which has made the price drop - and there are going to be a lot of farms operating today that probably aren't going to be operating next year. It's a time of major or re-imagining of the tomato industry.

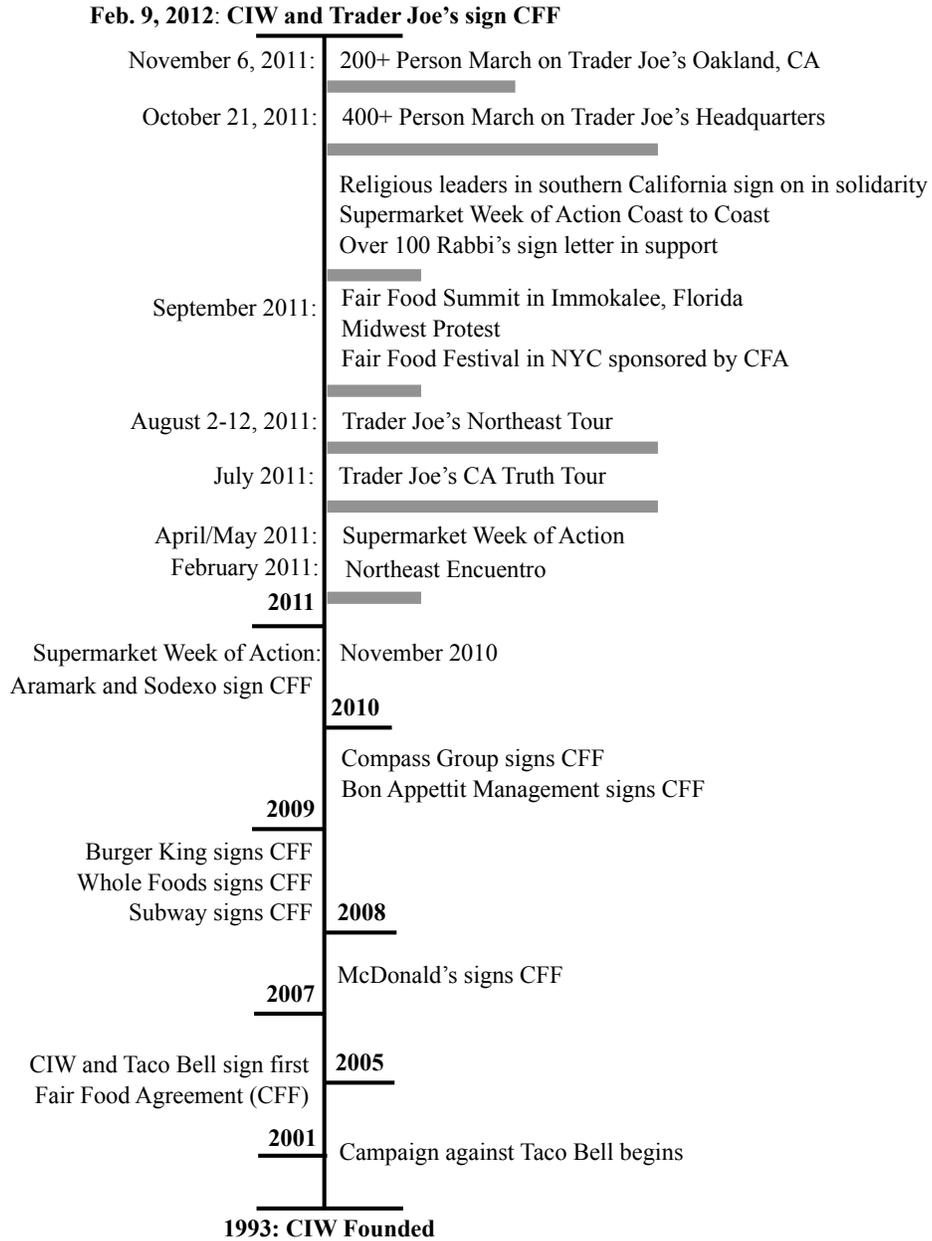
In one sense it's bad that the fair food campaign launched this year because we have lots of angry growers - the first year that the fair food program is all up in their business, the business growers are threatened in business. The ones that are doing the best this year are the ones who realized that this is the best way before. They differentiate themselves from Mexico tomatoes. So for a strong industry, we are using this as a differentiation tool. The fair food program is an essential part of that - it will take a hell of a lot of work. And credibility is everything. The fair food program is creating massive changes in the industry because the industry is coming from a very far place from being socially responsibility. Once we come to a position - we can ensure consumers that the tomato is a credible and viable thing. It requires a lot of work - audits, complaints, then how to handle the complaints, education, constant education, making sure the workers know what their rights are - all of that stuff, and we take that very seriously. And yes, wouldn't it be great that this was happening in other states, other crops - but it's not simple.

It took us 15 years to get to this place - we were fighting in the streets of Immokalee and now we are here. Every step of the way was necessary, and even though they weren't all in this direction it was all necessary to get us here today. So much work once we actually win, and we have a staff entirely created for this third party monitoring group, led by a former state of New York supreme court judge, an attorney, an accountant, but we need many more people - and all of that is the stuff that makes people work.

APPENDIX B: LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS MENTIONED IN ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

Fair Food	Religious	Student	Workers Rights	Misc.	Food Related	Media
Providence Fair Food	White Plains Presbyterian Church	Center for Political Education	East Coast Migrant Stream Forum	Code Pink	Saving Seeds Farm	Media Mobilizing Project
Baltimore Fair Food	Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists	United Students Against Sweatshops	Hotel Workers Rising Campaign	Environmental Justice League	Chez Panisse	Mark Bittman
DC Fair Food	Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farmworkers	UCLA's Labor Studies Program	Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores	MEChA	Community/Farmworker Alliance	Barry Estabrook
Ohio Fair Food	National Farm Worker Ministry	USC Santa Cruz	Commercial Workers Union	Oxfam	Swanton Berry Farm	Huffington Post
Chicago Fair Food	Presbyterian Church	Brown University	United Workers	YAYA	Just Harvest USA	Radio Bilingue
Boston Fair Food	Massachusetts Board of Rabbis to the Unitarian Universality Association of Congregations	UPenn Student Labor Action Protest	Massachusetts Immigrant Workers Center Collaborative	Amnesty International	People's Grocery Community Garden	
Denver Fair Food	Interfaith Action	Georgetown University	United Food Workers	Sum of Us	South Bronx CSA	
	Jewish Congregations	Vanderbilt Campaign for Fair Food		change.org		
	Workmen's Circle Center for Jewish Culture and Social Justice, Boston					
	World Communion of Reformed Churches					
	Massachusetts Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice					
7	11	8	7	8	7	5

APPENDIX C: TIMELINE OF CAMPAIGN FOR FAIR FOOD ACTIONS



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