



## **The Limits to Unified Claims against European Agricultural Policies: A Comparative Analysis of Wine Producers in France and Romania**

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**Abstract.** In 2008, a reform of the European Common Market Organisation (CMO) for wine was introduced. It consisted in helping ‘uncompetitive producers’ to step out of the wine market. The aim was to offer the ‘competitive producers’ the possibility of increasing their vineyards and developing large-scale production patterns on the model of the New World. The article focuses on the defense of the smallest wine producers invited to give up their traditional activities. It analyses the current dynamics in the *département* of Aude in France and the *judet* of Vrancea in Romania – two areas where there is a huge gap between poor producers and owners of large vineyards who could benefit from the reform. Stemming from the theoretical framework worked out by Pierre Bourdieu, the emphasis is laid on the objectification mechanisms by which some organizations managed to unify wine-growers’ claims in the past. The comparison between case studies drives to the conclusion that these mechanisms have not been activated since 2008, either because the reform of the CMO makes them inefficient or because wine-growers by-pass the new policies by other means.

There has been a major evolution of the European Union (EU)’s wine policy over the past few years. The European Commission has embarked on a significant and radical plan to restructure this sector of activity with a view to consolidating and reinforcing wine production while improving the competitiveness of wine producers in the global market. In the Commission’s view, European wine producers are facing increasing difficulties to sell their production overseas while exports from the New World (California, Australia, South Africa, South America) are making ‘huge inroads’ into the market, thanks to wines produced at lower costs in larger holdings. This has led to a branch-and-root reform of the Common Market Organisation (CMO) for wine, the body in charge of regulating wine production and trade in the EU. In a document published on 22 June 2006, entitled ‘Towards a Sustainable European Wine Sector’, Mariann Fischer Boel, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, announced a series of measures destined to turn the essentially traditional wine sector – too dependent on subsidies, in her view – into ‘a more industrial and competitive model’. According to the plan, EU wine production should

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be reorganized through a subsidized grubbing-up scheme for 400 000 hectares over a period of five years, encouraging 'uncompetitive producers to step out of wine production' under 'acceptable financial conditions'. With the abolition of the system of plantation rights as from 1 January 2014, the 'competitive' producers would be offered the possibility of increasing their production in proportion to their export capacities (CEC, 2006).

These proposals, which were met with hostile protests from most EU Member States, initiated a round of negotiations that finally led to the adoption of a new text, amended by the European Parliament. The Working Paper was then transmitted to the body of national experts working for the Special Committee on Agriculture in charge of preparing the meetings of the Ministers of Agriculture. The reform of the CMO was eventually adopted by the Council on 19 December 2007. A few amendments were agreed upon in the course of the in-depth debate on these proposals. The subsidized grubbing-up scheme was scaled down to 175 000 hectares for a period of three years. The abolition of the system of plantation rights was postponed until 2015 with possible derogations for the Member States that so requested. On these premises, the new legislative proposals were progressively implemented under the form of EU regulations.

In such a context, it thus seems interesting to focus our attention on the case of the smallest wine producers invited to give up their traditional activities to the advantage of large-scale production patterns on the model of the New World. In this article, we propose to adopt a comparative approach to the study of their mobilization and protest movements against a reform that has directly impacted them. For that purpose, we will analyse the common and diverging factors at play in two major production areas, the *département* of Aude in France and the *judet* of Vrancea in Romania.

The choice of two case-studies in France and Romania calls for a paired comparison that consists of identifying the fundamental similarities in both cases with a view to better apprehending their differences and variations (Tarrow, 2010). Each case will be studied in depth with special attention on the historical background. The objective is not to juxtapose case-studies but to combine analyses and propose more detailed considerations on the topic with potentially broader implications (Dogan and Pelassy, 1990, p.126; Dogan and Kazancigil, 1994, p.153; Steinmetz, 2004, p.377).

From that perspective, the key question will be to determine whether the two cases can be compared. Indeed, such an approach would be irrelevant if no comparison were possible. A comparative approach would also be pointless if the cases were too similar. Thus, the crux of the matter is to identify precisely the criteria of differentiation and assimilation (Sartori, 1991) that correspond to – and justify – our initial choice, since the two cases under scrutiny offer strong similarities, though they do not strictly mirror each other.

The two cases we propose to analyse have been chosen because they offer structural similarities. The two regions have roughly the same populations and their wine-making activities are organized similarly into two main poles: huge and prosperous estates in which production patterns tend to copy those of the New World, and small-sized wine-growers who stay out of such patterns. The larger wine producers welcome the CMO reform, of which they expect to take full advantage, whereas the second category of wine-growers is directly impacted by the reform as the objective of the grubbing-up scheme is to encourage them to step out of wine production.

According to official data, there were 7,562 wine producers in Aude, France, with 435 of them eligible for income support ('Revenu minimum d'insertion') in 2006, against 119 in 2005. Today almost 3,000 wine producers are on the verge of bankruptcy. Annual losses have been estimated at € 1,000 per hectare and per year since 2004, with a drop in revenue between 40% and 65% per year (Viniflor, 2007, pp. 19, 34, 37, 41). Producers working on very small vineyards can only survive thanks to the financial support of family members who have a salaried activity. Those with no financial help from their kin have often been obliged to cease their activities. At the same time, larger holdings (*groupements*) have adopted vertical organizational models, controlling their wine-making and marketing activities in huge vineyards – much in line with the orientations of the European Commission. The largest *groupe-ment* is Val d'Orbieu. Its headquarters are in the city of Narbonne, Aude. It manages a total area of 10300 hectares, two bottling plants (Les Vignerons de la Méditerranée and Trilles) with approximately 300 workers, and 11 wine-making production units with more than 100 workers. The total production is 600 000 hectolitres per year.

The *judet* of Vrancea is the main wine-producing area in Romania, with some 160 000 vineyards. More than 100 000 families make a small living out of wine production and complement their income with subsistence crops. Annual production is 230 000 tons, with 200 000 tons for wine production (Institutul Național de Statistică, 2007). Small producers use 60 000 tons to make ordinary table wine according to traditional methods. Large-scale wine-making holdings (*mari procesatori*) buy the major part of the production in addition to their own production. The best-known company is Vincon, which controls 2,150 hectares of vineyards in Romania – with more than 850 hectares in Vrancea – and employs 611 workers. Such companies have sought to expand by buying up small farms from the most fragile wine producers, in accordance with the principles guiding the CMO reform.

Although these two regions have structural similarities, they also present significant differences, which extend and legitimize the scope of our comparative approach. As a matter of fact, they have not adopted or complied with the EU reforms at the same pace. As France is among the main initiators of the European integration process, the French wine producers have become quite familiar with the regulating mechanisms attached to it. In the Aude *département*, wine producers' trade unions have developed over many decades and regularly championed the cause of the 'small wine producers'. It was only in January 2007 that Romania joined the EU, after a period of de-collectivization and progressive alignment with European norms. As a result, there has been a major change in Romania's domestic wine production sector, which has impacted its present organization. Trade unions have been created quite recently; there is a low level of membership and they cannot rely on a long history of activism for the defence of the 'small wine producers'. Such differences in time-scale call for a configurative approach. The idea is not to determine the presence or absence of any given variable in a static mode, concentrating on the situation today; it is rather to try and apprehend how some clearly identified structuring factors have combined over time while analysing their specific historical background (Katznelson, 1997).

For that purpose we shall proceed from a precise theoretical starting point. We have decided to distance ourselves from the studies essentially focused on the question of the historical relationship between the 'organized interests' and the State (Warner, 1960; Wilson, 1982; Keeler, 1987), extended to the case of the EU (Falkner, 2006). Apart from a few minor differences, these analyses are all based on the pos-

tulate of gross and spontaneously formed interests. From such a perspective, producers who happen to be in similar material situations have common and shared claims, simply relayed by trade unions to the administrations concerned. We have borrowed from Pierre Bourdieu's constructivist structuralism to critically assess this approach. In this view, social agents may be in more or less differentiated situations from a *structural* point of view. They never form a unified group spontaneously. Unity is *constructed* by the organization that presents itself as the mouthpiece of the group. The organization itself builds the group and presents it as a *natural* object in order to claim to be its undisputed representative, through a process of *objectification* (Bourdieu, 1984). Bourdieu's theoretical approach has been used to study the construction of 'farmers' interests'. In France, these interests were constructed from the outside by organizations claiming they defended them (Bourdieu, 1977; see also Wacquant, 1987). In spite of a variety of objective situations, farmers' unions shaped the group in whose name they claimed to speak. Several objectification mechanisms were at play. The discourses and the modes of self-representation adopted by the union leaders were particularly efficient (Maresca, 1983); the same can be said of the way farmers' protest marches were staged and of the type of comments given *ex post* (Champagne, 1984). The objectification of the farmers' interests by the unions has been all the more significant as it has 'hardened' over time (Hubscher and Lagrave, 1993). From such a perspective, we can envisage the construction of a category of 'small wine producers' through a process of aggregation of rather different situations. We can thus contend that the expression of claims against European policies is stronger when the unions that defend the small wine producers have a long history of activism. We shall put this hypothesis to the test through the analysis of the wine producers' representation work in Aude and Vrancea.

For that purpose, we shall use some qualitative data collected in each region. Our study is based on a documentary analysis: in both cases, we have gathered official information from the national and local administrations; we have analysed in depth the professional press and the unions' publications between 2007 and 2009 (*Réussir Vigne, La Journée vinicole, Le Journal du vin* and *Le Progrès agricole et viticole* in France; *ABC Agricol, Agroazi, Gazeta de agricultura, Gazeta fermierului, Lumea satului, Profitul agricol, Recolta* and *Revista ferma* in Romania). During the same period, we also conducted semi-structured interviews with wine producers in Aude and Vrancea. Twenty-four interviews were carried out in France and 22 in Romania. In both cases, our sample consisted of two main categories of agents: information was collected from an equal number of union leaders and wine producers without any official function.

The study of the data collected reveals some common characteristics in the wine producers' claiming patterns. Both in Aude and Vrancea, the situation is rather paradoxical. Most wine producers clearly perceive the European dimension of the reform. In our interviews, the European Union is commonly seen as being at the origin of the on-going restructuration process. The respondents are neither fatalistic, nor naive. Those who are expected to grub up their vineyards mention specifically a political project destined to promote the large-scale holdings. However, their grievances have not led to any precisely articulated claims, and no co-ordinated and unified critical stance has been adopted by the unions. Is that because the European reform incorporates elements that prevent any unified claims? Conversely, are such obstacles to unity dependent on different and specific local parameters? Our empiri-

cal analysis shows a complex reality. Although the obstacles to unified claims may be externally similar, they are the result of very different dynamics.

In the first part, we shall show that the mechanisms of objectification by the unions have not been historically structured in the same way. Consequently, the EU policies do not have the same impact in the two regions. In Aude, there has been a long history of objectification on the part of the wine producers' unions. The new orientation of the EU policy has indirectly altered the balance of power from which unified claims originally stemmed. The individual dimension of the financial support schemes has hampered the historically established mechanisms of objectification and prevented any unified claims. On the contrary, in the case of Vrancea our analysis shows a continuation and renewal of the mode of action used so far. Wine producers who had opposed the development of collective agriculture by by-passing the new norms locally and individually have reproduced the same type of mobilization patterns in order to dodge some of the EU policies. Such an approach has made unification and objectification irrelevant and unnecessary; difficulties have been met in a fragmented way and the absence of any unified claims is not perceived as a problem.

In the second part, our objective is to show that the impossibility to organize and express unified claims has led to very different political reactions to the EU reforms. In Aude, there has been a process of de-objectification of the wine producers' group. Unions have thus been in a position to stand as the only representatives of the small wine producers, whatever their economic situation. Such a process has prevented them from opposing the reforms. In Romania, objectification by the unions remains weak. As a consequence, the wine producers impacted by the EU reforms have not looked to the unions for guidance and help. They have rather been looking for political support in order to fight more efficiently against the reforms. Such support has been provided by political leaders who rely on numerous contacts within the administration and thus strengthen their electoral bases.

### **Obstacles to the Unions' Objectification Patterns**

When the EU wine policies encourage each wine producer to engage in individual action, it becomes almost impossible to shape and structure any form of collective protest. In Aude, the situation has been marked by what we can call a *rupture* with the old system, stemming from the implementation of institutional arrangements destined to treat the most serious cases. Conversely, in Vrancea, individual responses have been a continuation of the type of action conducted during the Communist period; they have not been induced by the institutional arrangements but are part of a broader propensity to dodge existing rules and legislation.

#### *A Rupture with the Historical Struggles in Aude*

In Aude, the history of wine producers' mobilization dates back to the late nineteenth century. Initially, there were very different types of holdings, of varying sizes, and the working conditions were far from standardized. A cleavage appeared progressively between the 'large vineyard owners' who could propose low prices in order to sell their whole production to the wine merchants, and the 'smaller producers' who were in no position to do so. Although some structural differences were identi-

fied, the categories shaped by them were constructed, regrouping agents who were in similar but not totally identical situations. Mechanisms of objectification made the contours of these categories even more visible. With the support of the first unions, co-operatives were created and a specific type of rhetoric adopted. According to the official presentation, the co-operatives were set up in order to put right the balance, with the 'small vineyard owners' pooling their resources and sharing costs for wine-making and marketing. Demonstrations were staged against rampant fraud in 1907. The effective organization of the protesters and the expression of comments delivered *ex post* strengthened the image of a group of small wine producers regrouped in co-operatives and united in the same fight (Levine Frader, 1981, 1986, 1991; Roger, 2008a). Through a process of symbolic construction, the co-operatives rapidly spread in the region. In 1929, 32 units gathered and formed the Federation of the Aude Wine-making Co-operatives ('Fédération des caves coopératives de l'Aude'). New objectives were then defined. Co-operative members no longer pooled the wine they produced on an individual basis; they regrouped their wine-making activities and could hence acquire new, more sophisticated and efficient equipment to resist the influence of the larger vineyard owners. They were helped by some major political leaders who thus also contributed to the objectification process. This was best illustrated by the example of a key Socialist figure, Léon Blum. Repeatedly elected as *député* (Member of Parliament) for Aude from 1929 to 1940, he made use of his national position and of the indirect control he could exert on Crédit Agricole mutual help funds. He managed to further the development of co-operatives and was always careful to use the rhetoric of general interest, beyond purely local stakes, in order to justify his action. Co-operatives were presented as an example to follow and an illustration of the model of agriculture promoted by the Socialist Party ('Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière'). They were described as a means of modernizing agricultural production without challenging the wine producers' independence. The objective was to reduce the role of intermediaries as much as possible and eventually 'emancipate farm workers' (Ferré, 2003). After the Second World War, George Guille championed the same mechanism of symbolic representation, in accordance with the reference category defined by the party. As a socialist President of the Aude *Conseil général* (General Council) and *député* for Capendu, he defended the interests of the co-operatives of his *département* in Parliament. While he called for specific and corporatist measures, there was also constant reference in his rhetoric to the collective struggles of the past (Lenoble, 2005). A member of the Aude *Conseil général* for Couiza, a socialist *député* from 1973 to 1978 and President of the Regional Council, Robert Capdeville took up the torch, as it were. He struck up close relations with Antoine Verdale, the President of the departmental Chamber of Agriculture and chairman of the departmental federation of wine producing co-operatives. They managed to articulate and consolidate the defence of the 'small wine producers' in such an efficient way that local producers were able to resist the major crisis that affected local production in the 1960s and 1970s. Indeed, there was a steady decrease in table-wine consumption during this period and competition from Algerian and Italian wine producers heavily penalized the Aude co-operatives. Collective protest movements gathered around some unifying slogans, the main objective remaining the defence of the co-operative model. Tension climaxed on 4 March 1976 when a wine producer and a riot police officer were killed on the occasion of a march in the village of Montredon (Aude). As a consequence of this tragic event, the French government was forced to address the problem in a more direct way. Through a

programme of state financial aid, complemented by European funds – a subsidized grubbing-up scheme and measures destined to improve the quality of vine varieties – the crisis was averted. The Aude wine producers were then in a position to break into new markets by producing better quality wine. At the same time they were placed under the authority of the CMO for wine. This new orientation *de facto* led the wine producers to adopt a more individualistic approach and break away from the unified defence of the co-operative model.

In 1962, the six founding members of the European Economic Community set up the CMO with a view to standardizing and regulating wine production and trade. However, each Member State had kept much leeway in terms of classification, plantation rights and wine-making regulation. In the aftermath of the 1970s crisis, national governments agreed to give a more interventionist turn to their policies. The CMO imposed a ban on any extension of the wine-producing areas and an obligation to distil the surpluses, a very profitable scheme for producers. Those comprehensive measures were not implemented on an individual basis: each year, producers were notified of a minimum selling price for each variety of wine. They received countervailing subsidies taken from European compensatory funds according to a standardized distribution system (Smith et al., 2007). In 1980, the system was changed as the European Commission considered that such an indiscriminate and automatic subsidizing system led to passivity among wine producers. It proposed a new system destined to reward initiatives and individual efforts, with financial aid for restructuring and introducing new vine varieties. Producers no longer received subsidies automatically; they were invited to send in their own application forms and each case was studied individually. During the interviews conducted by the Commission agents, applicants were encouraged to assume their responsibilities in terms of commercial risks and develop their own business strategies.

In an attempt to address the problems specific to the trade, national and local administrations rapidly proposed measures copied on those implemented by the European regulating bodies. Wine producers in financial difficulties were offered solutions mainly centred on the notion of individual responsibility – a new orientation that prevented them from analysing their situation by using historically constructed mechanisms of objectification. In 1993, the national reconversion system was reformed. Financed by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, subsidies were now managed by each Member State. The European Commission made recommendations and issued a guide for national authorities, which clearly identified criteria on how to differentiate between producers who should be assisted and those who had ‘to step out of wine production’. Codes of ‘good farming practice’ were proposed and the governments that had adopted the best tools in their case-by-case approach were cited as examples to follow. Along the same lines, each national government put in place their own institutional programmes. New emphasis was put on individual responsibility, which was a clear rupture with global management and collective bargaining used so far by the national regulating bodies. This change was particularly perceptible in the ‘Agriculteurs en difficulté’ scheme set up by French authorities in the early 1990s. Stricter rules were fixed. Financial aid could only be granted to those farmers deemed ‘viable’, after a very precise diagnosis had been made. In such cases, a ‘recovery’ programme was proposed, and subsidies were granted regularly, commensurate with the adoption of new techniques or new vine varieties. During the interviews, farmers were invited to attend training sessions proposed by the ‘Fonds pour la Formation des Entrepreneurs du

Vivant' (VIVEA) under the aegis of the Chamber of Agriculture. As in the EU documents, emphasis was put on the notion of individual responsibility and the necessity of developing business strategies. The leaflet presenting the training programmes was typically illustrated with overlapping pictures showing a vineyard and a chess-board. The objective was to develop a 'strategic approach' and reflect on the farmers' 'personal and professional projects' so that they could 'exploit data relating to the management of their businesses and be in a position to make all the appropriate decisions for their futures'. They were offered some 'teaching aid' to provide them with the necessary tools 'to express their opinions on their personal projects' (VIVEA, 2007). Thanks to the diagnosis made on their businesses or the financial support they were entitled to, by consulting the VIVEA documents or attending specialized training sessions, the wine producers were led to accept the idea that the difficulties they had to face in their professional activities were their own responsibility and originated from inappropriate strategies. As cases were always assessed individually, they could never be presented as evidencing a wider crisis affecting the whole trade, which could have justified some form of collective claims (Roger, 2010). The fact that wine producers were encouraged to accept the idea that they had to act as *entrepreneurs* and develop *individual* commercial strategies made harder the emergence of any unifying rhetoric. It contrasted strongly with the dynamics of the past. The mechanisms of objectification constructed around the co-operatives had spread the image of a close-knit group that could negotiate and obtain collective benefits. They progressively lost their substance with the emergence of a new type of rhetoric relayed by very strong communication and institutional supports. The situation was different in Romania, where wine producers adopted from the beginning individual and fragmented solutions to their difficulties – a strategy that can be better apprehended within the framework of set modes of action.

### *The Continuation of Past Struggles in Vrancea*

In order to understand the positions adopted by the Vrancea wine producers it is necessary to analyse the agrarian policies conducted during the Communist and post-Communist periods. Under the communist regime, the new policies led to creation of collective farms called agricultural co-operatives of production (*cooperative agricole de productie*), which immediately gave rise to latent tensions. In an attempt to stifle any risk of unrest among farmers, the authorities allowed co-operative members to cultivate 'individual plots' (*loturi in folosinta*) in exchange for their work on collective lands.<sup>1</sup> An underground economy developed and individual production was sold in an informal market, which hampered the completion of the objectives of the Plan. Though coercive measures were taken, they were never successfully implemented, as the co-operative members engaged in a somewhat hidden and informal struggle to preserve their individual interests (Roger, 2002). After the fall of Communism, the de-collectivization process made it possible for co-operative members to become owners of the plots they had been cultivating. The law on agriculture and agrarian resources (Law nr. 18/1991) passed in February 1991 gave each farmer who had worked for more than three years in an agricultural co-operative of production a plot of 0.5–1 hectare. The preservation of such 'micro-farms' under the new legislation perpetuated older practices and protected farmers from the upheavals affecting the national economy. However, negotiations for the entry of Romania into the EU forcibly furthered the consolidation process in the sector. A law on agricultural com-

panies and other types of agricultural associations (Law nr. 36/1991) was adopted in April 1991. New associations were created, based on informal agreements between farmers. They had no common capital. Their chairmen were under no obligation of keeping the books of the associations. They only had to redistribute a percentage of production to each member, once they had deducted their own share. *Agricultural companies* were distinct entities officially registered at the local prefectures. The farmers who chose to join these companies could pool their investments. Capital was divided into shares managed by a board and the president was helped by an accountant and a warehouseman, who were all salaried workers. Temporary workers paid by the hour were in charge of the ploughing and harvesting activities. Members could sell their production the way they wanted (Fulea, 1996; Voicu et al., 2005; Roger, 2001).

Associations and agricultural companies were created on the initiative of their presidents. They could acquire new land after negotiations with farmers, but the small farmers who owned plots of less than 1 hectare proved to be the most reluctant (Cartwright, 2001, 2003; Rizov and Swinnen, 2003). In 1996, 15 000 associations and 3,700 agricultural companies were registered, which only regrouped 21% of cultivated land (Institutul Național de Statistică, 2006). In order to accelerate the accession process, the EU urged Romania to speed up reforms. In 2004, a new, more aggressive agrarian policy was implemented, based on several pillars, with a view to furthering the adhesion of the country to the Common Agricultural Policy. The law on agricultural co-operation (Law nr. 566/2004) was the first pillar. It promoted the creation of 'Western-style' groups in which several land owners could work together and use the same equipment. This new organizational model was presented as a way to increase competitiveness in the European markets, as it was commonly acknowledged that it would be extremely difficult to produce enough at competitive prices if everybody worked individually on small farms. On these premises, each co-operative had to regroup a minimum number of five farmers who owned at least 5 hectares each. Each member had equal powers in the decision-making process and could cede his/her shares by donation or inheritance. As an incentive, co-operative members were granted tax deductions for a period of five years. However, the scheme fell short of what was expected and very few new co-operatives were created. The second pillar consisted of measures accompanying the SAPARD funding (Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development). The EU gave subsidies to the farmers working in the new Member States on condition that equivalent co-financing was secured. Under Law nr. 231/2005, a pilot programme called 'The Farmer' ('Programul-pilot Fermierul') allocated € 200 million for the scheme. Loans worth between € 5,000 and € 30 000 were granted to farmers who had applied for SAPARD financing. Repayment could be spread over a period of 10 years with a 4.5% interest rate. The authorities encouraged farmers to become entrepreneurs and 'take risks'. However, few projects were completed. Generally speaking, the small wine producers in the *judet* of Vrancea did not manage to organize themselves so that they could take advantage of EU financial aid. There were only a few successful exceptions. The Club of Odobești Wine Producers, created in August 2000, brought together 47 small producers from villages of Odobești, Jaristea, Vârtescoiu and Faraoanele. It produced and bottled wines sold under its own brand name, the Odobești Wine Club. Part of the production was sent to the 'central winery' against deferred payment of a certain amount of money determined once production had been sold. Visits were organized on a regular basis so that small producers could appreciate

the advantages of such a system and adhere to it. The Vitis Panciu Association of Individual Wine Producers, with its 60 members, also collected, produced and sold its own wine. Its managers tried to set an example in order to attract new members. However, such initiatives remained quite rare and the vast majority of wine producers in Vrancea went on cultivating their small vineyards.

After the entry of Romania into the EU on 1 January 2007, farmers were supposed to receive financial help equivalent to 25% of what their Western counterparts received for the same type of production. The gap was to narrow progressively as global production increased. To further this evolution, the government issued a document entitled 'Post-accession Strategy: 2007–2013'. The official objective was to decrease the number of farmers by forcing 'small-scale farms' out of the market and developing 'economically viable' ones. The idea was to 'promote the consolidation process in the agricultural sector through a functional real estate market' (Guvernul României, 2005). For that purpose, it was necessary to draw up a register of wine-producing holdings ('Registrul plantațiilor viticole'), as imposed by EU directives (Council Regulation (EEC) no. 2392/86, OJ L208, 31 July 1986, pp. 1–4; Commission Regulation (EEC) no. 649/1987, OJ L62, 5 March 1987, pp. 10–17). During the accession process, Romanian authorities tried to comply with these directives as best as they could and the Ministry of Agriculture imposed the registration of all vineyards over 100 m<sup>2</sup>. On each three copies of the document were indicated the names of the owner and of the producer, the location of the plot, its agri-technical characteristics and the vine variety (Order nr. 64/144/2003). Any change had to be notified. Wine producers also had to keep a log-book ('Carnetul de viticultor') in which they indicated the production mode adopted and the level of production, failing that the producers could not sell their production or receive any financial aid. However, very few wine producers registered spontaneously as they feared that the information collected might lead to new taxes or the implementation of stricter rules on farm regrouping. Initially planned for completion on 31 March 2006, the programme was postponed until 31 December of the same year. At that date, it was deemed necessary to further postpone the dead-line. From the partial data collected, proposals were made by the National Office of Vine and Wine ('Oficiul Național al Viei și Vinului') and the National Office of Designations of Origin for Wine ('Oficiul Național al Denumirilor de Origine pentru Vinuri'). A list of vine varieties for production was drawn up in each wine-producing area, which had to be approved by the Ministry of Agriculture. This document made provision for financial penalties in case of illegal plantation or grubbing-up. However, the authorities did not have much lee-way, constrained as they were by the EU directives. The European Commission imposed a massive grubbing-up plan for hybrid varieties. Local hybrid varieties had typically been Vrancea producer favourites for a long time as they are disease resistant, do not require any phytosanitary treatment and are quite easy to cultivate and produce wine at a low cost.<sup>2</sup> The small Vrancea farmers had indeed planted hybrid varieties on their individual plots after the de-collectivization process, so that the total area of hybrid vineyards had doubled in the 1990s. EU regulation banned hybrid varieties because the wine produced was regarded as dangerous for health. By special dispensation, Romania was granted a transitional period of eight years for the reconversion of 30000 hectares of hybrid vineyards (the deadline is 31 December 2014). By that time, hybrid production would have to be limited to 0.1 hectare per household, for personal use only. Funding for the reconversion scheme was provided through the SAPARD programme, co-financed by the Romanian government, the necessary in-

vestment for reconversion and provision for depreciation being estimated at € 10 000 per hectare. The allowances that farmers could receive did not exceed € 7,500, complemented by preferred loans guaranteed by the State, for a maximum of € 50 000. Even with such financial incentives, the reconversion costs remained prohibitive for the poorest wine producers and less than 1,000 hectares of hybrid vineyards were grubbed up each year. The producers who had remained attached to this type of local production developed some informal trade, which guaranteed a stable source of income. Along Road E85, there are many small stalls still today where car drivers can buy grapes or bottles of traditional wine. This informal trade has remained beyond any control and the restructuring policies implemented by the authorities, along the lines of EU directives, have mostly proved ineffective.

Thus, by refusing to regroup their farms and by developing an underground economy, the owners of small plots have opposed in a very pragmatic way the new orientations in the wine sector initiated by the Commission. They have remained outside any mechanism of objectification and have not gathered around a common platform of shared claims. As they have never been represented in such a way, their action is not fundamentally different from the type of action developed in the past. The informal nature of their trade is a modern continuation of what they used to do before the end of Communism in their country, i.e. outside any organization.

Our paired comparison shows that in Aude as well as in Vrancea the EU reforms have hampered the objectification of a group of 'small wine producers', according to Bourdieu's scheme, and hindered the emergence of common claims defended in its name. However, the trajectories that have led to this common situation have proved to be very different. Individual responses have been based on institutional arrangements in Aude while in Vrancea wine producers have adopted more informal ways and tried to dodge official regulation mechanisms. The EU wine policy has indirectly led to the fragmentation of the Aude wine producers whereas the development of individual action in Vrancea has served conversely to strengthen opposition to the EU reform. In Aude, giving up all collective claims evidences a rupture with the unions' mechanisms of objectification of the past; in Vrancea, it testifies to the continuation of older modes of resistance developed in the past, which have prevented the emergence of a mechanism of objectification. Indeed, in the two countries, the unions have not opposed the EU reforms.

### **Obstacles to the Unions' Opposition to EU Policies**

In our two case-studies, unions have failed to adjust their rhetoric and action to the European stakes and to the ensuing social restructuring. They have not been in a position to articulate claims against the EU reform of the wine sector. Here again, this situation is the result of different configurations. While unions have always been well organized in Aude, they have not stood up for the 'small wine producers' as it has proved particularly difficult for them to adopt a clear position on account of their claim to represent the wine sector as a whole – including wine producers who could benefit from the on-going restructuring process. In fact, these producers are in positions of responsibility within the unions and support the EU reforms. In Vrancea, unions have remained empty shells. Owing to the politicization of the local administration wine producers have shunned unions and set up a system of patronage in order to dodge more efficiently measures imposed by the EU.

*The Aude Unions under the Control of the Beneficiaries of EU Policies*

The wine producers' unions in the Aude *département* endeavour to oppose individual wine producers and co-operatives – two loose categories regrouping producers who benefit from the CMO reform as well as poor wine-growers who are incited to step out of the wine market (Martin, 1996; Lem, 1999; Petric and Gouez, 2007). As the objectification mechanisms dedicated to the defence of the 'small wine producers' are no more exploited, no one takes issue with these categories. The first category is especially extensive as the farmers who work in private holdings have very different economic orientations. The owners of large vineyards can have low production costs per hectare and sell their output easily. They may even be only investors and choose not to live on their farms. Beside, there are smaller size wineries, most often organized into 'groups of wine producers'. Members are in charge of the wine-making and bottling activities of their own production. Wine is sold collectively. Applications for subsidies are also centralized. In spite of these visible differences, the Federation of Independent Wine-growers in Aude ('Fédération des Vignerons Indépendants de l'Aude') claims it represents the whole trade. But, in actual fact, the Federation is controlled by the major vineyard owners. It is also the case of the larger Regional Federation of Independent Wine-growers in Languedoc-Roussillon ('Fédération régionale des Vignerons Indépendants du Languedoc-Roussillon'). According to its chairman, Jean-Marie Fabre, the restructuration programme initiated by the European Commission 'goes in the right direction: reform and competitiveness'. In his view, the development of grubbing up subsidies can be profitable if it is accompanied by 'specific and well-framed financial aid'. What is needed is to 'encourage the older wine producers to cease their activities with financial compensation so that they can retire in decent conditions' and to 'make sufficient financial provision' to help the other producers invest in new sectors of activity (Badea-Guerité, 2007). Co-operative members fall into another category. Their main activity is to grow grapes. Co-operatives are in charge of the wine-making activities and sell their output either to wine merchants or to the large-scale distribution chains. Even in this category, there are conspicuous differences. Large-size 'co-operative groups' with significant marketing capacities have been set up. There are also smaller co-operatives that produce wine on their own. Their members have seen their income decrease steadily and significantly over the last years. As they sell their output mainly to the large-scale distribution chains, they have been obliged to adjust to demand. Selling prices are not high enough for them to make a living, which has led to the absorption by more 'competitive' co-operatives of the smaller co-operatives in financial difficulties. In such a context, the absence of any mechanism of objectification that could make it possible for a union to present itself as the representative of the 'small wine producers' is heavy with consequences. In spite of diverging positions, the Federation of the Wine-making Co-operatives in Aude is the self-proclaimed representative of *all* co-operatives. It is in fact controlled by the major groups. Its official president, Michel Servage, has called for an increase in grubbing up subsidies to make them more attractive. He considers that higher subsidies may be a way of setting up 'a social plan' in this newly 'decentralized' sector of activity. In his view, it is essential to allow 'those who want to step out of wine production to do so with dignity' (AFP, 2007). In September 2007, his federation merged with those in Hérault, Gard and Pyrénées-Orientales, under the name of the Regional Federation of Wine-making Co-operatives in Languedoc Roussillon ('Fédération régionale de la coopération vinicole du Languedoc-Roussillon'). Boris Calmette is the chairman of

this new group. A former president of the Federation of the Wine-making Co-operative in Hérault ('Fédération des caves coopératives de l'Hérault'), and manager of 'Les Terroirs de la voie domitienne' co-operative, he has officially declared that he intends to take full advantage of the CMO reform (Huillet, 2007).<sup>3</sup>

Left to their own devices, the poorest wine-producers have found it extremely difficult to voice any articulate political demands and give a national dimension to their claims. With no organizational support, some of them have resorted to violent action. In 2004, a regional action committee in the wine sector ('Comité régional d'action viticole' – CRAV) claimed responsibility for several bomb attacks against local bank agencies, a building belonging to the Treasury in Narbonne and some railway lines. In April 2007, petrol bombs were thrown in supermarkets, and the electric power station of the 'Leader Price' discount store was destroyed by an explosive device, with CRAV slogans sprayed on nearby buildings. On several occasions, there were also messages of defiance against the unions (Roger, 2011).

Such sporadic acts of violence evidence the desperate and inarticulate efforts made to attract the attention of the unions, whose commitment in the various administrative bodies and agencies has distanced them from the poorest wine producers and prevented them from setting up any organized protest movement against the EU reform of the wine sector. There is a sheer contrast with the situation of the Vrancea wine producers who have not sought the support of the unions but rather managed to efficiently oppose the EU reforms with the help of the administration services.

#### *The Vrancea's Unions Deprived of their Substance by Partisan Networks*

Farmers' unions are very weak in Romania. They are only the professional branches of political parties and have no real autonomy. The National Federation of the Unions of Agriculture, Food, Tobacco and Related Domains and Services ('Federatia Națională a Sindicatelor din Agricultură, Alimentație, Tutun, Domenii și Servicii Conexe') boasts 38000 members. It has long had close relations with the Social-Democrat Party ('Partidul Social Democrat' – PSD). In 2000, its president, Elena Sporea, was elected Senator on the PSD list. The Liberal Democrat Party ('Partidul Democrat Liberal') developed ties with the League of the Association of Agricultural Producers of Romania ('Liga Asociațiilor Producătorilor Agricoli din Romania') by promoting its former leader, Adrian Radulescu, as a junior minister of Agriculture. In 2005, the association 'We are acting as Landowners' ('Proprietari Acționăm') became a union, under the impulse of the National Liberal Party ('Partidul Național Liberal' – PNL). In 2008, a local branch was created in Vrancea. Under the chairmanship of Gino Toma and Costel Ichim, it claimed it represented the Vrancea wine-producers but its links with the local PNL representatives deprived it of any functional autonomy. Placed under the authority of national parties, the unions were hardly ever consulted on the elaboration of public policies. Their membership remained very low. When demonstrations were organized, they could only gather a few dozen people.

The small wine producers turned directly to the local representatives of the political parties and to the administration in order to oppose the EU reform. Local officials, who were supposedly in charge of implementing the national and European norms, could also help the wine-producers by-pass them. This trend was facilitated by the very organization of the administration in Romania. Indeed, Romania's main ministries have local agencies in each *judet*. Officials are appointed according to a

hybrid procedure, theoretically based on meritocracy but more realistically on political co-optation. When there are vacancies, recruitment for jobs is by competitive examination in the local prefectures under the supervision of the National Agency of Civil Service Employees ('Agenția Națională a Funcționarilor Publici'). The jury is made up of civil servants belonging to the ministry concerned. There is a written test followed by two interviews, and candidates are recommended by the party local representatives.<sup>4</sup> The newly appointed civil servants are then supposed to relay the orientations of the party they belong to. They all have a prominent position in the *judets*. Their action is publicized and analysed by the local press, much like what happens for the elected representatives. The frontiers between the partisan and administrative spheres are rather blurred; indeed, most local agency officials are former mayors or members of the *judet* Council.

In Vrancea, it is the local agency of the Ministry of Agriculture that has typically been the most active in such matters, especially the Departmental Office of Agricultural Consultancy ('Oficiului Județean de Consultanță Agricolă'). Created in 1998 with a view to providing technical aid for farmers, it has regularly staged introductory courses in modern agronomics. Its second mission is to help farmers applying for SAPARD financing. The other institutional pillar is the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development ('Direcția Agricolă și pentru Dezvoltare Rurală') officially in charge of ensuring the smooth running of the agricultural sector, notably through the monitoring of the SAPARD application dossiers. The two agencies can hinder the granting of EU subsidies to the large-scale wine producing holdings, a policy presented locally as a way of offsetting market imbalance and alleviating the financial burden of the small wine producers. In the context of the entry of Romania into the EU, the Departmental Office for Financing Rural Development and Fisheries ('Oficiului Județean de Plăți pentru Dezvoltare Rurală și Pescuit') was created in 2006. It has been in charge of implementing the 'The Farmer' pilot scheme and helps farmers obtain additional financial aid for investment in complement to SAPARD financing. It has also managed EU structural funds that the Vrancea *judet* may benefit from. The Financing and Intervention Agency for Agriculture ('Agenției de Plati și Intervenție pentru Agricultură') was set up the same year. In charge of managing the allowances for production directly taken from state and EU budgets, it has supervised the registration of holdings and verified that the levels of production officially declared by the producers were correctly evaluated. Several local offices were set up in Focșani, Adjud, Panciu, Vidra, Nănești and Dumitresti. Small wine producers have typically asked for derogations in exchange for their electoral support of the party controlling the administrative department concerned. Derogations have not only been about grape crops but also about their complementary subsistence activities. In that respect, it is the Directorate General of the Sanitary-Veterinary and Animal Security Affairs ('Direcția Sanitar-Veterinară și pentru Siguranța Alimentelor' – DSVSA) that has the most extended competence in such matters. Its agents are commissioned to make regular or surprise visits to the production areas and the market places. They can be assisted by the police. In accordance with the EU norms, the maximum amount of produce that can be sold directly is limited. The farmers who wish to sell directly their own production of grapes, meat, milk, eggs and so on have to be registered on the DSVSA list. They can only obtain their 'registration certificate' after an *in situ* visit to determine the sanitary conditions. These controls have to be made each year and are paid for by the producers. In December 2006, the scheme was extended and made stricter for pork meat, the Romanian farmers'

typical diet. A ban was imposed on the selling of individual animals bred in farmyards, and the farmers who could not produce the required documents were liable to fines and their goods could be seized. Controls have also been made on the stands along Road E85 where farmers directly sell their production. Fines have not been issued systematically and the farmers could negotiate with the official agents (Roger, 2008b). As a result, this type of informal trade has prospered and been extended. It can be said that the possibility offered to the producers of finding compromises with the administrations directly concerned by the implementation of the reforms has made union intervention unnecessary and irrelevant.

## **Conclusion**

The comparative approach that we have adopted in our study makes it possible to examine Bourdieu's theory and the objectification of the farmers' interests by the unions. We may infer from our analysis that, beyond some formal similarities, the consequences of the EU policies on that ground are not exactly the same in each region. In Aude and Vrancea, the small wine producers see the EU norms as a source of difficulties. However, their claims have not been channelled by any well-structured movement or relayed by any clearly identified representative. In spite of these common elements, two clearly distinct trajectories can be discerned. In Aude, financial aid given to the smallest producers has progressively fallen in line with the financial mechanisms put in place by the EU. In the institutional response to their financial difficulties, emphasis has been laid on the notion of individual responsibility, thus furthering the process of fragmentation in the unions' approach to the crisis, in sheer opposition to the collective claims movements of the past. As a consequence, the mechanisms that made it possible to objectify the group of 'small wine producers' have been blocked. Unions have adopted a totally different strategy. Their leaders stand as the representatives of the farmers as a whole, including those who could gain from the EU reform. In Vrancea, the farmers' individual responses have been the result of past modes of action, adopted under the Communist regime. They have not been seen as a rupture with the past as each small wine producer has kept resisting reform by defending his/her small individual plots and making a living thanks to informal trade. In such a context, unions have not been in a position to articulate specific demands. Producers have directly dealt with the local administration in charge of implementing the reform in order to obtain derogations. The mechanisms of objectification have not been operative, but they have been superseded by other means: clientelist networks linked to political parties that have helped farmers to resist EU norms and regulations.

We have shown that the expression and articulation of collective claims for the defence of the small wine producers was impossible in the two cases under scrutiny. The causes and consequences of such a situation are different and contrasting: when the unions used to act as objectification entities in the past, producers are left to themselves, defenceless; when there never was any objectification by the unions, other means of defence are found, as a way of parrying the direct impact of the EU reforms. Such differences invite us to consider the historical dimension of the mechanisms of objectification and to differentiate between several types of obstacles: a process of de-objectification weakens the wine producers impacted by the reform more than the complete absence of objectification by the unions.

The paired comparison makes it possible to go beyond appearances. It invites us to take into consideration the historical trajectories and study the evolving combination of various factors. The distinctive feature of such an approach is to open up research in order to gain new understanding in other domains. Two complementary research areas can be proposed. In line with the focus that we have placed on the wine sector, it first seems interesting to analyse the evolution of other local areas where wine production is predominant, and study any potential variations. The idea here is to determine whether the new cases under scrutiny converge with or diverge from the two case-studies we have analysed or whether new configurations appear. Second, the study of other professional groups exposed to EU policies may give interesting clues to assess precisely the scope of the contrasts that we have identified and point to other factors of differentiation. Our analysis of the wine sector in Aude and Vrancea may finally fall within the scope of a broader programme of comparative research.

## Notes

2. State-run agricultural companies were also created. Employees only worked on collective land for fixed salaries. The plots cultivated were progressively sold to private companies.
3. The total production area is 227 800 hectares; 227 200 hectares are used to produce wine. Hybrid varieties are cultivated on 122 200 hectares, a 50% increase since 1990. The European Union wants the total production area to be reduced to a maximum of 40 000 hectares. In 2007, 25 715 hectares of vineyards were in the Vrancea *judet*, including 2,759 hectares of hybrid varieties (Institutul Național de Statistică, 2007).
6. There is an official body in charge of defending the wine producers' interests in Europe, the Comité des Organisations Professionnelles Agricoles–Confédération Générale de la Coopération Agricole (COPA-COGECA). However, it has not been very active and has very loose contacts with the wine producers. The wine sector representatives who belong to COPA-COGECA are all large vineyard owners. Joël Castany was the vice-president of the organization until 2005. He was also in charge of the 'Wine' committee.
7. Law n°161/2003 makes provision for an incompatibility system. It stipulates that 'a civil servant cannot belong to the leadership of a political party nor publicly express the positions of a political party'. A newly appointed civil servant falling into this category must resign within 10 days, failing this he may be relieved of his duties. However, he may remain an ordinary member of a political party.

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## **Behavioural Change and the Temporal Ordering of Eating Practices: A UK–Spain Comparison**

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**Abstract.** Dominant policy approaches to changing behaviour typically address the topic by way of the attitudes, beliefs and intentions of individuals. Their analytic value is compromised by the limited success of policies based upon such an understanding. In light of the expectation that, *inter alia*, mitigation of climate change will require radical changes in food consumption, we make some suggestions about the value of alternative models of behaviour and data sources that focus on the temporal ordering of the practice of eating. We review selectively the social scientific literature on the relationship between time and eating. Following a brief review of theoretical accounts of time and its significance in relation to eating, we reprise the conceptual apparatus for understanding temporality, with its distinctions between duration, sequence, periodicity, tempo and synchronization. The multiple temporalities of eating are examined in relation to empirical evidence, primarily through cross-cultural comparative analysis of Spain and the UK. We argue that detailed empirical attention to time and timings can provide important insights into patterns of food consumption, and that addressing the temporal ordering of practices presents opportunities for achieving substantial shifts in behaviours.

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## **Introduction**

Contemporary forms, and volumes, of consumption in advanced capitalist societies are widely identified as a principal source of many societal problems. Apposite examples include environmental sustainability and food consumption. In the case of the former, the resource intensity of increased volumes of consumption propel the globe towards 'dangerous' levels of human-induced climate change (Munasinghe et al., 2009). In the case of the latter, contemporary patterns of food consumption raise multiple concerns about nutrition and obesity, the deconstructing of meals and aesthetic integrity, and food security. And, of course, food consumption is amongst the major contributors to green-house gas emissions, declining biodiversity, and environmental degradation (Lang et al., 2011). That patterns of consumption need to change is not in doubt even if much uncertainty surrounds the precise alternative forms of food consumption necessary. Even less certainty can be found regarding how to change patterns of consumption.

In policy and academic debate, approaches to changing consumption have, increasingly, come to focus on consumer behaviour. According to Whitford (2002, p. 325) such approaches are dominated by the 'portfolio model of the actor', a model in which 'individuals carry a relatively stable and pre-existing set of beliefs and desires from context to context. Given the situation, they select from this portfolio "those elements that seem relevant and [use] them to decide on a course of action"'. Such a model applied to consumption presents the individual as a sovereign consumer. Put broadly, and in a somewhat simplified manner, consumption (or consumer behaviour) is presented as a matter of personal decision-making, usually within the context of commercial markets that respond to (aggregate) consumer demands, and provide the sovereign consumer with many product and life-style choices (Southerton et al., 2004). Within the portfolio model of action, consumer choices are understood to be influenced by individual's values and attitudes. The implications are simple enough, to change behaviour (for example, towards more sustainable forms of consumption) the challenge is to change the attitudes that shape, and values that frame, consumer choices (Shove, 2010).

The underlying philosophies of many policy approaches to sustainable food consumption serve to illustrate the pervasiveness of the portfolio model of action. Macro (societal) level approaches tend to be directed through instruments that affect aggregate consumer demand. This logic is identified by Wirsenius and Hedenus (2010) who distinguish two approaches in their review of environmental policy instruments for changing food consumption. First are command-and-control instruments, which include produce and production performance standards and the regulation of technologies and supply-side systems. Second are price-based instruments, which often take the form of taxes on productivity outputs (produce) and inputs (energy, feedstock, and so on) based on calculations of green-house gas emissions. Such approaches focus as much, if not more, on addressing food production, with patterns of food consumption framed as primarily (if not entirely) responsive to pricing and regulation as consumers respond to market signals and adjust their patterns of consumption in a calculated and rational manner. Where market signals are not heeded, there is a third set of instruments to legislate, regulate or prohibit specified behaviours (Reisch et al., 2010). The difficulties of this latter approach are partly ones of resistance in the light of economic interests, but also of an increasing unwillingness on the part of populations (imbued with an ideology of individual and consumer

freedoms and choice) to accept external, and especially state, authority over apparently private, everyday matters.

Given the salience of the idea of consumer sovereignty, freedom and choice it is not surprising that attention has increasingly come to focus on micro (individual) level behavioural change (Southerton et al., 2011). Perhaps most prominent amongst the policy instruments employed to shift behaviours is social marketing and information campaigns (McKenzie-Mohr, 2000), which hope that individuals will conform to the model of rational actors and see that it would be only sensible to modify their habits and help save the planet. Where this strategy does not seem to work, and it rarely does, recourse is had to trying to increase people's commitment to the tenets of ethical consumption (Vermier and Verbeke, 2006), whether through 'bottom-up' political mobilization (Micheletti, 2003) or through an appeal to the societal responsibilities of 'citizen-consumers' (Spaargaren, 2000). If people held green values tenaciously and deeply enough, then they might be more assiduous in turning into new behavioural commitments their general sympathy for the environment (according to opinion polls hardly anyone wants the planet to burn up). And yet, even where we find apparently pro-environmental values they do not necessarily translate into pro-environmental actions. For example, DEFRA (2008) reports on a range of evidence revealing that the percentage of people's attitudes to pro-environmental consumer behaviours was consistently higher than the percentage of people who took measures to change their behaviour. While some of this discrepancy can be explained by survey respondents not being sure about what steps they could take, the evidence does suggest that the relationship between 'attitudes', 'values' and 'behaviour' is not straightforward. The 'value-action gap' reveals a critical lacuna in policies for behavioural change.

As the critics point out, the 'portfolio model' is not the only plausible way to account for and explain human action. Among the alternatives proffered are so-called theories of practice. Some suggest that we have experienced 'a practice turn' in the last couple of decades (e.g. Schatzki et al., 2001; Reckwitz, 2002), the gist of which is to conceptualize individual action in a rather different fashion; certainly not as sovereign, decision-making, rational actors whose behaviour would be turned around as a result of more information, cheaper pears, more expensive beef, or encouragement to love the earth. Theories of practice shift the foci of analytical attention away from individual attitudes, values and decision-making toward 'blocks' or 'patterns of actions'. For Reckwitz (2002) a critical conceptual distinction can be found between practices as 'entities' and as 'performances'. Practices are configured or shaped as entities (as recognizable, intelligible and describable) by the many elements that comprise the conditions of existence of a practice. While there is no single typology of the elements that configure practices, the most frequently cited are cultural conventions and representations, socio-technical systems, material objects, normative understandings of competent performance, social and economic institutions, and spatial and temporal organization. Such elements both configure how practices are conducted and make them identifiable to practitioners and non-practitioners alike.

In the case of eating, one does not need to be engaged in the practice to recognize that it exists. Elements such as the spatial location, time of day, the material objects employed (e.g. the furniture – or lack of – in the dining room, cutlery and crockery), the food served, cultural conventions of the appropriate sequence of dishes or etiquette of the occasion, and the presence of co-participants are important in distinguishing the practice of eating from other such entities (or blocks and patterns

of action) and between variants of the practice. This is not to deny that individuals affect practices. Practices also exist as performances: it is through the 'doing' of practices that the pattern provided by the practice as entity becomes meaningful and the entity is reproduced and modified. Practice-based approaches can, in many respects, be regarded as 'meso' level analytical constructs. In their focus on practices as entities they identify a range of elements that configure (as macro-level) blocks and patterns of action, while a focus on practices as performances draws attention to the (micro-level) production and reproduction of the 'doings' of daily life.

This article takes one, fundamental, element of the practice of eating in order to explore the capacity of practice-based approaches to advance understandings of food consumption. By focusing on the temporalities of food consumption, it is suggested that time configures the practice of eating in multiple ways. Understanding 'configuration' offers alternative insights into the mechanisms of social change over and above changing the attitudes and values of millions of consumers. We begin with a broad introduction to theoretical accounts of time and temporality, illustrated by examples from food consumption. This is followed by a brief discussion of the potential of time-use studies for shedding light on the temporalities of eating, and illustrated through an empirical comparison of the temporal rhythms of eating practices in the UK and Spain. From a relatively rudimentary analysis, clear differences between the two countries are revealed in the temporal ordering and resultant patterns of food consumption. Systematic analyses of the temporalities of eating practices draw attention to, and explicate, the relationship between personal and institutional timings of daily activity, which includes rhythms, routines and the challenge of co-ordinating food consumption (in terms of provisioning, cooking and eating, and of commensality). This is an approach that views food consumption as a function of temporal ordering, a greater understanding of which is required to identify potential pressure points for reconfiguring the trajectories of eating practices.

### **Eating, Time and Social Organization**

It is remarkable how little attention has been given to 'time' in relation to food, and theories of human behaviour more generally, for it is a principal feature of the practices of food provisioning, shopping and eating. Where time has been considered a valuable concept through which to understand the practice of eating, its application has centred upon a narrow range of topics, mostly of perceived social problems in the temporal ordering of eating, like family meals (Cheng et al., 2007) and domestic divisions of labour around food preparation (Sullivan, 1997). In order to begin an exploration of the relationship between temporalities and eating practices, it is first necessary to consider briefly some insights from theoretical accounts of time. To capture the range, three themes will be discussed: social time, economies of time and temporal rhythms.

#### *Social Time*

When the word time is discussed it is usually associated with 'Newtonian' time. For Newton, time is the measurement of motion, and this idea of it being a unit of measurement underpins 'clocks' and the contemporary notion that durations of seconds, minutes and hours are resources to be distributed efficiently and effectively.

However, classical accounts of time in the social sciences begin with the premise that time in human societies is socially (not mechanically) constructed. Durkheim (1961 [1915]) argued that only humans have a sense of time that is abstract and impersonal. Describing modern societies, Durkheim discussed how the rhythms of social life are the basis for the idea of time itself. Social understandings of time emerge from the regularity of events such as 'market day', 'festivals', and 'rites', and the timings of daily activities such as eating and working. Social events mark the temporal rhythms of society and our collective understandings of the passage of time: of past times, present times and future times. Elias (1992) formulated this as 'social time'; because time is understood and experienced through the intervals that derive from collective social activities. The category of time is a social institution: our ideas and understandings of time are inherently social.

The consumption of food illustrates Durkheim's argument well. Eating has long been pivotal to the scheduling of time. Zerubavel's (1981) account of Benedictine monasteries presents a socio-historical analysis of the scheduling of social time, a convention that came to be institutionalized through calendars in various guises. The medieval Benedictine 'table of hours' (*horarium*) illustrates the detail of scheduling with rules concerning the temporal ordering of activities for seasons, months, weeks, particular days and by the hour. What to eat, when to eat it, and the length of time devoted to each event was scheduled and institutionalized. And, it was not only monks who obeyed. By the fourteenth century, the English church had prohibited the eating of animals on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and throughout Lent and Advent, which amounted to roughly half the year (Mortimor, 2009). As Zerubavel (1981, p. 30) states: 'Benedictine monasteries... constituted the original model for all modern Western schedules'.

There are many instances of the continuing temporal institutionalization of eating. People spend more or less time depending upon whether it is a feast-day or a fast-day (Sutton, 2001), a weekday or a weekend (Mestdag, 2005), a work-day or a holiday. Christmas is a time for feasting, the new year one for dieting. Also meals continue to punctuate temporal cycles. Whether they are as strong a marker of time passing (a *Zeitgeber*) as in the past is questionable (see Mestdag, 2007). However, aspects of economic order remain organized around tea-breaks and meal-breaks, causes of so many industrial disputes, and daily routines entail collectively observed meal times, if in some countries more than others. Examples such as these indicate that social times (the collective ordering of events and practices) represent forms of institutionalized conventions. Social times institutionalize eating behaviour: when, what, where and how to eat; and if intentions and attitudes matter, they do so because they illustrate the normative salience of institutionalized times. By the same logic, identifying, analysing and understanding how the social times of eating change and vary (across space and cultural groups) reveals the critical contexts through which eating behaviours are ordered and experienced.

### *Economies of Time*

Social time refers to the significance of collective timings. However, time can also be understood as a resource to be allocated across social and economic activity. This is the starting point for E.P. Thompson's (1967) classic account of the changing relations between time, economy and society during modernity. Critical for Thompson is the process through which time was commodified. As economic activity shifted

toward factories, time increasingly came to be understood as a resource to be utilized efficiently in production. Seen this way, time became a resource to be spent, sold and saved. Not only fundamental to the development of industrial systems of production, time was also the source of 'time discipline' as all forms of everyday activity came to be regulated by the clock.

Thompson's account is essentially one of rationalization. Coupled with the Protestant ethic of productive activity, efficient temporal organization and not wasting time has become internalized, described by Thompson as the 'inward notion of clock time', within Western societies. To illustrate, contrast the (clock) time discipline described by Thompson with that of the Algerian Kabyle, where social times were dictated by natural rhythms; meal times determined by the rhythms of labour rather than collectively prescribed parts of the day, and clock-time was regarded as the 'Devil's mill' (Bourdieu, 1963). Economies of time, nevertheless, remain dominant in Western societies with working time and its rationalization pivotal to the organization of temporal rhythms (Rotenberg, 1981). As Hochschild (1997) argues, a defining feature of the post-war period is that economies of time have spread from the logic of the work-place to the home. First, domestic technologies subject household organization to the principles of economic efficiency. Second, economies of time invade interpersonal relationships where couples, parents and children increasingly need to schedule and rationalize time to spend together.

Shifts in economic organization re-institutionalize social times. Take the move from Fordist to post-Fordist modes of economic organization as an example. Garhammer (1995) describes a major shift towards 'flexibilization' whereby times of work, shopping, banking and eating out are increasingly deregulated and scattered. The consequent tendency is for a temporal shift from 'nine-to-five, Monday to Friday' to the '24-hour society'. Many food-related anxieties are explicitly related to flexible economies of time. It is often remarked that scattered working hours result in the shared timing of meals breaking down. An epidemic of 'snacking' (a phenomenon identified by the brief time taken to eat and the frequency of its occurrence) was diagnosed throughout Europe a few years ago. In some countries, this was thought to be accompanied by declining frequency of meals taken with family members. The implication is clear: as the collective ordering of social times is undermined by the increasingly scattered (flexible) patterns of individual time use, the co-ordination of daily practices with significant others becomes more difficult (Southerton, 2003), and collective patterns of eating are torn asunder.

A second and related process relates to food preparation and the growing prevalence of convenience foods of various types. As time economies become fragmented and food practices individualized, pre-prepared meals that can be consumed individually as and when household members require become more appealing (Warde, 1999).

Anxieties such as these revolve around a changing role for meals, and implicitly presume the decline of the meal as a marker of social order, as a *Zeitgeber*. They predict change for the worse. Yet the empirical information necessary to judge their prevalence is generally wanting. There is also a good deal of conceptual confusion about what exactly the problem is. A rare comparative study, of the Nordic countries in the late 1990s (see Kjaernes, 2001; Kjaernes et al., 2009), did not rule out a growth in flexibility in the scheduling of eating events, but did demonstrate the existence of powerful rhythms and regularities (i.e. institutionalized social times), shared across different national populations, including an association between spe-

cific meal occasions and food intake. Not only were the patterns significantly different in the four countries examined, but it seemed that flexibility meant not the disappearance of routines for individuals, but that those routines had become more differentiated across populations. The variation was not strongly associated with socio-demographic characteristics, however; for instance, people living alone were no more eccentric or de-routinized than those in family households. Kjaernes et al. suggested that de-routinization was to a significant degree imposed externally, by obligations of work or leisure pursuits, rather than a change in ideals about proper meals. Something similar has been shown for France (Herpin, 1989; Poulain, 2002).

There are many strong theoretical grounds to draw associations between macro-shifts in economies of time and changes in eating practices. The limited empirical analysis of such macro-processes reveal, however, that post-Fordist economies of time do not necessarily undermine collective temporal rhythms but reinstitute social times of eating.

### *Temporal Rhythms*

To say that time is constructed and understood through the events that collectively mark it and the economic organization of daily life is to recognize that the temporal rhythms of any practice or activity are more than a consequence of attitudes and behaviours. Eating events punctuate activities – daily, weekly and annually – such that they establish routines and rhythms. Put strongly, such temporal rhythms have often dictated that individuals make the same decisions (or choices) about eating at more-or-less identical times. Anxieties surface with the erosion of temporal rhythms.

In some cases the effect of temporal rhythms is clear: many people still are forced to eat at particular times – in institutions of many kinds, including work-places, schools, military establishments, hospitals and residential accommodation. Viewed from such settings, it is something of a privilege to be able to choose at what time to eat.

More generally, temporal rhythms order and organize meal content, such that eating soup for desert or roast beef for breakfast is regarded as eccentric. As social times and economies of time suggest, the temporal patterning of eating behaviours is neither arbitrary nor universal. Different countries, cultures and groups have different and changing institutionalized ways of organizing meals. Lunch is particularly interesting; for while the British have very fragmented patterns, the French have developed a new form of eating in which the canteen associated with the work-place is a major source of midday-meals, and thus of some regularity and discipline, while the Spanish still have long lunch-breaks and have relatively little need for work-place provided meals (they can go home or eat in a more leisurely fashion in a restaurant). These raise issues of both time and space, and indicate the value of further exploring the temporal rhythms of food consumption in a systematic and rigorous way.

### *The Potential of Time-use Studies for Understanding the Social Organization of Eating Practices*

Time-use studies are a valuable but neglected resource for dealing with these issues and, particularly, the important question of how these processes vary between

countries. More sophisticated analysis allows for understanding of what people do, where they do it, the sequences within which they do it, whether they do it simultaneously with other activities, and whether they do it with other people. Time-diary data also provide micro-level detailed evidence of eating patterns in terms of shifts in location (home, work, friends homes, restaurants), whether eating events occur after or during work (one consequence of flexible work could be scattered hours of eating) and so on. Revelation of such details opens new lines of enquiry for understanding eating behaviours without recourse solely to individual intentions and actions.

Time-diary surveys record the primary activities of respondents during time slots of specific duration (usually 10, 15 or 30 minutes duration) over 24 hours for two or more days. Studies have been conducted since the 1930s and they cover many countries at different dates. While recognizing the variability of the experience of the passing of time, its units are quantifiable and directly comparable. The pattern of time-use is a potential short cut, proxy for, or indicator of a key dimension of practices as entities (or blocks and patterns of action). Furthermore, time-use reflects social interdependences between practices and people, because for many practical purposes interaction has to be co-ordinated spatio-temporally. Shifting allocations of practices within time and their temporal ordering, then, reveal changing social norms and cultural understandings about competent performance of practices, and suggest how socio-economic constraints might lead social groups to organize those practices differently (Southerton, 2009a).

Most analyses of time-diary data have focused on durations of activity, particularly revealing the macro socio-temporal organization of daily life; shifting distributions of time across common categories of activity tell us much about patterns of consumption, economic activity and welfare, and because it is comparable across societies it highlights institutional variations (Gershuny, 2000). This is the case particularly with food consumption, where durations of time spent on the activity of eating per day or per meal is particularly revealing of socio-cultural variations in the practice (Warde et al., 2007). Duration is, however, but one key dimension of temporality. Fine (1990) identifies four additional dimensions: sequence, tempo, periodicity (or frequency) and synchronization.

All four can be identified relatively easily through observations of the practice of eating. *Tempo*, for example, can be found in different types of meal event, being relatively fast when eating alone or in a fast-food establishment as compared with slow and leisurely when eating as a group at a conventional restaurant. The *periodicity* with which one eats is often as problematic as the nutritional content of the food: hence eating many small meals per day (i.e. snacks) as opposed to two or three prepared meals is widely regarded as unhealthy. Periodicity can also be identified where certain foods are associated with particular times of the day and mark the passing of periods of time (breakfast–lunch–dinner), although the order and timing (i.e. *sequence*) of such meals is neither consistent across cultures nor over time. Routine also implies sequence, for it is not merely the passage of time but patterns of succession, whether soup before pudding, cooking before eating or work before lunch, which matter. *Synchronization* is perhaps the most intriguing as it entails not only the co-ordination of people but also of practices. Whether eating is synchronized to occur with other people present has some bearing on the form and experience of the practice and eating is usually synchronized with other practices such as social events and rhythms of work. The critical point is that duration, frequency,

regularity and speed of eating are all functions of time allocation (Southerton, 2006). The ordering of meals, the relationship between certain foods, rituals and norms surrounding the activity are related to timing. And, the resultant rhythms of eating in all societies form temporalities that represent the patterned performances of the practice (practice as entity) and configure what and how we eat (practice as performance).

### **Eating Time in Europe: Some Evidence**

In this section we review material that describes and discusses the significance of: time spent eating; rhythms and routines; commensality and synchronicity; and the sequencing of meals within daily schedules. A comparison between Britain and Spain is included in order to highlight the significance of institutional variations to the practice of eating. In doing so, the temporal ordering of eating practices (as both entities and performances) is revealed as a principal feature of the configuration of the practice (or behaviour).

#### *Time Spent Eating: International Variation*

Many studies are devoted to the duration of eating events, which are important because shifts over time, variations across space, and differences across social groups (especially in relation to gender) are instructive about the changing patterns, social relations and provisioning of food consumption. A study published by the European Communities (2004) reveals that women devote more time to cooking and less to eating than do men. There are considerable variations by country. Women in Hungary spend 87 minutes per day in food preparation compared to 49 in Denmark, while Hungarian men spend only 14 minutes compared to British men's 27. The French spend almost three hours a day eating while the Finnish, Slovenian, Estonian and British spend barely two.\*

Warde et al. (2007) calculated the mean amount of time spent by respondents aged between 20 and 59 in five countries (France, Netherlands, Norway, UK, USA) in the 1970s and at the turn of the century. Except in France, the amount of time spent eating has, on average, reduced. People in France were eating at home for longer than those in the other countries in the 1970s and, since the amount of time remained constant (at just over one and a half hours), they were spending much more time than the others by 1998 on account of increased time spent eating out. Reduction of time eating at home was less in the Netherlands than for the rest of Europe, amounting to a little over an hour in 1995, while the Norwegians and the British were spending less than an hour and the Americans less than three quarters of an hour. It is clear that domestic meals were already taking much less time in the USA in 1975 than in Europe, and that the amount of time reduced further in the subsequent decades.

Change in mean duration alone tells us little about whether people are eating more or less food, eating faster or slower, or with a greater or lower frequency. Reduced durations might be a consequence of faster eating, perhaps indicative of fast foods, snacking and more individualized eating, or of a lower frequency of eating events, such as the dropping of lunch or breakfast. The other four temporal dimensions are required to fully understand the significance of changing durations. Nevertheless, while crude, comparing durations is still revealing about institutional variations that

shape contexts of eating. Attitudinal evidence is not required to demonstrate that the temporal organization of eating in France leads to very different behaviours than are found in the Nordic countries.

### *Rhythms and Routines*

Rhythms and routines of eating are shaped by many social, material, economic and cultural factors. Analysing diaries from the 1930s, Southerton (2009b) showed that the timing of meals in inter-war Britain was largely a consequence of the rhythms of work (economies of time), the main meal of the day being taken at lunch-time with one or two 'suppers' in the late afternoon and evening. Such rhythms and routines played an important role in determining what people ate. Dinner on Mondays predominantly consisted of stews comprised of the 'left-overs' from a Sunday roast. Monday was also wash day (of both clothes and bodies). This configuration of practices was not arbitrary: while the oven was lit to make the stew it was also available to heat the water necessary for washing clothes and preparing baths. This made kitchens hot – ideal for drying clothes should it be raining outside and for keeping bodies warm as they entered and exited the bath tub. While a simple story, the point is clear: temporal rhythms emerge from a number of contextual factors and configure the social norms surrounding when and what people eat.

In a contemporary, qualitative, Danish study, Kristensen and Holm (2006) show that routines directly affect not only types of food consumed, but even the feeling of being satisfied. Danes, like many people in other countries, have strong ideals regarding how best to eat, with social prescriptions entailing firm routines. When usual behaviour is disrupted they may adopt many strategies for adaptation and accommodation, if sometimes grudgingly. One telling example was of a single woman who, when required to eat dinner later than normal on the day of the interview, said that her appetite responds such that she will not feel hungry until immediately before the appointed time for her meal. She said,

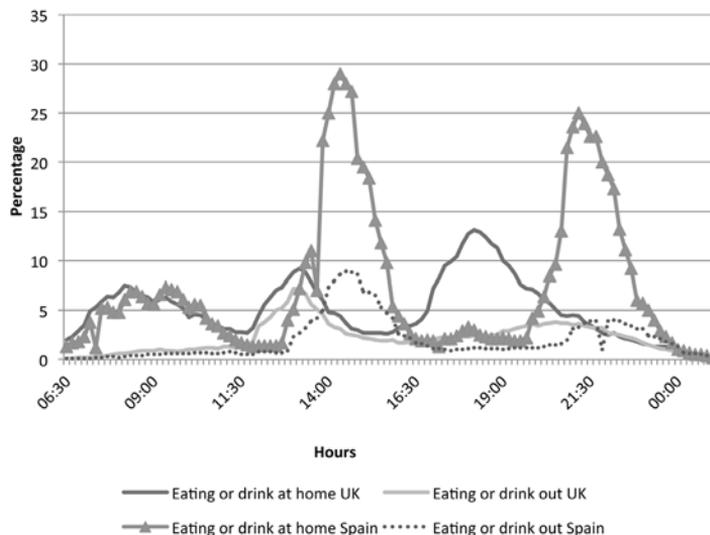
'I know that I am going out to eat later this evening. So I have prepared myself not to be hungry right now. If I was alone, however, I might have felt hunger. I probably would have considered going to the kitchen and making myself some food then, and also felt the appetite to do so. But I don't feel like that now, I have prepared myself not to eat over the next three hours or so... so, I feel okay about it' (Kristensen and Holm, 2006, p. 164).

A powerful example of the inseparability of mind and body, her account both indicates the strength of a cultural template for regular meal times in Denmark and the capacity to reorder routines in response to unexpected or unusual situations. Kristensen and Holm show, in addition, that having personal control over time-schedules is generally bad for dietary well-being. Those who take lunch with colleagues in the canteen are more likely to eat healthily than those who eat alone at times that they personally determine. This is not simply an example of the importance of co-participation in the eating of meals affecting diet, but of the critical importance of temporal co-ordination in shaping the performance of eating practices. Moreover, as revealed by Southerton (2003), the challenge of temporal co-ordination is less a matter of control over personal schedules and more a consequence of the changing temporal organization of daily life.

The report of Kristensen and Holm makes perfect sense in the light of qualitative evidence about the organization and meaningfulness of food events. What people eat depends upon their definition of the meal occasion. There is no biological, geographical or commercial explanation as to why, for instance, Danes and Norwegians eat cold lunches while Swedes and Finns eat hot food in the middle of the day (Kjaernes et al., 2001). Rather, it would seem that there are powerful conventions, nationally variable, which associate particular foods with temporally (and spatially) defined eating events. Situations regulate intake, partly because subjective norms – an individual's understanding of the expectations of others – come into operation. What qualitative studies do not necessarily do, however, is to account for the generality of the practices for which they have personal testimony, which is why there is great potential in determining the extent to which routines, rhythms and coincident time paths underpin dietary habits of larger social groups and categories.

A very basic analysis of the timing of eating events in the UK and Spain provides a sketch of that potential. Figure 1 shows the percentages of people eating or drinking as a main activity between half past six in the morning and one o'clock at night. Breakfast times in both countries share a certain synchronicity, but for the rest of the day patterns of eating times vary significantly. The British appear to spread meals through the day, while Spaniards concentrate them between half past one and four o'clock in the afternoon (lunch) and between eight and eleven o'clock in the evening (dinner). In the Spanish case this makes for important peaks of individuals eating at the same time (in the periods 2.00–2.30 p.m. and 9.00–9.30 p.m.), peaks that are not clearly defined in the UK.

People in Spain have fixed meal-times. Meals continue to function as a collective *Zeitgeber*. Eating divides the day into clear parts: working time before lunch, a long break for lunch, working time after lunch, and time after work to rest and eat at the

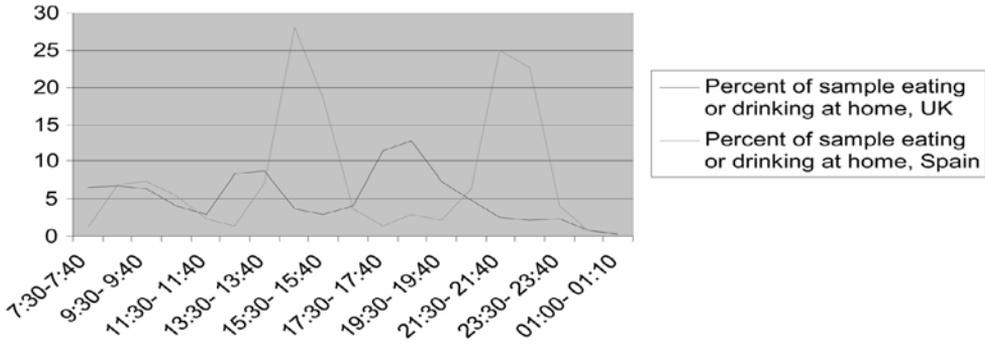


**Figure 1.** Population percentage (16–65) eating throughout the day (at home and out).

Source: Own elaboration from the United Kingdom Time Use Survey, 2000 and Encuesta Nacional de Uso del Tiempo en 2002.

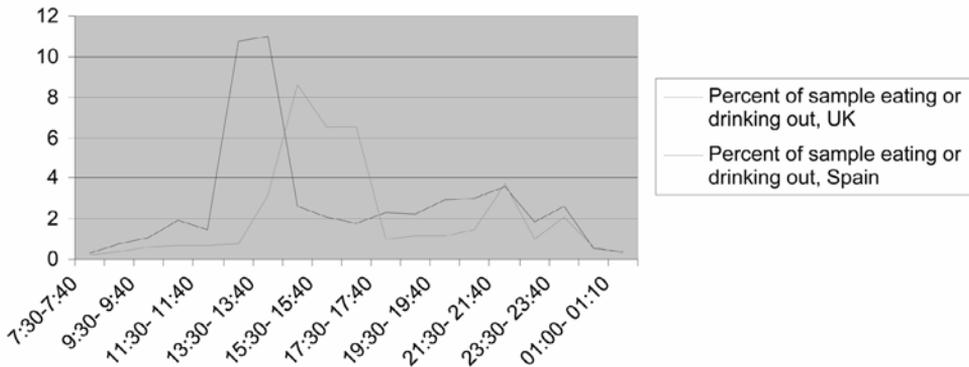
end of the day. People mostly return home for lunch at midday and for dinner at the end of the working day. There is a clear correlation between economies of time based around routine working hours and social times based around the collective timings of eating events. This contrasts with the UK, which shows a flatter line with far less pronounced peaks for participation at particular times and relatively shorter periods for lunch (12.00–2.00 p.m.) and dinner (5.00–8.00 p.m.).

Whereas in Spain about 40% of the population were eating at 2.50 in the afternoon, and about 30% at 9.30 in the evening, in Britain at no time of the day were so many as 20% of the population so engaged. Whether individuals have fixed routines in Britain is not clear, but meal timing is a much weaker *collective Zeitgeber*. The detail can be inspected in Figure 2, concerning eating at home. In Spain eating peaks strongly around lunch and dinner, with comparatively little eating other than at main meals (breakfast is taken between 9 and 10.30 and there is less of a pronounced pattern). In Britain there are peaks at earlier points during the day, but the trajectory of the graph is much flatter, with peaks depressed and more frequent eating at home



**Figure 2.** Comparison between Spain (2002) and UK (2000): eating or drinking at home.

Source: Own elaboration from the United Kingdom Time Use Survey, 2000 and Encuesta Nacional de Uso del Tiempo en 2002.



**Figure 3.** Comparison between Spain (2002) and UK (2000): eating or drinking out.

Source: Own elaboration from the United Kingdom Time Use Survey, 2000 and Encuesta Nacional de Uso del Tiempo en 2002.

during working hours. We are much less certain about the reliability of the data for making comparisons about eating and drinking away from home, due to cultural variations in the interpretation of what constitutes eating out in the two countries, but it would seem from Figure 3 that Britons spend more time in these activities and there is a pronounced peak between 12.00 and 1.00 p.m.

From a brief examination of the basic rhythms of eating in Spain and Britain, it is clear that institutional differences in each country result in quite different eating routines, even though lunch and dinner punctuate the day in both. This is partly a consequence of different economies of time; Britain has more employment in the service industries with scattered working hours undermining the collective timing of eating events. Viewed this way, temporal rhythms clearly demarcate the practice of eating as an entity, shaping the different cultural understandings and social organisation of food consumption in the two countries (with lunch and dinner being quite different practices in each), and affecting the ways in which those practices are performed. This is not a matter of attitudes and values but of the temporal ordering and framing of the practice.

#### *Periodicity and Synchronicity: Commensality*

A further application of time data describes how and whether the activity is synchronized with other people and other activities. One of the most important social features of meals is that they give opportunities for sociability. With whom one dines is enormously significant in indicating the centrality of people in one's life. Companions at meals separate family from friends, friends from strangers, etc. The family meal has often been thought especially important for emotional and affective reasons, as well as for practical aspects of adequate nutrition. In many western countries the decline of the family meal is predicted, with dire consequences for social and familial relationships. In Britain there are regular political and popular moral panics, and equally frequent rebuttals by academics (for a discussion, see Murcott, 1997). Because time diaries almost always ask where an activity took place and with whom, there is an opportunity to examine synchronization of household member schedules around family meals.

Occasional and *ad hoc* survey data suggest that while the whole family taking its main meal together in the UK is still (just) the norm, it occurs perhaps once a week less often than in the 1970s (Cheng et al., 2007). The situation is almost certainly different in Spain. The simple evidence of large numbers of people returning home for lunch and similar proportions of the population also eating dinner at home implies that the family meal is still intact. Indeed, Spain is one country where there is no scare about the demise of the family meal. Qualitative research also supports the hypothesis of the continued relevance of Spanish family meals. The Spanish make greater organizational efforts to make possible that all household members can eat lunch or dinner together. Sometimes this means delaying or advancing the meal-time and awaiting the arrival home of family members from work or school (Díaz-Méndez, 2005). The institutionalized convention of eating together offers a persuasive explanation for the longer duration of main meals in Spain.

This suggests interdependence between duration, periodicity and synchronicity, and that the synchronization of time-space paths is a critical issue for eating. The meal depends upon getting the right people together at the same table, and it would appear that this is more easily done if meals occur for most of the population at the

same time. There is then less interference with the possibility of eating together. The more often, by contrast, people feel the need to eat at unpredictable times, or their other obligations prevent them from synchronizing their activities with others in their households, the less easy it is to organize commensality. Moreover, since meals eaten with others usually take longer than those eaten alone, synchronicity is relevant to duration. The contexts of eating behaviour that inform and shape attitudes can be uncovered through systematic empirical analysis of social times, economies of time and temporal rhythms.

### *Sequencing*

Synchronization is not only a matter of co-ordination amongst people but also one of fitting together multiple activities and practices. There is a clear, prevalent and easily understandable sequential relationship between cooking and eating, although the advent of freezers and microwaves do allow for some shifting in the timings of those sequences (Shove and Southerton, 2000). Indeed, a strong indicator of the breakdown of the proper meal would be accelerated desynchronization of food-related practices. Analyses of sequences can identify patterns of synchronization and permit empirical interrogation of claims surrounding the fragmentation of collective eating. Mestdag (2007), in her study of meal deconstruction in Belgium, presents a powerful, if preliminary, indication of the potential explanatory value of studying the succession of activities surrounding eating. Sequence analysis provides a means to generate typologies of eating behaviour, incorporating its temporal, spatial and social characteristics. So, for example, some people experience a hurried breakfast because of the early hour at which they set out for work, while others record a relaxed event often much later in the morning. The rhythms of preparation for an evening meal, and also the duration of it, depend upon whether other household tasks are to be completed in addition.

Sequence analysis of time diary data is increasing in technical sophistication, with the potential to reveal much about the contextual conditioning of eating behaviours. For example, that fewer women are engaged in paid work in Spain than the UK presents a possible explanation for the apparent greater persistence of family meals in that country, because cooking a meal for the entire household is more likely to be sequentially possible. By contrast, one would expect to see sequential disjuncture between the practices of cooking for the family (as opposed to reheating) and eating in the UK. In addition to revealing the temporal ordering of food practices, sequence analysis also has the potential to explain how practices fit together. For instance, under what conditions does snacking occur, do evening meals always signal the end of the working-day, and with what implications for culinary cultures?

Analytical focus on sequences acknowledges that temporal rhythms are a fundamental context in which behaviour occurs, is understood and is conditioned. Analysing the sequence of practices unpacks those rhythms to reveal institutionalized conventions and their variations across space and culture, and over time. Sequences are instructive about the duration, tempo, periodicity and synchronicity of everyday practices because they underpin the temporal co-ordination of daily life. In one way or another, most contemporary anxieties surrounding eating, whether related to its fragmentation or individualization, its nutritional deficiencies or its social deconstruction, are concerns about its sequential co-ordination with other people and practices.

## Discussion

Time is one principal co-ordinate of social practices. The temporal aspects of eating cannot be reduced to individual intentions or attitudes, but rather point to the need for mutual co-ordination of human activities. Social time refers to the institutionalization of cultural conventions that frame practices. Economies of time highlight how our understandings of time and its organization are subject to macro-processes of change, which result in shifting temporal parameters for the co-ordination of practices. The resultant temporal rhythms shape the contexts in which individual behaviour is located, interpreted and experienced.

Time-use studies unearth details of what people do, about how practices are performed and patterned as entities, and provide some indications as to how those practices are configured and ordered. Our brief analysis of time diary data identifies a number of insights not accountable in terms of personal decisions and preferences. There are clear national differences in patterns of eating that result from institutional variations. Routines and rhythms of eating in Spain are more predictable than in the UK; although eating patterns in Britain are by no means as disorderly as is popularly imagined. Even the most basic analysis demonstrates that eating is ordered along axes of time and space and that eating practices are subject to temporal routines.

The time-use data presented here provide evidence that many people engage in the same activity at the same time. Examination of the pattern for a population (whether that be a group, say women, or for a country), particularly examining what proportion of the population are doing what and when, gives us access to issues of synchronization, which may be interpreted either as subjective norm or structural constraint. Societies do things differently, and in some societies we can safely postulate that meals are more of a collective *Zeitgeber* than in others.

Changes in the timing and co-ordination of meals also indicate a relationship between norms, shifting economies of time and social time. Thus, in addition to revealing change, comparative analysis demonstrates the varying situational constraints faced by different cultures or groups. This is because the allocation of time to any practice reflects a structural parameter to action: whether that is related to changing institutional configurations of working hours, or a matter of the timing and sequence of collectively shared practices, is an empirical question. Thus, strategic use of time depends on the configuration of all five temporal dimensions. One can do things faster; do more than one thing at a time; make appointments; spend shorter periods (intensification); do something less often; produce a more efficient sequence; and seek to synchronize or desynchronize certain practices and people. Change over time and variations across space in the allocation of time reflect the contexts in which practices are performed and constrained.

By examining food consumption in terms of eating practices, analytical attention is pulled away from the portfolio model of action – from the attitudes and values of sovereign individuals – and toward the temporal organization of daily life, social relations and cultural norms, socio-technical systems and infrastructures, and institutions. In this article, attention has focused primarily on temporal organization, although the interdependencies between this and other elements that configure eating practices have been alluded to. Such an analysis suggests that changing eating behaviours, whether in order to address health, sustainability or other societal ‘problems’, requires looking beyond the portfolio model of action and paying closer attention to the interdependent elements that configure eating practices.

We have argued that temporalities are particularly powerful in this respect. On the one hand, temporal dimensions in the form of duration, periodicity, sequence, tempo and synchronization represent readily identifiable features of the practice as an entity. This is reflected in the patterns revealed by analysis of time diary data. This is more than mere observation. Features of the patterning of the practice also frame cultural meanings and understandings of the practice itself, hence narratives of declining family meals being less prominent in Spain. On the other hand, the performance of those practices reproduces the practice as entity, and in doing so plays some not insignificant role in reproducing the temporal ordering of the practice. For it is only through relatively large proportions of the Spanish population performing the practice of eating lunch at particular times of the day and for certain durations, particular tempos, within sequences and synchronized with others that the practice can exist in its current form.

Understanding human action as configured through practices as entities and reproduced through practices as performance undermines the core theoretical basis of the portfolio model of action. If a critical challenge confronting contemporary societies is to change consumption and (consumer) behaviour, then targeting the attitudes, values and consumption decisions of sovereign individuals appears a particularly myopic approach. Indeed, the arguments presented here suggest that attitudes, values and consumer decisions are framed and tempered by practices – to change attitudes and behaviours even from within the portfolio model of action would first necessitate addressing the relationship between practices as entities and performances.

This raises one final set of issues, which is how to change practices. To some extent this is an empirical question – research into the ordering and performance of practices is required, and time-use studies offer one set of empirical and conceptual tools for this task. This article has focused on one element (temporalities) of the ordering of eating practices. From a relatively brief analysis, and returning to an earlier example of how the portfolio model of action has been translated into instruments for behaviour change in the substantive areas of sustainable food consumption, we can provide little more than general indications as to how such an analysis can feed into policies for changing practices. The first is that instruments for changing eating practices should take seriously the interrelated temporalities of related practices. This might include the timing of meals by addressing the temporalities of working times, should the target be to encourage people to eat at collectively defined times (which, with respect to sustainability could have benefits of scale regarding the provision of food, although this could exacerbate ‘peak time’ loads within energy and transport infrastructures). The sequential ordering of food provisioning (e.g. shopping, storing, cooking and eating food) in relation to broader everyday temporal rhythms could also be considered if the target is to encourage local sourcing of food, less use of frozen storage, and reducing domestic food waste. Such ideas are speculative; however, the critical point is that attention to the temporal ordering of practices – across multiple and interdependent dimensions of temporalities – shifts policy orientation away from persuading, influencing and encouraging attitudinal change in the hope that millions of people will simultaneously change their behaviours, and toward a focus on how daily practices are co-ordinated and ordered within collective daily life.

## Note

- \* Note that time spent eating is unhelpfully categorized with personal care, but other evidence (Cheng et al., 2007) suggests that the variance is due to time spent eating.

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## **Globalization, Food Quality and Labor: The Case of Grape Production in North-Eastern Brazil**

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**Abstract.** This article investigates the consequences of the production of table grapes for export to corporate supermarkets in the global North on labor in a region of the Brazilian North-east. This production is destined to meet the growing demand for year-round food marketed as quality food. Quality food is required by supermarket chains to increase competitiveness and is guaranteed through third-party certification programs. Despite claims that certification not only maintains product quality but also safeguards the use of labor, the study demonstrates that the global production of quality grapes engenders negative consequences for workers. Laborers work longer for less pay, perform more sophisticated tasks, are employed mostly through temporary contracts, and experience new and more advanced forms of control. Additionally, the article illustrates the ways in which other salient actors, such as global food retailers, brokers and firms, operate in regard to labor and quality grape production. It is concluded that, despite various claims about the objectives of certification programs, the actual use of the certification processes at the local level does not translate immediately into better labor relations in the global South.

### **Introduction**

The effect that globalization has on social relations has been one of the most frequently studied topics in recent sociological scholarship (e.g. Harvey, 1989, 2006; Dicken, 1998; Robinson, 2004; Bonanno and Cavalcanti, 2011). In particular, concepts such as hypermobility of capital – the enhanced velocity with which various forms of capital (i.e. financial, productive, commercial) move about the globe – and global sourcing – the corporate search of convenient factors and conditions of production – have been employed to illustrate new and often more exploitative social relations (Harvey, 2005; Sassen, 2007; Reich, 2008). These concepts have also been employed in the study of agriculture and food to analyze the manner in which the existence and working of agri-food commodity chains link distant actors in consumption and

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production networks (e.g. Bonanno et al., 1994; Heffernan and Constance, 1994; Heffernan, 2000; Moreira, 2001, 2004; McMichael, 2002; Prichard and Burch, 2003; Busch and Bain, 2004; Friedland, 2004; Marsden and Murdoch, 2006; Burch and Lawrence, 2007).

Pertinent literature has further shown the importance of consumption as a form of resistance to corporate power and the manner through which the demand for 'quality' food has been employed to develop alternative and more democratic food networks (Humphery, 1998; Lockie, 2002; Marsden, 2003; Busch and Bain, 2004; Burch and Lawrence, 2005, 2007; Bonanno and Constance, 2008; Wright and Middendorf, 2008; Bonanno, 2010). Also documented are on-going corporate efforts to capture this demand and transform it into an instrument to enhance the power of global supermarket chains (Gabriel and Lang, 1995; Gereffi et al., 2001; Marsden, 2003; Burch and Lawrence, 2005; Bonanno and Constance, 2008; Hendrickson et al., 2008). It has been shown that corporate retailers employ the notion of 'quality food items' to enhance their competitiveness in, and control of, increasingly concentrated mainstream markets (Moreira, 2001; Marsden, 2003; Busch and Bain, 2004; Burch and Lawrence, 2005, 2007; Konefal et al., 2005; Seyfang, 2006; Lawrence and Burch, 2007; Wright and Middendorf, 2008; Bain, 2010a; Bain and Hatanaka, 2010). Despite the wealth of research on the demand for quality food, relatively less attention has been paid to the intersection of corporate production, global mass consumption of quality food items, and labor. In particular, only limited emphasis has been placed on the ways in which the production of corporate quality food affects the use of labor. This article addresses this gap by illustrating the consequences of quality fruit production in a region of the global South on wage-labor. Specifically, the article investigates the consequences of the production of table grapes for export to corporate supermarkets in the global North on labor in a region of the Brazilian North-east. Attention is paid to the use of third-party certification programs (TPCPs) as mechanisms to define quality and instruments employed by relevant actors to shape the use of local labor.

The article opens with a review of pertinent literature. Key arguments on the outcomes of globalization of agri-food on food production and consumption and labor are reviewed along with salient contributions on third-party certification. The central segment of the article is occupied by the illustration of the case-study. The development and characteristics of grape production for export in the San Francisco Valley in North-eastern Brazil are illustrated. This segment also reviews the methodology employed in the study. The concluding part links the findings to relevant literature.

### **Globalization and Agri-food Production, Consumption and Third-party Certification**

In recent years, the topic of globalization has received significant scientific attention in the social sciences in general (e.g. Cavanagh and Mander, 2004; Robinson, 2004; Flanagan, 2006; Harvey, 2006; Sassen, 2007) and in the sociology of agriculture and food in particular (e.g. Bonanno et al., 1994; McMichael, 1994; Prichard and Burch, 2003; Bonanno and Constance, 2008; Wright and Middendorf, 2008). One of the common traits of this literature is the emphasis on the processes of the compression of space and acceleration of time and their effects on production and consumption (Harvey, 1989, 2000, 2006; Dicken, 1998; Bonanno and Cavalcanti, 2011). The compression of space refers to the reorganization of production and consumption based

on social relations that unfold over a space that is physically greater but socially smaller than in the past (Bonanno and Constance, 2008). For instance, large global food retailers in Europe control farm practices in Latin America with greater effectiveness and without direct intervention or ownership (Marsden et al., 1996; Bonanno and Cavalcanti, 2011). Simultaneously, consumers in the affluent North can count on the availability of food items in a manner that transcends traditional seasonal and/or socio-geographic limitations (Marsden, 2003; Wright and Middendorf, 2008). The acceleration of time refers to the speeding up of the social time necessary for the production and consumption of commodities. Barriers to the faster reproduction and circulation of commodities have been significantly reduced through a variety of practices at the technological, political, economic and social levels. For instance, fruits and vegetables are grown using genetically improved varieties that develop faster, are pest resistant and much less susceptible to production delays caused by weather conditions. They are packed directly in the field in containers that maintain their 'freshness' and extend their commercial lives. Finally, they are shipped to points of consumption benefiting from fewer trade restrictions and faster carriers than in the past (Bonanno and Constance, 2008).

The consequences of the creation of global networks of production and consumption associated with globalization have been interpreted in a variety of ways. Globalization advocates view them as beneficial to society. Some of the most sophisticated of these analyses recognize that global social relations entail some undesirable social and economic consequences, yet this is an acceptable price that society should be willing to pay in order to enjoy the much greater benefits that they generate (Friedman, 2000, 2006; Kitching, 2001). Critics, however, identify globalization as one of the most efficient tools to control labor, advance the class project of ruling elites, and role back many of the gains obtained by subordinate classes in previous decades (Dicken, 1998; Sklair, 2001; Robinson, 2004; Harvey, 2005, 2006; Sassen, 2007).

The negative effects of globalization on labor have been stressed by some of the works in the sociology of agri-food. Heffernan and his associates (Heffernan and Constance, 1994; Heffernan, 2000; Hendrickson et al., 2008) demonstrated the ability of transnational corporations not only to diminish the power of agri-food workers but also to effectively control them through capital mobility. Corporations' ability to relocate plants and/or threaten relocation has been a formidable tool to obtain concessions from labor and local communities. Similarly, Friedland contends that the corporate strategy to establish global agri-food commodity chains has enhanced control over labor (Friedland, 1994, 2004). Studying the same geographical area discussed in this article, Collins (1993, 2000) points out that the creation of global networks for the production and consumption of fruits and vegetables increases the exploitation of labor. Her work documents the increase in exploitative forms of labor relations based on labor flexibility, the use of weaker segments of the labor force (women and children) and subcontracting. She indicates that firms use weaker and flexible segments of the labor force when their primary objective is to reduce costs. In situations when quality and timing of production are more relevant, subcontracting emerges as the preferred strategy.<sup>1</sup>

The diminished power of labor under globalization has been employed to argue that resistance has been shifted to the consumption level. Research indicates that reflexive consumers searching for quality food products can be effective progressive actors (Gabriel and Lang, 1995; Humphery, 1998; DuPuis, 2000; Lockie, 2009). Combining the quest for quality with the importance of the local, consumers have

been instrumental in opening up new democratic spaces, such as civic agriculture, organic and/or natural production and farmers markets (Collins, 2000; Goodman, 2000; Reynolds, 2000; Lyson, 2004; Hinrichs et al., 2004). It has been recognized, however, that global corporate retailers employed food quality as a tool to further their interests (Busch and Bain, 2004; Burch and Lawrence, 2005, 2007; Bain, 2010a; Bonanno and Cavalcanti, 2011). The literature has demonstrated the growing power of global corporate retailers and their ability to affect production and consumption networks. A number of authors have pointed out that by shifting emphasis to quality and desirability, corporate retailers control distant production processes and labor in unprecedented ways (Marsden and Arce, 1995; Marsden, 2003; Morgan et al., 2006; Busch and Bain, 2004; Campbell, 2004; Burch and Lawrence, 2007; Campbell and Le Heron, 2007; Campbell and Dixon, 2009). As competition shifted away from price and became centered increasingly on convenience and product differentiation, corporate supermarkets began to attract consumers by emphasizing the quality and uniqueness of their food products (Busch and Bain, 2004; Burch and Lawrence, 2005, 2007; Bain, 2010a; Bain and Hatanaka, 2010).

Corporate retailers' use of third-party certification programs has been a fundamental instrument in their attempt to co-opt progressive consumers' demand. In particular, they employed TPCPs to demonstrate the quality of fresh fruits and vegetables sold in their stores (Konefal et al., 2005; Lockie et al., 2006; Marsden and Murdoch, 2006; Bain, 2010a, 2010b; Bain and Hatanaka, 2010). TPCPs call for the verification that good production practices are employed in the production and delivery of food items. However, they also call for the establishment of standards in an array of related spheres such the environment, health, safety, and use of labor (Busch and Bain, 2004; Konefal et al., 2005; Bain, 2010a, 2010b; Bain and Hatanaka, 2010).

While corporate retailers stress that TPCPs guarantee the quality and safety of food, the assumed positive results of their application do not always materialize (Busch and Bain, 2004; Konefal et al., 2005, 2007; Bain and Busch, 2006; Bain, 2010b; Bain and Hatanaka, 2010; Hatanaka, 2010a). Studies indicate that retailers' expanded role in the implementation of TPCPs often hampers rather than promotes democratic governance; TPCPs use of scientific and technical measures hides political agendas that favour corporate actors; and certification penalizes weaker social groups (i.e. Hatanaka, 2006, 2010a, 2010b; Bain, 2010b; Bain and Hatanaka, 2010; Konefal and Busch, 2010).<sup>2</sup> To be sure, these and other works also indicate the contested nature of TPCPs. Corporate retailers' gains from, and control of, TPCPs are not necessarily as strong as often assumed while local actors' empowerment and more transparency in production processes may indeed occur (Campbell and Le Heron, 2007; Bonanno and Constance, 2008; Bain, 2010a; Hatanaka, 2010a).

The impact of TPCPs on labor has been addressed only by a handful of studies. It has been observed that small and medium farmers and wage laborers have suffered negative consequences from the implementation of TPCPs (Hatanaka et al., 2005; Bain, 2010b; Hatanaka, 2010b). In the case of small and medium farmers, participation in TPCPs allows these producers access to affluent markets, but it also requires that they pay for the service. Inability to pay translates often into exclusion from these affluent markets and economic marginalization (Bain, 2010b; Hatanaka, 2010b).

As far as wage-labor is concerned, it has been argued that the implementation of TPCPs forces growers to search for strategies to reduce costs. This situation, in turn, translates into labor exploitation (Bain, 2010b; Selwyn, 2010). As retailers pressure

growers to pay for certification, the latter compensate for the additional expenses by lowering labor costs. There has been a reduction of permanent positions and the concomitant increase in temporary workers (Bain, 2010b). Temporary workers are hired only during periods of high labor demand and released for the rest of the year. They tend to be paid less, work longer hours, offer less political resistance, and their employment does not require the payment of social benefits (Bain, 2010b; Selwyn, 2010). Additionally, cost-cutting strategies involve subcontracting (see Bain, 2010b). Growers subcontract farm tasks to third-party agencies. As these agencies supply workers, they also become responsible for certification requirements relieving growers from these responsibilities (Bain, 2010b). Due to the often informal status of subcontractors, regulation is rarely followed (Bain, 2010b; Selwyn, 2010). Labor unions resist these exploitative strategies and have been active in denouncing the frequent law violations involved in subcontracting and the use of temporary labor (Bain, 2010b; Selwyn, 2010). The case presented in this study addresses the above-mentioned literature by exploring the consequences that global supermarkets' required third-party certification of table grape production has on wage labor.

## **The Case**

### *Methodology*

This article employs a case-study methodology. Data were collected through unobtrusive observations, in-depth interviews with key actors, and consultation of existing documents. Key actors include permanent and temporary wage-workers, managers of corporate farms, producers (farmers) who operate their own farms, production co-operatives and union representatives. Interviews and observations were carried out throughout 2008 and during the first three months of 2009. Additional pertinent information was collected during site visits conducted in previous years. Interviews and observations were transcribed and analyzed employing the qualitative method of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; More et al., 2009). The analysis of the text permitted the development of analytical categories that were employed to interpret the data. These categories were validated through the techniques of saturation and negative cases (Charmaz, 2006). Interviews were conducted in Portuguese and the direct quotes that appear below were translated into English for this article. The central theoretical concept of food quality has been operationalized in terms of the implementation of the requirements associated with the GLOBALG.A.P. certification process (GLOBALGAP, 2009).

### *Brief History and Characteristics of the Region*

The region studied is the San Francisco Valley in the interior of the North-eastern portion of Brazil. Known locally with the name of Sertão, this region lies around the cities of Petrolina and Juazeiro. It is a semi-arid region historically associated with drought, poverty and immigration. To stimulate socio-economic development, in the 1960s the Brazilian government invested to channel the waters of the San Francisco river for the production of hydro-electric energy and land irrigation projects. Conceived in term of a two-phase developmental scheme, the land irrigation project was designed to create farms for the production of fruits and vegetables. In the first phase, this production was destined to supply domestic agro-industries. In the sec-

ond, it was mostly directed for export to more affluent markets in the global North. Implemented in the 1980s, this second phase coincided with the growth of global agri-food networks (Cavalcanti, 1999).

In the late 1960s, about 70 000 hectares of irrigated land were used for production as new farms were established. By 2007, about 100 000 hectares of irrigated land were employed in the production of primarily mangoes and grapes,<sup>3</sup> but also coconuts and bananas (Valexport, 2007). The farms that were created varied in size and type of ownership/control (see Table 1 for a summary view). The largest amount of land is currently controlled by a small group of large farms. In the case of grape production, large farms constitute 5.7% of all farms and occupy 46% of the cultivated land. These farms are controlled by a combination of domestic but mostly international commercial corporations. Global supermarket chains, such as Carrefour, Tesco and Wall-Mart – that operates through its Brazilian subsidiary Bom Preço – are present through direct ownership of farms along with some Brazilian companies that also invested in the purchase of large operations.

Medium farms occupy about 24% of all cultivated land and account for almost 15% of all farms. They are owned by local exporting firms controlled by Brazilian professionals with a variety of backgrounds, such as lawyers, physicians, teachers, agronomist, retailers, and others. Most have been in agricultural production for generations while others only recently redirected their investments from other economic sectors. Small farmers or colonos operate about 80% of all farms and 30% of cultivated land. Differing from large and medium farms, they rely significantly on family labor but also employ wage workers for about 40% of all labor output (Correia and Marinozzi, 1999). There are varying estimates of the number of wage laborers employed in grape production in the area with consensus placing this number at about 20 000 in the mid-1990s (Bloch, 1996, p. 49). Due to the economic crisis of the late 2000s, it has not grown as rapidly in recent years (Cavalcanti et al., 2011). While some wage-workers come from the metropolitan areas of Petrolina and Juazeiro, a much greater number are migrants who come from adjacent states and poorer and less unionized areas. The recruitment of migrant labor has been employed by firms to count on a more docile labor force (Cavalcanti et al., 2011). Small producers sell their products to co-operatives and/or firms creating a hierarchy in the production process led by brokers. Brokers establish deals with supermarket chains and exporting firms and co-operatives.

In the late 1960s, the irrigated land was first employed to grow tomatoes and onions. The rapid success of these crops gave impetus to the further expansion of cultivated land and production. However, the decades that followed saw a number of 'growth and bust' cycles that severely limited the original enthusiasm of local producers (Cavalcanti, 1999). The introduction of mangos but above all table grapes

**Table 1.** Structural characteristics of table grape farms in the San Francisco Valley.

Size of Farms in Hectares	% Number of Farms	% of Land Used	Type of labor used	Ownership
More than 50	5.7	46	wage-labor	mostly global corporate and some domestic corporate
10 – 49.9	15.0	24	wage-labor	domestic investors (export firms)
Less than 10	79.3	30	family and wage-labor	colonos (local farmers)

Source: Elaboration on secondary data.

in the late 1980s provided renewed momentum to production and allowed the development of a steady flow of commodities toward supermarket chains in the global North.

Currently, the San Francisco Valley is the primary fruit producing region in Brazil. The production of fruits has steadily grown over the last two decades and accounts for about 40% of all agricultural exports of the country (Fachinello et al., 2011). As far as the production of grapes is concerned, it has grown from less than one million metric tons to over 1.5 million between 2000 and 2010 representing 18% of all fruits produced and 13% of all fruits exported. Additionally, the land cultivated and the value of the crop exported increased by 39% and 200% respectively during the same period (Fachinello et al., 2011). The development of counter-seasonal contracts contributed to the growth of demand and employment. In the San Francisco Valley, the demand for labor is consistent and represents a source of jobs for workers. As it will be illustrated below, this demand, however, is accompanied by changes in the use of labor that temper some of the gains associated with job availability.

The growth of the sector involves the presence of new actors. Among these new actors trade brokers play a significant role. Born as middlemen between producers and global supermarket chains, brokers quickly assumed the concomitant roles of informal guarantors of the 'quality' required by retailers and enforcers of new production practices at the local level. They brought to the local producers the norms and conditions of production stemming from global retailers' industrial plans. They also are the agents that establish the business contracts through which producers are able to sell their grapes. Brokers are the gate-keepers that allow production to be channeled to global supermarket chains.

Producers learned quickly that they had to follow brokers' instructions and requirements if they wished to have their crops included in global production networks. Producers began to feel the subordination to brokers and their organizational power. Currently, while producers constantly refer to the 'open market', there is an understanding that brokers are the actors who make this abstract market a reality. More specifically, it is through the role performed by the brokers that the conditions and required tasks of production are defined for producers.

Brokers also ask growers to pay for certification and they comply with this request. A medium-size grower comments:

'They [brokers] go everywhere and can get you everywhere. You need to stay with them and do as they say even when they ask you to pay for certification. We don't know to whom they deal with and how. But they make it possible to sell... if you want to sell in this world market, you need to stay with them. They maintain a good relation with producers.'

Simultaneously, while brokers are instrumental in the enforcement of quality requirements, they shield global retailers from direct interaction with local actors. This is relevant in the process of control of local labor relations as supermarket chains – the primary actors responsible for the establishment of contracts and certification – are not seen by producers and workers alike as those in control of the overall production process. Local producers and workers view brokers as the primary force in the organization of production. Ultimately, brokers provide a social buffer between supermarket chains and producers that depersonalizes production requirements and makes them abstract and disconnected from their sources. Brokers, therefore, contribute to the reification (Lukács, 1968) of the production process whereby the

social relations that engendered it are largely invisible to those who work in the fields. As clearly illustrated by classical sociological theory, the reified understanding of social relations is one of the primary tools for the control and subordination of labor. A grower states:

‘Everything [in the production process] is well organized in advance by brokers. Tasks are given to each producer and nobody knows why we need to do it nor what the others are asked to do or did. We are told of the ships, the trucks, the containers, the boxes, etc., that we need to use in production. Then we have to pay attention to everything from the schedule of ships, to the freight prices, the port services, and who are the transportation carriers for our containers. We need to make sure that all the required production steps are followed. We are told all this ahead of time, one or two months before the shipment has to go out.’

Despite their unclear origins, instructions are accepted. They are also rarely questioned even when they make little sense to those in the fields. Rule acceptance is so strong that it becomes a challenge but also a source of pride when requirements are met. Another producer says:

‘A group of 35 people came to view our products. They were German, Dutch, and Japanese buyers and visited some of the local farms. They come at the end of the harvest to present awards to those who met the requirements. We could do it and do it well.’

### **Corporate Quality Food and Labor**

Some of the most relevant consequences of global retailers’ requirements for the production of certified quality food are changes in the use of labor. Salient among these are: production time, working time, labor remuneration, employment conditions, and labor control.<sup>4</sup> In the following pages an analysis of the manner in which these processes are affected by the demand for certified quality food is presented.

#### *Production Time*

That the time employed in the production of agricultural commodities is socially constructed is not a new finding. In their classical analyses, both Marx and Weber, among others, point out the socially constructed nature of work. Marx, for instance, discusses at length the manner in which changes in productivity shorten the socially necessary time for the reproduction of labor. Identifying this process as the relative exploitation of labor, he contends that the introduction of technical innovations makes the time necessary to produce a given amount of value shorter than in the past (Marx, 1977, pp. 533–565). Furthermore, and speaking of farm labor, he distinguishes between ‘working time’ and ‘production time’ (Marx, 1992, pp. 316–325). Working time is defined as the time in which labor transform factors of production into commodities. Production time, conversely, refers to the ‘entire time... of the production process’ (Marx, 1992, p. 316) and includes times in which factors of production are idle due to some barriers such as snow covered fields in the winter. The time necessary to generate a commodity ‘can be often shortened to a greater or less extent by the artificial shortening of the production time’ (Marx, 1992, p. 317). For Weber the acceleration of production time is associated with the rationalization of society (Weber, 1968, pp. 164–166). He contends that the use of formal rationality

in the organization of social institutions and relations along with the development of advanced systems of production, such as mechanization but also rational book-keeping, created the conditions for a constant acceleration of work and production tasks (Weber, 1968, pp. 337–154). Affected by cultural traits, this acceleration of production time is a constant feature of modern society (Weber, 1968). In more recent times, students of agriculture have also stressed the particular nature of capitalist farm production. In their now classical article, Mann and Dickinson (1978) employ Marx's theory to discuss the natural barriers to capitalist production that allow the persistence of family farms in contemporary agriculture. However, these and other structuralist accounts of the organization of farm production (see also the coeval work of Mottura and Pugliese, 1975, 1980), fail to stress the social construction of agricultural production as they underscore its immanent component. For Mann and Dickinson the existence of natural barriers to agricultural production is a permanent dimension. For Marx, conversely, agricultural production under capitalism is constantly accelerated and based on the class nature of its organization.

Current practices of agricultural production have exceeded many of the expectations of classical sociologists and this is certainly the case of global agri-food networks. To follow Marx, the 'natural' conditions for grape production in the San Francisco Valley would not entail any difference between working time and production time as grapes can be grown year-round. However, the presence of powerful actors constructs the 'times' in which production is 'possible' in the Valley. Global retailers' request for a year-round steady supply of grapes and competition from actors in other world locations (primarily California and Chile) contribute to the social construction of counter-seasonal markets and local market 'windows'. These are the times in which there is an adequate demand for local production. And these are also the times in which production ought to be ready to be shipped to consumption centers.

Currently in the San Francisco Valley, these socially constructed windows coincide with two eight-week periods in May–June and November–December. These periods are the outcomes of a dynamic interaction process in which producers actively attempt to extend these windows and/or create new ones. They delay and/or reschedule harvest times but are virtually impotent against corporations' global sourcing. As a result, these constructed windows are now accepted by producers and workers alike. One producer states:

'We can and wish to produce for additional periods during the year. But it has been very difficult, almost impossible, for us to sell grapes in other periods of the year. We learned when it is convenient for us to produce... this is the way it is... We need to take advantage of the available times to export and must increase productivity and reduce costs. This year, we can't make mistakes; we must send good grapes to the market at the right time and export as much as we can.'

### *Working Time*

The production tasks carried out by hired workers increased. Certification requirements used by GLOBALG.A.P. mandate new rules designed to establish the quality of the fruits. Producers execute these rules by assigning new tasks to workers. Accordingly, these rules translate into adding a number of facets to the production

process that increased hired laborers' work-load. They cover the preparation of the fields, preharvest, harvest and post-harvest activities, including pruning, sorting, packaging, and shipping, but also require some expertise in management, accountability and traceability of the product. In essence, workers are now asked to perform multiple tasks generating a process of reskilling of labor. Moreover, laborers are now required to demonstrate that they can perform these various components of the job if they wish to be hired. A hired laborer indicates:

'I need to make sure that all my tasks are done well. I need to pick the grapes, but also prune off those parts of the bunch that don't look good. I need to place them in the box. If I pick seedless grapes I need to place them in the plastic bags. These are the bags that are shipped out.'

These new requirements further mandate additional training. However, training turns out to be specific to the firm, not remunerated, and almost invariably unrelated with higher wages. Contrary to established arguments that associate reskilling with better economic labor conditions and overall labor strength (e.g. Attewell, 1987; Reich, 2008), reskilling in fruit production is marked by increased labor exploitation. Training is performed informally relying on the knowledge and skills of more experienced workers. Because each firm must conform to contractual specifications, workers are instructed to a new set of rules that often differ from the ones that they learned and applied in the past. A trainer (older worker) explains:

'New workers will learn what is required and how things work here. They will know that this is a different place and, therefore, there are different rules. Then they will ask questions and we will give them a comprehensive explanation, then they have to work and follow the rules.'

This situation is highly consistent with the now classical Marxian analysis of labor reskilling proposed by Harry Braverman (1974). For Braverman, specialization is one of the instruments through which workers are controlled in contemporary capitalism. As labor performs more specific tasks, the ability of supervisors to control workers increases along with workers' productivity. These are conditions that characterize grape production in this area.

### *Labor Remuneration*

Neither the trainers nor the trainees are paid during the time they teach and learn the required procedures. These are requirements that are passed on to hired labor as necessary conditions to obtain work and to trainers as a necessary condition to keep their jobs. Firm and co-operative managers as well as farm owners who employ hired labor explain that they have to follow this practice in an effort to meet the brokers' requests and keep costs down. A local producer states: 'cutting labor cost is what firms and family farmers must do to compete effectively'.

According to local union representatives, overabundant and poorly paid workers are available in the region. As a union representative explained and field observations and interviews with workers confirmed, a great number of the hired laborers employed in the area are immigrants from rural areas in adjacent states. This is the result of an effort by local producers to keep wage cost down. Producers prefer not to hire workers from Petrolina and Juazeiro as they tend to be union members accustomed to higher wages and better working conditions. Additionally, efforts

have been carried out to replace permanent workers with temporary laborers. The reduction of permanent workers is an effective cost cutting strategy as firms are not required to pay fringe benefits to temporary workers.

A union representative explains:

'This past December [2008] a large numbers of workers applied for unemployment benefits. [These are reserved only to those who have been employed for more than five continuous months.] There was a great reduction of the numbers of permanent contracts. The [name omitted] firm, for instance, usually employs 2,200 temporary workers and 1,100 permanent workers. The number of permanent workers was reduced to 400. But, the quantity exported went up from 70 000 [metric] tons in 2007 to 80 000 tons in 2008.'

Also according to local union representatives that were interviewed, the Federal Government has been more concerned with shielding exporting firms from the economic crisis than assisting workers. As a result firms' managers have used the crisis as an excuse to get more assistance from the government, impose lower wages and cut employment.

Arguably the most noticeable change from past labor relations is the diffusion of remuneration based on piece work. Hired laborers are now paid by the number of bunches that they pick and/or the boxes of grapes that they pack rather than receiving hourly wages. Given the increased amount of tasks to be performed by each worker, this practice increases the work load without increasing the pay. A grower explains:

'Every worker has to accomplish their task of picking and packing 700 bunches of grapes a day. If they can do more, they would get some additional remuneration. It is in the neighborhood of 2 or 3 reals<sup>5</sup> per day.'

Yet, this is such a small amount that workers are discouraged from taking additional work despite the need for employment in a unfavorable labor market.

A local union representative indicates:

'During pruning in a regular working day, a male worker trims about 80 vines and receives from 10 to 50 cents per extra plant. Others won't even get that. However, those workers do not show interest in additional work as they find that the extra pay is too small and it doesn't change their lives.'

A worker adds:

'We have to piece work 700 bunches a day. However, as the shape of a bunch varies, so does the work to be performed. In some cases, it takes longer to finish a bunch. But the pay is the same unless we pick more bunches.'

In the case of seedless grapes, for instance, a longer work time is required yet remuneration remains the same.

A female worker explains:

'Seedless grapes are smaller and more fragile. They are not very easy to pick as the bunches break and we need put them in plastic bags. It takes more work.'

Firms have been able to convince workers to accept this new work load by arguing that seedless grapes have a shorter growing season and that new and time saving technology is available. It is assumed that less work is required.

A producer explains:

‘Seedless grapes have a short cycle. From the first trimming of the vines to harvest, it takes 100 days, whereas for the others it takes 120 days. At the beginning we thought that seedless grapes would require less work because of the shorter cycle. But as this is a feeble and fine fruit, harvesting is time consuming and it is not good for making up a bunch... In the case of other varieties, the fruit is harder and not so difficult to pick and have a good bunch. However, nowadays we use of a new technique of pruning that really cuts the amount of work needed.’

In the field, nevertheless, the story is told the other way around. A worker explains it clearly:

‘Picking seedless grapes requires a lot more work... and the new pruning requirements add lot more work also.’

### *Employment Conditions*

Certification of food quality involves terms that prescribe not only the safeguarding of acceptable conditions of labor use but also the prevention of overt labor exploitation (GLOBALGAP, 2009).<sup>6</sup> However, these terms are understood and carried out according to their formal meaning. Substantively, the situation in the fields is quite different. Firm managers and producers have used the certification process as an instrument to ‘to cut the cost of labor’, as a union representative indicated. They have coupled it with the ‘need’ to address the global economic crisis to create a legitimization strategy that has been used to restructure employment. The words of a firm manager capture this posture:

‘The crisis is severe. We need to do whatever we can to stay competitive... we need to receive more support from the government... we even burned and buried some crops to keep prices high... [because of this crisis] we are forced to cut down costs and this means to review labor cost. We need to reduce the volume of production, employment, and rework contracts to limit the number of permanent jobs in favor of temporary employment.’

Another manager says:

‘In any agribusiness, those who produce in a lean manner are the only ones who survive.’

A co-operative manager maintains:

‘We serve the most exigent markets in England and the United States... since we started the co-operative the aim has been to cut costs... and to focus on quality certification.’

Labor unions have documented the labor cost saving strategies used by firms and the lack of support that labor receives from the Brazilian government. According to unions the government has been concerned with supporting firms and paid only lip-service to the interests of workers. A union representative explains:

'The Ministry of Labor does not pay attention to the impact of the crisis on workers... they create measures to protect firms and don't do much to [protect] employment, wages, and benefit for workers... Firms are using the crisis and certification to get better financial deals and reduce labor costs.'

To be sure, the Brazilian government has expressed concerns about the economic situation. It remains committed to implement measures to assist firms. But it has also stressed that any economic recovery should not come at the expenses of workers. In effect, the economic recovery should enhance employment and improve labor conditions. A representative of the Brazilian Ministry of Labor speaking to a local audience stated:

'Measures to assist fruit production should create new opportunities for labor and create new jobs. The idea is to help firms in order to create employment. Jobs should not be eliminated.'

Despite these pronouncements, however, the overall lack of government presence in the region and the relative weakness of unions leave firms in control of the labor market. As indicated above, contracts have been restructured to favor temporary employment and workers have been fired.

A female laborer says:

'Recently, I had a five month contract to work for a firm, and I expected to be hired on a permanent basis... Previously I had worked for six years for another firm. Now I have a contract for only one month.'

A union representative adds:

'Firms fire permanent workers. This is where they can cut costs as quickly as possible. They said that the crisis has created employment instability in the region. The situation of labor does not show much of a sign of improvement.'

Another union official explains:

'In this area we have contracts from May to June and from November to December. Also harvest contracts from June to October do not give workers the right to have unemployment benefits. Workers will usually have six idle months, no wages, no benefits.'

### *Labor Control*

Local firms use the process of certification to enhance control over workers. Because certification requires the formal verification of the appropriate execution of labor tasks, workers are subjected to a greater degree of scrutiny than in the past. This scrutiny centers on the processes of 'labor acknowledgment' and 'direction of labor activities'. As far as labor acknowledgment is concerned, under certification rules, the execution of assigned labor tasks is considered accomplished only when formally recognized (acknowledged) by supervisors. While forms of field supervision existed in the past, workers' supervision associated with certification is different at, at least, two levels. First, supervisors' power to evaluate workers' performances is reinforced and legitimized by the specific set of formal rules that are dictated by the certification process. Second and because of the above, workers feel disempowered

when interacting with supervisors. Supervisors are armed with a list of required tasks/levels of performance and review workers' activities accordingly. Commonly known as 'being on the checklist',<sup>7</sup> workers' labor becomes formally recognized only if it appears on the list compiled by supervisors. 'You need to be on the checklist', a worker commented. Performed work tasks become as such in so much as they are recorded on the appropriate list. A worker explains:

'We are doing our job everyday and we have to harvest a set number of bunches. Later, the field supervisor arrives to record the results. She does it. While I know how much I worked, I'm not sure how much I have actually worked until she records the number of bunches I harvested and packed. She tells us.'

Legitimized by the necessity to meet certification requirements, workers are now given more and increasingly specific directions on how to execute their labor tasks. To make sure that these directions are followed, workers remain under close watch during the entire day. This is a situation that stands in sharp contrast with previous local labor practices. In the past, workers were left relatively free to use their experience and accumulated knowledge to complete a task as they were only moderately supervised. As indicated above, there is a clear sense that 'workers will learn what is required and how things work here'. Workers need to learn the new and more stringent procedures associated with grape production. The knowledge that they accumulated in the past – even in recent experiences with other firms – must be set aside.

Regularly, managers issue directives to standardize and codify behavior in the field. A worker recalls that, recently, women were asked to 'stop talking' with another one when 'picking grapes'. While talking – along with singing – has been a long-established practice as workers harvest, now it is deemed an 'activity that would distract laborers from performing their work tasks well' as a manager put it. That workers have been asked to limit verbal exchanges on the job is not a new requirement. It has been employed to increase productivity but also to limit resistance to management and political mobilization (Yates, 1994; Le Blanc, 1999). Yet it constitutes a new and disliked dimension in the relatively 'non-rationalized' social context of the Brazilian grape fields.

A worker says:

'We come from different towns and neighborhoods... we cannot get to know each other well during breaks or lunch. These are short and we are under pressure to go back to work and complete the assignments.'

## **Conclusions**

This case-study can be employed to make four concluding points in regard to pertinent literature. First, the study shows that certification requirements generate production processes in which laborers work longer for less pay, perform more sophisticated tasks, are employed mostly through temporary contracts, and experience new and more advanced forms of control. Despite progressive claims associated with certification and certification agencies, the production of quality grapes is not by itself a vehicle that leads to the betterment of the conditions of labor. This case, therefore, supports the arguments of those segments of the literature that point out that

certification requirements do not translate into more equitable and just social relations and promote democracy. There is a gap between the stated objectives of quality certification programs and the actual conditions of labor. Furthermore, current literature suggests that certification empowers local actors and that this power may limit that of corporate retailers. This case-study, however, shows that certification does not alter established power hierarchies. Local firms and producers actively use certification to gain power over labor but remain subordinate to corporate retailers and brokers.

Second, the case confirms arguments that stress that transnational corporate retailers are powerful actors that control local production. This case-study, however, adds to the literature by demonstrating that corporate retailers maintain control without a noticeable local presence. They remain politically 'invisible' to workers and unions. Workers remain unaware that transnational retailers are the actors who are responsible for production requirements, working and production times, and the required labor qualifications. These are viewed as existing conditions that need to be met by workers to keep their jobs. Similarly, unions have directed their claims consistently against local firms and brokers and the Brazilian government. This is a posture that reproduces traditional patterns of local unions' action and does not question the global arrangements that characterize current agri-food production.

Third, the invisibility of transnational retailers is accompanied by the visible presence of brokers. In the fields, brokers make sure that certification conditions are met while payments for certification are provided by producers. Additionally, brokers are viewed as the actors that also establish the quantity of production as they negotiate export contracts with producers. Production requirements are enforced by firm managers who instruct and control labor on the needed production tasks. Brokers can also count on the support of government authorities who express concerns for the consequences of the economic crisis but identify in enhanced competitiveness and specialized 'niche' production the desired anti-crisis moves. Producers and unions have not been able to challenge brokers' clout. Brokers' power to affect the production process rests largely on their quasi-monopoly of production information. They control information on the requirements, timing, and quantity of shipments. They further control information on available contracts and clients. They bring this knowledge to fruition as they set up contracts with producers and demand the respect of certification requirements. Aided by the complexity of these requirements, the scope of commercial operations, and the virtually unchallenged manner in which these requirements are accepted, they emerged as dominant actors at the local level.

Finally, the case demonstrates that firm managers and producers employ certification as a discourse to enhance their control and exploitation of labor. The discourse that dominates local labor relations centers on the argument that employment can be obtained and maintained only in the event that workers comply with certification requirements. In this context, certification is presented as an essential condition for the generation of employment, the establishment of viable anti-crisis strategies and access to markets.

In essence, the message that emerges from this study is that global networks of quality food production continue to be class based and firmly controlled by corporate actors. To paraphrase David Harvey, certification remains part of the restoration of class power associated with globalization. While claims about the emancipatory dimension of certification are made explicit, they remain just hopes that clash with the harsh reality of the conditions of workers in the fields.

## Notes

1. Collins's work is important as she investigates fruit and vegetable production in the San Francisco Valley. Her analysis, however, precedes the development of TPCPs and does not focus on wage-labor. These are the primary foci of this article.
2. For an excellent summary of the debate on third-party certification see the special issue of the *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*, 25(3), 2010.
3. The analysis presented in this article refers to table grape production only. The producers and workers interviewed for this research worked primarily in table grape production.
4. These are key analytical categories that emerged from the grounded theory analysis employed in the study. There are a variety of additional categories that are also relevant such as gender (i.e. female workers are displaced in favor of male workers), immigration (i.e. immigrant laborers are controlled through political and bureaucratic processes) and community (i.e. local communities experiences a number of important changes). However, and for heuristic purposes, the article focuses exclusively on the above mentioned categories.
5. One US dollar is approximately 1.8 Brazilian reais.
6. GLOBALG.A.P. requires 'a responsible approach to worker health and safety' and 'responsibility regarding socially related issues'. While the use of labor must conform only to existing domestic legislation, the exploitation of labor is considered one of the primary conditions to be prevented.
7. Check-list is the term used by GLOBALG.A.P. to refer to items to be included in the certification process. The English word 'check-list' is used in the everyday Portuguese used by workers.

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## **Migrants in the World Food System: Introduction**

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Material life, consisting of very old routines, inheritances and successes, is there at the root of everything (Braudel, 1967, p. xii).

‘The nomads had been the followers of flocks and herds...  
The harvesters had been the men of homes.  
But ours is a land of nomad harvesters...  
Men of no root, no ground, no house, no rest;  
They follow the ripening, gather the ripeness,  
Rest never, ripen never,  
Move and pause and move on’ (Welch, 1956).

### **Migrant Agricultural Labor and Abstraction in the World Food System**

Food is sustenance. It is the basis of material life. Because we must submit regularly to our common corporeal need for nourishment, the majority of humans that have ever walked the earth have been food laborers in one form or another. As food laborers, we have been intimately involved in the production of food. For most of human history, we have had a direct, relatively unmediated relationship with food production: we have known the sources of our food and we have been aware of the repercussions of our methods of food production. In short, we have had relatively direct knowledge of the social relations of our food.

Today, out of material necessity, we all still eat, but proportionally fewer of us work as food laborers. Ten thousand years after the Neolithic revolution, approximately 40% of the world’s population is still employed in agriculture, but agricultural employment now varies widely across the world: from 80% of the population in Ethiopia, to only 1.5% of the population in the United States (World Bank, 2011). On the whole, 60% of the world’s population (4.2 billion people) has been freed from work as food labor, and thus, freed from knowledge of the social relations of the food that serves as the basis of our material lives.

The decline in agricultural labor is associated with the transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy, a transition commonly referred to as ‘development’. Above all else, development is a process of abstraction, of a growing disconnection between food producers and food consumers. This has been a long-term, historical process; it is not a new condition. Food surpluses produced by settled agriculture

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first released some of the populations from food labor, and separated producers from consumers, nearly ten thousand years ago. But the scale and depth of this condition changed dramatically with the incorporation of agriculture into the capitalist mode of production.

Driven by the imperative to accumulate capital, capitalist agriculture substituted capital for labor on an ever-larger scale, reducing the absolute number of agricultural laborers while further distancing producers from consumers. Over many cycles of accumulation and consolidation, agricultural production has become increasingly concentrated among a handful of agro-industrial firms. Today, we have what can only be called a world food system, one organized largely by transnational agro-industrial firms that control food production from gene to shelf, source inputs from the lowest cost places worldwide, and market food globally to a growing class of world consumers (McMichael, 2005).

Within the capitalist world food system, the rift between food producers and food consumers has widened into a gulf, further obscuring the social relations of food. Today, more people are more distanced from food production than ever before and, at the same time, agricultural labor is less visible than ever before. This is not a mere coincidence. It is instead an expression of capitalist agriculture in the world food system, which has rendered agricultural laborers less visible both by reducing their absolute numbers, as a proportion of the world population, but also by concealing them under layers of abstraction in the world food system, in the longer and more complex agri-food commodity chains that span thousands of miles, and in the disembodied food products that line supermarket shelves with no traces of the labor contained in them or of the social relations that conspired to bring them to consumers. Today, 'food from nowhere' predominates (Bove and Dufour, 2001, p. 55); food produced by people without names in spaces without places; food symbolic of a growing separation of the world's population from the social relations through which the sustenance of material life is produced.

Yet agricultural labor remains vital in the world food system. Despite attempts to overcome all limits, both natural and social, capitalist agriculture ultimately still relies on labor. The strawberries must still be harvested. The lettuce must still be packed. The cattle must still be slaughtered. All of this must be done at the lowest possible cost in order to further capital accumulation, which often means that, in a context of agricultural labor scarcity in the more developed countries today, agricultural labor must be imported. Migrants must do the work. The evidence supporting the importance of migrant agricultural labor in the capitalist world food system is in the lengths firms have gone to procure it in the more developed countries. In the face of widespread opposition to immigration among resident populations, and in the midst of a massive economic recession, firms continue to lobby for the authorization of larger immigration flows in the U.S. (Hanson, 2009) and the EU (Awad, 2009). Capitalist agro-industrial enterprises have become structurally dependent on labor migration.

If agricultural laborers have been rendered less visible by capitalist agriculture in the world food system, migrant agricultural laborers are the least visible. These are the food laborers that often work in the most precarious and insecure forms of employment in the world food system, moving not just with the seasons but with the rhythms of capital accumulation, hired and dismissed as necessary. Yet this is the preferred form of labor in the world food system. This is the labor on which the rift between production and consumption in the world food system ultimately rests.

The irony, of course, is that many migrant agricultural laborers were once farmers themselves. However, rounds of consolidation and concentration in agriculture, encouraged by agricultural trade policies that remove public support for agriculture in less-developed countries, have made migration more viable than farming as a livelihood strategy. Ten thousand years since the Neolithic revolution made settled harvesters out of nomads, the settled harvesters of less-developed countries are becoming nomads. These nomads, however, no longer follow the flocks and herds, but instead trail the movement of capital, responding to the incessant demand for flexible agricultural labor in the world food system; farmers converted to migrant agricultural labor, working in the service of capital accumulation by transnational agri-food corporations, rendered more invisible, and more vulnerable, by the system they serve to reproduce. This is the condition that confronts us today.

### **Migrant Agricultural Labor in the Scholarly Literature**

Unfortunately, the abstracted, concealed nature of migrant agricultural labor in the world food system is mirrored in the recent scholarly literature. The topic seems to be mainly of historical interest: of the Bracero Era in the United States or guest worker programs in mid-twentieth century Western Europe. Extended recent treatments of migrant agricultural labor in the world food system are notably scant, notwithstanding a few notable exceptions (Griffith, 2007; Striffer, 2007; Barndt, 2008; Mize and Swords, 2010). More broadly, the neglect of migrant agricultural labor has coincided with a broader shift in the study of migration away from political-economic and historical-structural investigations of the processes that motivate, sustain, and constrain migration (e.g. Castles and Kosack, 1973; Portes and Walton, 1981; Cohen, 1987; Sassen, 1988).

Today, these (now classical) approaches are often eschewed in favor of more descriptive studies of migrant narratives, which are valuable in their own right to the extent that they de-commodify, or humanize migrants, rendering migrants and the migration experience less invisible in the world food system. But the gains from this approach often come at the expense of diminishing, or even ignoring, empirical regularities among cases that might reveal broader, structural processes: patterns of social relations that endure in the world food system. And yet, these structural processes are critical because they serve as the context for the stories that migrants tell, but more importantly, because they ultimately conceal the role of migrant agricultural labor in the world food system.

The work of uncovering structural processes requires comparison: comparison across places and comparison across times. By teasing out similarities among differences across cases and over time, comparative approaches are capable of building systematic understandings of structural processes and, in doing so, promise to 'break us out of the unending regress of disputed stories of human experiences used for gain by some groups over others' (Teune, 2010, p. 194). Thus, comparative investigations of structural processes ultimately can support the development of appropriate responses to the exploitation of migrants in the world food system. Yet comparative research is remarkably absent from the scholarly literature on agricultural labor migration.

### **Reviving the Study of Agricultural Labor Migration in the World Food System**

This special issue attempts to reinvigorate the study of agricultural labor migration by presenting a series of articles that might serve as the basis for future comparative research. The articles in this collection were selected from submissions to a general call for proposals. Each paper went through a double-blind peer review process by at least two external reviewers. All of the articles focus on the Global North, where the separation of food production and consumption is most pronounced and, thus, where migrant agricultural labor is most crucial. Yet each of the papers considers a different dimension of agricultural labor migration in the world food system, ranging from temporary labor migration policy and labor recruitment practices to the construction of alternative food systems that are more inclusive of immigrants. Together, the papers provide many potential entry points into future comparative studies of agricultural migrant labor in the world food system.

The articles by Preibisch and Mannon et al. demonstrate that, although agricultural labor migration may ultimately respond to the rhythms of capital accumulation, the state continues to play a crucial role in the world food system. Preibisch examines recent changes to Canada's temporary migration programs, focusing especially on the implications of these changes for the position of labor vis-à-vis capital. Drawing on interviews of migrants, civil servants, employers, and industry representatives, Preibisch provides a detailed analysis of a concerted shift in the management and recruitment of temporary migrant labor from state to market-based institutions. This shift has further deepened the insecurity and vulnerability of migrants by, above all else, expanding the global pool of labor from which Canadian employers can draw. By making available a broader, more diverse, supply of immigration sources, the state, in concert with market institutions, has exacerbated competition within the agricultural labor market, restructuring the employment relation by making vulnerable, cheapened forms of labor more readily available, while providing new means of disciplining and controlling migrant agricultural labor.

The article by Mannon et al. extends the analysis of temporary labor programs to the case of strawberry production in Southern Spain. The context is different, but there are striking parallels with Preibisch's study of Canada. Here again, employers are in constant need of migrant agricultural labor, and again, immigration policy is crucial for organizing a sufficient supply of this type of labor. However, Mannon et al. probe the gendered construction of temporary migrant agricultural labor policies. Today, at least 95% of temporary agricultural migrant laborers in Huelva Province, the study site, are estimated to be women. But the type of women has changed over the last 10 years. Mannon et al. trace a gradual transition in employer preferences from relatively young, unmarried, childless women to older, married women with children, who are believed to be more likely to return to the country of origin at the end of the labor contract, a marker of the 'success' of a temporary labor program. In this regard, the 'Huelva model' is widely viewed as an exemplar. Yet through interviews and field observations, Mannon et al. detail how this model has also been successful in using gender, and motherhood in particular, to construct the specific form of labor necessary for agricultural production in the world food system: a form of labor made flexible, disposable, vulnerable, and insecure. In this respect, the Huelva model is also 'a flexible labor strategy par excellence'.

The next two articles shift attention to the United States, and specifically to the case of Hispanic immigration. Hispanic immigration in the United States has become more geographically diverse over the past 30 years, spreading out from tra-

ditional areas of settlement in California, Illinois, Texas, New York, and Florida into 'new destination' states (Zuniga and Hernandez-Leon, 2005) that have not had much historical experience of immigration. These two articles examine two such new destination states: North Carolina and Iowa.

Based on over 25 years of research on agricultural migrant labor in Eastern North Carolina, Griffith takes up the question of how labor recruitment practices affect immigrant settlement patterns in destination communities. Specifically, this paper explores the relationships between the seasonality of work, industry recruitment strategies, and the forms of settlement patterns among immigrants in the food sector. Griffith examines three branches of the food sector prominent in Eastern North Carolina, each of which is vertically integrated and each of which has become more dependent on immigrant labor. The comparison illustrates how variations in the seasonality of work and in industry recruitment patterns intersect in various ways to pattern the likelihood of long-term immigrant settlement, generating a continuum of immigrant settlement patterns along which different branches of the food industry can be placed. The study refines our understanding of the consequences that labor procurement strategies of agri-food firms have on destination communities.

Griffith concludes with a brief discussion of how, out of Hispanic immigrant settlement, the seeds of a more localized, community-based food system have emerged, as entrepreneurial immigrants have developed new food enterprises oriented toward serving the local population. Migrant agricultural laborers are not only food producers, of course; they are also food consumers. Embedded within this emerging local food system is an implicit critique of the political economy of the world food system, one grounded in an alternative moral economy of food. Griffith thus captures a key tension illustrative of the role of migrant agricultural labor in the broader world food system: 'Ironically, in North Carolina, the labor that immigrant workers seek to replenish with nutritious food is directed, more often than not, toward producing food that enriches agribusiness.'

The final article by Flora et al. delves more deeply into the question of how localized food systems might be constructed to be more inclusive of immigrants. Their article reports findings from a leading-edge program that includes applied projects in two communities in rural Iowa: a community garden, and a training program for beginning farmers. Among their findings, the projects revealed differences along racial-ethnic lines in the underlying motivations for participation that closely parallel broader tensions in alternative agriculture movements: between the goal of sustenance in the community food security and social justice faction; and the goals of environmental sustainability and local economic vitality in the sustainable agriculture faction (Allen, 2004). Flora et al.'s article is a reminder that construction of an alternative food system will be messy, that it will require navigation of myriad challenges of race, ethnicity, and class. Yet it is necessary work, and their project provides important insights into how alternatives to the world food system might be organized.

In doing so, Flora et al. provide a glimpse into not only the challenges but also the promises of an alternative food system: one that might be more inclusive of, and thus more beneficial for, the migrants who have thus far worked to build a much less socially just food system; one that may reduce the rift between food producers and food consumers; one that makes the social relations of food more visible again, reconnecting us to the 'very old routines' of material life that are 'there at the root of everything' (Braudel, 1967, p. xii).

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## **Migrant Workers and Changing Work-place Regimes in Contemporary Agricultural Production in Canada**

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**Abstract.** Contemporary processes of globalization have had significant implications for food systems around the world. The adoption of neo-liberal policies on a global scale, changing systems of governance in supply chains, and the development of new technologies have transformed how food is produced and consumed. Although the implications of these changes for the labour sustaining agri-food systems have received scant attention in the literature, research suggests they are profound. In this article, I seek to further our knowledge of how these processes are unfolding in a high income country context through a focus on Canada, examining in particular how changes to immigration policy have rendered work in Northern agri-food industries more precarious. In so doing, I seek to contribute to theoretical debates on the role of the state in regulating work-place regimes and managing capitalist accumulation in agriculture.

### **Introduction**

For at least three decades, agri-food systems around the world have been undergoing significant changes. The adoption of neo-liberal policies on a global scale, changing systems of governance or regulatory regimes, growing concentration and integration within supply chains, and the development of new technologies are among the processes transforming the ways in which food is produced and consumed (McMichael, 1996; du Toit and Ewert, 2002; Busch, 2010; Carton de Grammont and Lara Flores, 2010). The implications of these changes for the workers and their households employed in the contemporary global food system is a topic that has received little

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scholarly attention (Carton de Grammont and Lara Flores, 2010). Yet the limited literature available indicates that the scale of processes underway holds profound implications for labour–capital relations in agriculture. Within some developing countries, the precipitous growth of non-traditional agricultural export production, integrated in buyer-driven supply chains dominated by corporate retail giants, has had significant impacts on paid farm labour. For example, exporters seeking to comply with quality-driven requirements and supermarket procurement systems have adopted new technologies and managerial strategies of organizing the work-place (Selwyn, 2007; Carton de Grammont and Lara Flores, 2010). The consequences for workers have included a trend towards flexible labour with reductions in regular farm employment, an extension of growing/harvesting seasons, a move away from on-farm employment, deepening gender and racial segmentation, and the intensification of work (du Toit and Ewert, 2002; Dolan, 2004; Kritzinger et al., 2004; Carton de Grammont and Lara Flores, 2010). These processes have fundamentally changed how workers experience their jobs and how and where they live. Productivity gains appear to have come at the cost of labour, with most studies pointing to deepening precariousness of farm work (Barrón and Rello, 2000; Barrientos et al., 2003; Dolan, 2004; Carton de Grammont and Lara Flores, 2010). Changes in the organization of work have also shifted internal migration and settlement patterns, with considerable consequences for farm workers' households (Dolan, 2004; Carton de Grammont and Lara Flores, 2010).

The implications of transformations in the global food system for waged work within high income countries – where agriculture maintains the livelihoods of significantly fewer people – also remain under-investigated, despite suggestions from existing studies that considerable change is underway. This literature, while dominated by research on one contingent of the work-force – international migrants – shows convincingly the importance of this labour force to capitalist accumulation in agriculture (Friedland et al., 1981; Martin, 1988; Mitchell, 1996). More recently, scholars have documented the dispersal of an ever-larger migrant work-force outside of traditional zones of labour-intensive agriculture and across a wider range of agri-food industries (Martin, 2002; Guthman, 2004; Griffith, 2006). The rising employment of international migrants has also been documented in other high-wage countries over the past decade; in Europe, migrant workers are becoming, or now constitute, the dominant work-force in labour-intensive agriculture (Kasimis et al., 2003; Frances et al., 2005; Rogaly, 2008; Labrianidis and Sykas, 2009; Rye and Andrzejewska, 2010). The implications for farm labour have included downward pressure on wages, the persistence of sub-standard working conditions, and new forms of labour discipline (Ruhs, 2006; Plewa, 2007; Rogaly, 2008; Labrianidis and Sykas, 2009; Rye and Andrzejewska, 2010).

This article focuses on Canada to contribute to our knowledge of contemporary labour–capital relations in high-income country agriculture and the role of migrants within the global food system. In particular, I investigate recent modifications to the country's temporary migration programs and show how these have rendered work in agri-food industries more precarious. Greater availability of migrant workers across industries and regions, the creation of a global labour pool of workers on temporary visas, and shortcomings in government regulation have all combined to create a much more competitive agricultural labour market, with adverse outcomes for the work-place regimes encountered by those employed at the bottom end of Canada's food system. While not discounting the rising importance of private regu-

lation in the global food system, the article underscores the continued role of state intervention in procuring reservoirs of labour and influencing labour market policy, thus challenging the persistent portrayal of a retreating state within some interpretations of contemporary processes of globalization.

### **Globalization, Work-place Regimes, and State Regulation**

Michael Burawoy (1985) reminds us to conceptualize production as containing not only economic elements but political and ideological ones as well. His concept of work-place regimes encompasses the social organization of production – the labour process – and the political apparatuses that reproduce it through the regulation of struggles, or ‘production politics’ (1985, p. 122). The concept of work-place regimes thus considers the set of labour arrangements that comprise the productive process, the negotiations that shape them, and the range of actors involved (Burawoy, 1985; Rutherford, 2004; Rogaly, 2008). Particular attention is given to the role of state intervention in the labour market and the nature of labour relations (Burawoy, 1985; Rutherford, 2004). Complementarily, Selwyn (2012) provides a constructive analysis of Elger and Edward’s (1999) framework of the regulation of labour regimes involving states, employers, unions and workers in which the state is characterized as acting institutionally to structure the work process, the labour market, and the political representation of labour. The forms such regulation takes vary spatially and temporally, particularly as the result of changing relations between the actors involved and in relation to other processes, such as the global integration of markets. This echoes Burawoy’s (1985) insistence on the importance of the national context (among other scales) in influencing the character of workplace regimes. Moreover, Selwyn’s analysis does not see states as neutral arbiters of capital–labour relations or reactive to the needs of ‘capital’ or specific capitalists, but rather *managers* of the process of capitalist development. Thus while ‘organized capital and the state often collaborate to construct regimes of accumulation designed to weaken workers’ bargaining power’, work-place regimes are contested political terrain in which labour also tries to position itself advantageously (Selwyn, 2012).

This analysis of the state is important when considering immigration policy and agricultural production in the contemporary context. As Sharma (2006) argues, the portrayal of a retreating national state is alive and well within debates on the character of globalization. Such assumptions regarding the state have been adopted within the migration studies literature, where some scholars define globalization as ‘the multiple and varied social, economic, political, as well as cultural processes through which nation-states are traversed and weakened’ (Lem and Gardiner Barber, 2010, p. 1). Indeed, it is not uncommon in the agri-food literature for the retreat of the state to be identified as a globalizing process (Selwyn, 2009, p. 762). Recent theorizing within the political economy of food cautions against this. In Lawrence Busch’s analysis of how the neo-liberal project has been enacted in the agri-food sector (2010), he argues that ‘despite the rhetoric of deregulation, of a neoliberal “withering away of the state”, the state has actually grown in scope’ and provides evidence of how the state now regularly produces the legal and regulatory frameworks as well as bureaucratic structures that support and induce the creation of markets. Ironically, these have included new forms of governance such as tripartite standards regime that are accountable only to themselves and outside the purview of democratically elected legislatures. According to Pechlaner and Otero (2008), state promotion of policies

associated with neo-liberal globalism such as these should be conceptualized as a form of neo-regulation rather than deregulation in order to emphasize a modified, rather than diminished, state.

With relation to labour, Sharma argues that most states are increasingly regulating nationalist labour markets through immigration policy, particularly through the procurement of migrant workers that are unfree, more easily regulated, and cheaper (2006, p. 50). Immigration policy thus serves as a means to organize and restructure employment relationships by making weakened and cheapened forms of labour available and thereby infusing greater competition in national labour markets. In addition to implementing temporary migration policies, states may also enact restrictive borders and asylum policies to cheapen and weaken other groups such as refugees (Giles, 2010) and undocumented migrants (Heyman, 2010; Però, 2010) through an imposed, differential status. Immigration restrictions thus function not only to exclude people from impoverished nation states (Richmond, 1994) but to differentially include them (Sharma, 2006). Widening inequality between the North and the South in terms of income and human security has only amplified the relevance of immigration policy as a site of labour market regulation. As the incorporation of migrant labour in the high-income world rises and extends into new industry sectors, agriculture provides an illustrative, protracted history of state collaboration with employers to subjugate farm labour through discriminatory legislation and the supply of labour reservoirs that is over a century old. As Griffith (2006) has argued in the case of the United States, agricultural employers distinguish themselves as having successfully shaped immigration policy to meet their labour needs since at least the Second World War. Satzewich's (1991) critical history of farm labour in Canada makes a similar case.

In what follows I provide a detailed analysis of changes to Canada's temporary migration programs and their implications for work-place regimes in agriculture. This analysis draws on secondary documents as well as extensive primary research carried out within a program of research focused on the social relations of labour-intensive agriculture in Canada. It relies principally on in-depth interviews with a diverse set of stakeholder participants in Ontario and British Columbia conducted between 2002 and 2010, including 39 civil servants in Canada and migrant-sending countries, 39 employers and industry representatives, and 122 migrant workers.<sup>1</sup> The article is also informed by interviews with Canadian farm workers and members of outreach or advocacy organizations. The research sought to protect the anonymity of all participants, particularly migrants who were interviewed without their employers' knowledge, off farm premises, and in English or Spanish. All interviews were transcribed and imported into a qualitative data analysis software program that was used to organize the data for analysis. The article further relies on ethnographic insights from field research that inform (and often contradict) interview content and my participation in various multi-stakeholder forums on migrant labour issues.

### **Temporary Migration Programs and Canadian Agri-food Industries**

Temporary migration programs are a contemporary piece of farm labour history in Canada, a history that can be characterized similar to descriptions of California agribusiness as 'a succession of labour reservoirs' composed of immigrant and racialized workers that either voluntarily leave – or are forced out – of agriculture

(Burawoy, 1976, p. 1064). Since Confederation in 1867, the Canadian state has had various levels of involvement in facilitating the supply of low-wage labour to farms. Early sources (1870–1930) included Chinese immigrants who were legally barred from working in more desirable occupations (Wong, 1988) and impoverished, often orphan British children who laboured as indentured servants in exchange for Canadian citizenship upon adulthood (Bagnell, 2001). During the Second World War, the Canadian state intervened directly to supply farmers with ethnic Japanese internees, German prisoners of war, and conscientious objectors. In the post-war period, war veterans and displaced persons were employed as contract agricultural labourers. When these sources were no longer available, growers turned to international migrants from the southern United States, the Caribbean, and Portugal, many of whom did not have legal status (Wong, 1988; Satzewich, 1991).

In the late 1960s, as a new framework for immigration policy was being adopted, the state institutionalized the employment of international migrants under the auspices of highly managed bilateral agreements known collectively as the Seasonal Agricultural Workers' Program (SAWP). Canada signed the first of these bilateral agreements with Jamaica (1966), followed by Trinidad and Tobago (1967), Barbados (1967), Mexico (1974) and members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) (1976). From some 264 workers at the outset, the SAWP now moves some 25000 migrants from these countries into Canada each year and, following the completion of their six-weeks to eight-months contracts, returns an estimated 98% of them home (Table 1). This high degree of 'circularity' in policy-speak – or cyclical labour migration that does not result in permanent settlement – is a fundamental benchmark for which the 'success' of guest-worker programs is measured, earning the SAWP an international reputation as a model temporary migration program (Vertovec, 2007; Hennebray and Preibisch, 2010).

Governments and the private sector jointly administer this highly managed, bilateral guest-worker program. Canada's federal immigration ministry, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, approves and issues visas and work permits to migrants, while the labour ministry, Human Resources and Skill Development Canada, approves employer requests. Eligible employers must produce commodities deemed to be seasonal and prove that they have made attempts, unsuccessfully, to hire Canadian workers. The processing of approved requests and other operational aspects of the program is undertaken by two regional, private-sector organizations, Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services (FARMS) based in Ontario and Fondation des Entreprises en Recrutement de la Main-d'œuvre Agricole Étrangère (FERME) based in Quebec, who assumed these functions during Canada's neo-liberal policy shift in 1987. Migrant-sending governments undertake an even larger share of the operational burden, including worker recruitment, selection and job matching. They also finance offices in Canada to mediate worker–employer relationships by providing 'consular support' (Mexico) or 'liaison service' (Caribbean), including satellite operations within areas of high migrant employment. Migrant-sending countries further participate in annual meetings with Canadian officials and industry representatives to negotiate wage rates, benefits, and other details of the bilateral memoranda of understanding (MOU), including standard employment contracts. This high level of government involvement – particularly in the realm of recruitment – distinguishes the SAWP among North American guest-worker arrangements (Griffith, 2003).

**Table 1.** Comparison of Canada's Temporary Migration Programs for Agriculture.

	SAWP	NOC C&D Pilot	Agriculture-Stream NOC C&D Pilot
Year implemented	1966	2002	2011
Confirmed positions in 2010	27 359	9,748 in agrifood industries	709
Work permit type	Employer specific	Employer specific	Employer specific
Work permit length	≤ 8 months	≤ 24 months	≤ 24 months
Forced rotation	Migrants must return home by 15 December, can return by 1 January	After accumulating 4 years of employment, migrants must return home for 4 years	After accumulating 4 years of employment, migrants must return home for 4 years
Employment contract	Standard contracts; Canada, sending country, employer and worker are parties	Employers write contracts according to guidelines; employer and worker are parties	Standard contract, employer and worker are parties
Program structure	Federal program resting on bilateral agreements signed between Canada and sending countries formalized in memoranda of understanding	Federal program that approves employers to hire workers from abroad	Federal program that approves employers to hire workers from abroad
Countries eligible	Mexico, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (nine members)	Any country	Any country
Employers eligible	Fruits, vegetables (incl. canning and processing), green-houses, nurseries, apiary products, Christmas trees, flowers, pedigreed canola seed, sod, tobacco, bovine, dairy, duck, horse, mink, poultry, and sheep	Any approved employer requiring workers in occupations designated as low skilled	Fruits, vegetables (incl. canning and processing), green-houses, nurseries, apiary products, Christmas trees, flowers, pedigreed canola seed, sod, tobacco, bovine, dairy, duck, horse, mink, poultry, and sheep
Worker recruitment	Government responsibility: sending countries fill grower requests communicated by authorized private-sector organizations	Employer responsibility: employers contact workers independently (often through brokers)	Employer responsibility: employers contact workers independently (often through brokers)
Program costs employers can recover from wages	Portion of return airfare (except BC); rent for housing (BC only)		Rent for housing (\$30 per month)

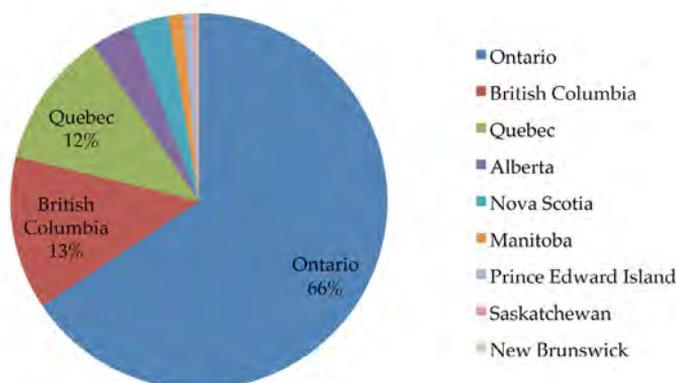
Sources: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services, 2011.

As a program designed to facilitate temporary movement into seasonal agriculture, visas issued to SAWP migrants are valid for a maximum of eight months, from 1 January to 15 December, and entry rights are not extended to family members. Most workers have contracts that are less than six months long, but almost all leave the country when their contracts expire. The program involves forced rotation (Wong, 1984; Bolaria et al., 1992; Sharma, 2006); that is, for migrants to remain eligible for

future placements (and for Caribbean migrants to recoup a portion of their savings that are compulsorily deducted), they must return home at the end of their contracts. Additionally, migrant-sending countries and employers exert pressure on migrants to exit Canada upon completion or breach of their contracts (including as a result of injury or illness) to avoid visa overstays. Work permits are similarly restrictive; SAWP migrants are only legally able to work for a single, designated employer. Since workers are thus bonded or indentured, a number of scholars consider the SAWP a contemporary form of unfree labour relations (Wong, 1984; Satzewich, 1991; Bolaria et al., 1992; Basok, 2002; Sharma, 2006). The program also contains ancillary mechanisms of control. For example, the practice of nominative recruitment (whereby employers indicate by name the migrants they will rehire) exerts a powerful measure of labour discipline as migrant-sending countries may refuse subsequent employment to those who fail to be renamed (Basok, 2002; Binford, 2004). Some countries, such as Mexico, also determine migrants' subsequent participation on the basis of annual employer evaluations.

Furthermore, the disposability of migrants is inscribed in SAWP employment contracts that allow employers to dismiss and thus deport workers 'for non-compliance, refusal to work, or any other sufficient reason' with no formal right of appeal (Verma, 2007b; Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2008). As most migrants are housed on their employer's property, loss of work is accompanied by loss of residence (Verma, 2007b). Although rates of forced return have remained low, the threat of deportation serves as an effective mechanism of coercion independent of its actual exercise (Preibisch, 2010). In addition, migrant-sending states' practice of 'pro-poor' recruitment, targeting land-poor farmers and/or farm workers with low education levels, delivers a labour force whose 'dual frame of reference' (Waldinger and Lichter, 2003) reflects heavily in their on-the-job performance and acceptance of substandard working and living conditions. In sum, while SAWP workers may share the same employment rights as domestic farm workers in principal, they cannot enforce them in the same way in practice (Verma, 2007a).

The SAWP has grown considerably, with approved employer requests reaching 27359 in 2010 (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2011b). Although the program was initially subject to a cap, this was removed in 1987 when the government devolved the SAWP's operational elements to the private sector, leading to a doubling of the number of migrants in just two years (Alberta Federation of Labour, 2003). Precipitous growth continued through the 1990s and 2000s, contributing to an expansion in Canadian horticulture (Preibisch, 2007). Along with rising numbers of migrant workers has been a broadening of their employment across a greater range of agribusinesses<sup>2</sup> and places of employment. The SAWP now operates in every Canadian province but Newfoundland and Labrador. Particularly noteworthy was the SAWP's extension in 2004 to British Columbia, a province that within four years was hiring over 3,000 migrants. The SAWP's extension to British Columbia changed the regional distribution of migrant employment, reducing Ontario and Quebec's share of SAWP employment from 96% in 2003 to 79% by 2009 (Figure 1). Furthermore, while official discourse refers to temporary migrants as seasonal complements to the agricultural labour market, there is evidence that they play a more fundamental role. Their numbers have grown within the context of decreasing employment of domestic workers (Weston and Scarpa de Masellis, 2003) and employers see them as crucial to their business strategies (Basok, 2002; Preibisch, 2007). One study estimated that SAWP workers contributed 45% of total employment hours in the commodities



**Figure 1.** Proportion of approved positions for temporary visa workers under the SAWP by province, 2010.

*Note:* Proportions express positions that have received positive labor market opinions (LMOs) from HRS-DC, not the actual number of workers in Canada that year.

*Source:* Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2011b.

in which they were employed in 2000, and predicted this to increase (Weston and Scarpa de Masellis, 2003). In contrast to the United States, agricultural enterprises in Canada do not have access to large reservoirs of undocumented migrants.

The most dramatic changes to Canada's agricultural labour markets have accompanied the launching in 2002 of a new, sector-wide initiative to allow employers to access international migrants in jobs designated as 'low skill', now known as the Pilot Project for Occupations Requiring Lower Levels of Formal Training (National Occupational Classification C and D), hereafter the NOC C&D Pilot. The initiative was a policy response to increasing employer demand for oil, gas, and construction workers during the expansion of Canada's economy in the early 2000s and reflected problems with federal immigration policy that resulted in a back-log in the processing of landed immigrant applications and, overall, a human capital model focused on educated workers in higher status occupations (Fudge and McPhail, 2009). The phenomenal growth of the initiative, whereby requests for migrants to fill low-skill occupations exceeded those for the highly skilled within just five years, signalled a shift in government policy towards greater use of temporary migration to resolve labour market needs at the lower end of the occupational spectrum (Hennebry and Preibisch, 2008; Fudge and McPhail, 2009; Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2009). Indeed, the Canadian government gave the 'pilot' additional impetus in 2007 with measures to ease the hiring process and extend the length of temporary visas (Government of Canada, 2007). Although the NOC C&D Pilot is not specific to agriculture, this new guest-worker program has irrevocably changed work-place regimes in agriculture. In this section, I highlight the key features of the NOC C&D Pilot that distinguish it from the SAWP before turning to the implications for agriculture.

First, as a sector-wide temporary migration program, the NOC C&D Pilot is open to any employer seeking 'low skilled' workers. As such, its implementation extended employer access to international migrants beyond those involved in primary agriculture (see Table 1). Secondly, unlike the SAWP model of bilateral agreements

with select countries, the NOC C&D Pilot functions as a unilateral provision within immigration policy that allows approved employers to recruit migrants from anywhere in the world. Third, work permits are longer (up to 24 months) and not bound to specificities in the calendar year. Migrant tenure, however, is restricted. Whereas SAWP migrants face no restrictions on the number of years they can participate in the program, as of 2011, NOC C&D Pilot migrants who accumulate four years of employment are ineligible to work in Canada for a subsequent four years.

A final noteworthy feature that distinguishes the new initiative from the SAWP is the reduced role of government in program management and, consequently, greater scope for private sector involvement. Whereas the SAWP commits the Canadian government to work in co-operation with migrant-sending governments to manage the migration of agricultural workers according to a set of annually negotiated principles and to ensure migrants' equitable and fair treatment, the NOC C&D Pilot implies far less state commitment and responsibility. Fundamentally, the NOC C&D Pilot transfers the management of migrant labour from state to market institutions. Employment contracts, for example, are signed only between employers and migrants; unlike the SAWP, the Canadian government and migrant-sending countries are not parties. Moreover, recruitment has been removed from state purview. While sending countries may still position themselves as labour brokers, they do so within an open market. As I discuss in greater detail below, this shift occurred without the corresponding implementation of a regulatory framework to register and monitor the industry that the NOC C&D model, by its very structure, requires to operate.

Until 2011, eligible employers in any agri-food occupation could choose to hire migrants under the SAWP, the NOC C&D Pilot, or both. The Canadian government subsequently modified the access of employers seeking to hire farm workers under the NOC C&D Pilot in those commodities eligible for the SAWP, obliging them to follow new requirements tailored to the farm and food industry. Referred to as the New Agricultural Stream under the Pilot Project NOC C&D, the 2011 modifications seek to equalize certain aspects of the employment offer as well as the costs to the employer. First, employers hiring NOC C&D Pilot workers for SAWP-eligible commodities must pay SAWP-negotiated rates. In addition, employers must adopt a standard contract and enroll migrants in work-place compensation schemes in provinces where farm workers are excluded. These modifications thus harmonize aspects of the employment contract that could feasibly affect workers under the two programs employed in the same occupation, not to mention the same work-site. Moreover, the Agricultural Stream allows employers to charge rent to their NOC C&D employees. Because employers using the NOC C&D Pilot must finance migrants' return air fare – a portion of which is recoverable from workers under the SAWP – their costs were marginally higher than using the SAWP. Although the difference was offset by removing employers' obligation to provide accommodation (mandatory in the SAWP), many agricultural producers already had existing housing (particularly if they had previously hired SAWP workers) or were open to building it in order to access the benefits of an on-site work-force. According to a civil servant, it was precisely the higher cost of the NOC C&D Pilot and the ensuing employer complaints that instigated the tailoring of the program for agriculture.

### **Impact for Work-place Regimes**

The crafting of temporary migration programs in the late 1960s and more recent policies to facilitate their expansion and shift their management to the private sector

have resulted in significant changes within the agricultural labour force and, correspondingly, in labour regimes. To begin, the greater availability of migrants beyond those commodities considered seasonal or primary agriculture has led to their rising employment within agriculture and agri-food occupations. In addition to the aforementioned growth of the SAWP, Table 2 depicts the number of confirmed positions for temporary migrants in agriculture under the NOC C&D Pilot that grew from 2,445 in 2005 to 10 697 in 2008, dropping slightly in 2009 (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2011a).<sup>3</sup> While numbers of migrants in both programs have not returned to the historic highs of 2008, there has been no decline in migrant numbers employed under the NOC C&D Pilot in SAWP-eligible commodities (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2011a, 2011b).

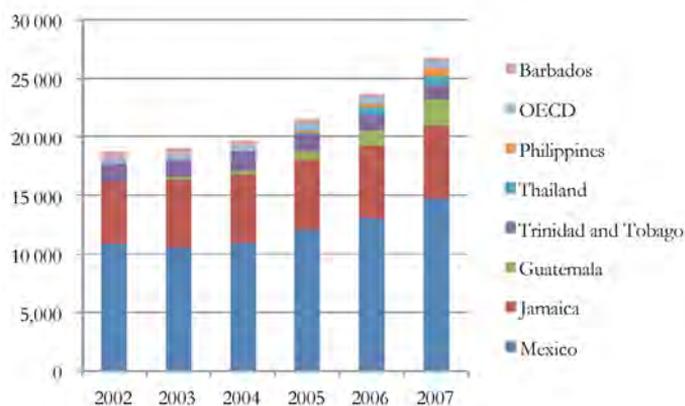
Perhaps even more striking than increases in migrant employment has been the rapid diversification of the non-citizen labour force in agriculture. Prior to the NOC C&D Pilot, almost all non-citizen farm labour was from one of 13 SAWP migrant-sending countries. In 2002, the first year of the Pilot, migrants from an astounding 52 different countries took up jobs in agriculture and food processing. By 2007, that number had grown to 75 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2009a). The incorporation of workers with distinct ethnic and cultural backgrounds has thus rapidly altered the social relations of production. In addition, wholesale shifts in the dominant nationalities of migrants employed in agriculture have occurred. Figure 2 indicates the top 10 countries of origin for migrants issued work permits for employment

**Table 2.** Number of confirmed positions for temporary visa workers on labor market opinions in agriculture (non-SAWP), by occupation, 2005–2010.

Occupation	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Farmers and Farm Managers	168	176	390	313	308	221
Agricultural and Related Service Contractors and Managers	14	12	11	*	10	*
Farm Supervisors and Specialized Livestock Workers	362	548	810	765	559	710
Nursery and Greenhouse Operators and Managers	25	23	22	14	*	16
Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Contractors and Managers	*	*	*	15	*	*
Supervisors, Landscape and Horticulture	10	15	30	66	39	91
Aquaculture Operators and Managers	*	*	*	*	*	*
General Farm Workers	406	885	1,797	2,038	2,310	2,321
Nursery and Green-house Workers	167	382	651	993	772	1,002
Harvesting Labourers	858	1,667	1,918	3,114	4,393	3,719
Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers	*	93	567	1,110	604	583
Aquaculture and Marine Harvest Labourers	*	*	26	19	*	*
Labourers in Food, Beverage and Tobacco Processing	417	592	1,760	2,244	1,344	1,069
	2,445	4,400	7,988	10 697	10 359	9,748

*Notes:* Table shows the number of confirmed positions for migrants workers (temporary foreign worker) in agriculture (non-SAWP), by occupation, 2005–2010 (not actual entries) and excludes confirmed positions in support of arranged employment applications for permanent residence and international migrants who do not require labour market approval due to exemptions provided for by trade agreements. Cells containing fewer than 10 cases in a specific category have been suppressed and replaced with '\*'.  
*Source:* Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2011b.

**Figure 2.** Top 10 countries of origin for temporary visa workers in select agri-food occupations.

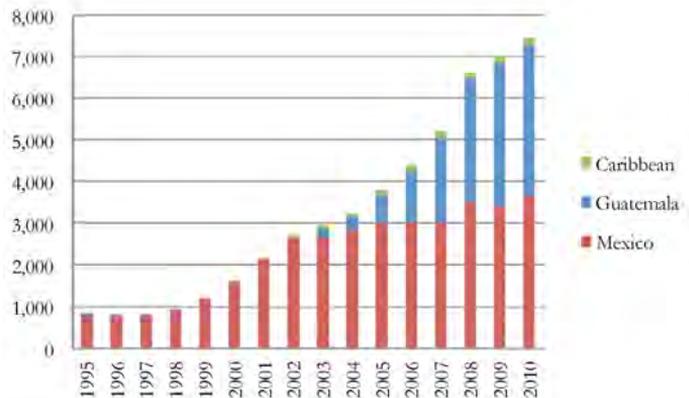


*Note:* Numbers reflect the country of last permanent residence reported by migrants who were issued employment authorizations from Canada to work in a select list of agri-food related occupations: general farm workers; harvesting labourers; nursery and green-house workers; food and beverage processing labourers; landscaping and grounds maintenance workers; process control and machine operators in food and beverage processing; industrial butchers and meat cutters, poultry preparers and related workers; fish plant workers; and food testers and graders. Numbers include extension and new work permits issued in Canada at CIC inland offices, CPC-Vegreville and ports of entries (airports, borders and marines). *Source:* Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2009a.

in selected agri-food occupations over the period 2002 to 2007, and illustrates how migrants working in Canada's agri-food industries from countries formerly outside of the SAWP now rival those of SAWP bilateral partners. For example, Thailand and the Philippines emerge in fifth and sixth place among countries supplying farm and food industry workers, ahead of the long-time SAWP bilateral partners Barbados and the OECS. Most spectacular has been the incorporation of Guatemalan workers, a country that in five years was sending the largest number of migrants to Canada after Mexico and Jamaica. Almost all of this employment has taken place in Quebec where Guatemalans have replaced Mexicans as the preferred labour force. Figure 3 illustrates the number of migrants placed by FERME. From 2003, the first year of their employment in Quebec, to 2011, the number of Guatemalan migrants under the NOC C&D Pilot has increased 16 times to reach 3,654. Over the same period, the number of Mexicans and Caribbean workers employed remained stable.

There is also some suggestion that the gender balance of the migrant work-force in agriculture may also be shifting. Analysis of the total number of temporary migrant workers entering Canada across all occupational categories over the first five years of the NOC C&D Pilot shows growing feminization, with women's share increasing from 33% to 40.5% between 2002 and 2007 (Fudge and McPhail, 2009). Although data tracking actual entries of migrant workers into agriculture-related jobs under the NOC C&D Pilot by gender are incomplete, existing data indicate that similar processes may be occurring in agriculture. In 2008, migrant women's share of total entries in agriculture-related jobs under the SAWP and NOC C&D Pilot was 3.2% and 15.4%, respectively (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2009b, 2009c). These figures suggest new instances of labour replacement or substitution of groups of racialized and gendered workers.

**Figure 3.** Number of temporary visa workers employed in agriculture in Quebec and New Brunswick by sending country



*Note:* Figures reflect requests processed by the regional employers' association FERME for employers in Quebec and New Brunswick. Both provinces are grouped together for administrative reasons; numbers in New Brunswick are marginal.

*Source:* Fondation des Entreprises en Recrutement de la Main-d'œuvre Agricole Étrangère, 2011; personal communication, Fernando Borja.

Although the evidence of how groups of farm workers have left agriculture voluntarily or have been forced out as a result of the latest round of policy changes is only gradually emerging, such practices have fostered heightened competition between workers and weakened the bargaining power of labour. The threat and practice of labour replacement as a mechanism of control is not new. Examination of archival records (Satzewich, 2007) and contemporary employment practices in the SAWP (Preibisch and Binford, 2007; Preibisch and Encalada Grez, 2010) provide evidence that management uses the threat and practice of labour substitution to discipline both workers and migrant-sending governments. In terms of the latter, employers have used their power to choose the sending country of the migrants they hire in order to dampen the bargaining power of states participating in the SAWP, either through threats or 'country-surfing' (Preibisch and Binford, 2007). Indeed, a principal reason for Mexico's inclusion in the SAWP in 1974 was to provide employers with leverage to mitigate pressures from Caribbean governments to improve wages and working conditions (Satzewich, 2007). The broadening of the global labour pool to the entire world further entrenches this tool of labour discipline. Employers who have switched to workers under the NOC C&D Pilot are frank to note that access to a global labour pool limits any single group of workers or sending country from developing bargaining power (Preibisch, 2010). A grower in British Columbia, when explaining the desire to have access to multiple migrant-sending countries involved in the SAWP, stated: 'because then Mexico can't blackmail us, which they have been doing. We need to have a second or third group because Mexico, they don't have to budge on things because they know they're our only workforce besides domestics' (Interview, April 2007).

Competition is actively fostered between groups to coerce or challenge workers to increase productivity or acquiesce to employer demands. One advocate, comparing domestic and migrant workers claimed: 'they are threatened by each other. There is animosity and there is intimidation as well' (Interview, April 2007). The threat of la-

bour replacement can be communicated through practice, whereby workers observe or learn of instances of labour substitution of one group by another, a process that can occur gradually over several seasons or from one year to the next. Workers' expendability can also be communicated on the 'shop floor' through censure – when supervisors or employers threaten workers to meet yields or lose their jobs to another group – or praise, when a group of workers is compared positively to another, as illustrated in the following interview excerpt with a NOC C&D Pilot migrant: 'the first week we arrived, [the translator] said "I've been asked to congratulate you because the last year the employer had Chinese [workers] and they only produce two cans [of bait worms] a day and you are producing five"'. Similarly, employers and supervisors commend women workers on the ways they differ positively from men (Preibisch and Encalada Grez, 2010). In effect, widening employer ability to choose the nationality of their workers further entrenches divisive employment strategies whereby workers can be compared, contrasted, and placed in opposition with each other (Preibisch, 2010). These practices, together with their discursive justifications, communicate to workers what is required of them (Salzinger, 2003).

Employers' greater access to migrants has also introduced new groups of vulnerable workers into the agricultural labour force. Many of the new sending regions suffer from higher rates of marginalization and political unfreedoms than the SAWP bilateral countries. Rising recruitment from Guatemala is concerning in terms of how the threat of political repression within that country is shaping worker acquiescence in Canada. In addition, the shift towards greater private sector involvement in recruitment has introduced new sources of vulnerability. Since the introduction of a temporary migration program for low-skilled occupations, Canada has experienced a proliferation of private recruiters seeking to profit from reduced government involvement in temporary migration (Hennebry and Preibisch, 2008). As this has occurred within a weak regulatory environment, a range of abusive practices have also emerged, including charging extortionate fees to migrants (and at times employers) for job matching; collecting fees from migrants for non-existent jobs; misleading migrants regarding expected earnings or their prospects for achieving landed immigrant status; providing contracts that are poorly translated or inconsistent with the one held by the employer; and overcharging for transportation, housing, translation services, or obtaining an extension of their work permit (Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2009). Thai migrant farm workers, for example, reported paying job-matching fees of \$11 000 to recruiters, a fee some financed through money borrowed against property at high interest rates.<sup>4</sup> One interviewee claimed: 'I still have to pay back [the original fee] to the agent, \$473 per month for 24 months. My employer cannot help because I already signed [this agreement] in Thailand' (Interview, July 2008). In addition to paying job-matching fees, some migrant farm workers reported paying additional expenses to recruiters for training and its documentation to include in their visa applications. Abuses linked to recruitment have prompted a number of defrauded migrant farm workers to desert their designated employer in order to stay in Canada beyond their 24-month visa in order to recover the costs of their migration through unauthorized employment (Bajer, 2010; Chen, 2010; CBC News, 2011). There have also been cases of migrants applying for refugee status in order to remain in Canada and extend their work authorization (CBC News, 2011).

Exploitative employment practices have also motivated migrants to leave their specified employer or take up unauthorized work outside of their contract to supple-

ment their wages. A common problem is employer failure to provide the hours contractually guaranteed to migrants. At one work-site, Thai interviewees related that, while their employer did pay them minimum promised earnings when the weather reduced their hours, this was subsequently deducted from their pay-cheques when the weather improved. Previously, at the same company, the employer fired and deported a group of Mexican workers because their productivity was lower than he had expected. According to the migrants, the employer did not provide the probationary training period promised in their contracts that may have allowed them to meet productivity targets. As one worker related:

[The boss] started demanding greater yields and told us who among us were the worst in terms of production. He told us that if we didn't work out he'd send us back to Mexico, that we were incompetent. By the first pay period, he had sent back the [first group]' (Interview, August 2004).

Another four workers were also fired after they spoke out regarding poor working conditions: 'When he saw that we were in all of this [speaking to migrant advocates], he said that it would be best if the trouble-makers left and he decided to fire us. Two weeks previous, several co-workers had quit and he didn't fire anyone else after that, except for us' (Interview, August 2004).

Some NOC C&D Pilot workers have found themselves out of a job early into their contracts before they have recouped the costs of their migration. When Canada's largest mushroom producer faced bankruptcy just before Christmas in 2008, the company laid off 70 migrants without notice, arranged for their transportation home, and evicted them from company-provided housing. Two weeks later, an additional 50 workers were terminated (United Food and Commercial Workers of Canada, 2009a). Although the migrants had signed contracts for 12 months, many of them had only been working for a fraction of that time. As a result, some 30 laid-off workers remained in Canada to face their prospects as undocumented workers (Contenta and Monsebraaten, 2009). Moreover, there has been at least one case of sexual harassment that prompted some migrants to return home voluntarily and others to abandon their employer and remain in Canada without status. Indeed, there is rising evidence that Canada's undocumented work-force has grown as a result of problems with the NOC C&D Pilot (Alberta Federation of Labour, 2007; Hennebry and Preibisch, 2008; United Food and Commercial Workers of Canada, 2009a).

In agriculture, the non-status work-force includes largely Thai, Chinese, and Filipino migrants (Bajer, 2010; Chen, 2010). The vulnerability experienced by unauthorized agricultural workers in the United States has been amply documented (Findeis, 2002; Griffith, 2006; Holmes, 2007). Although this topic has received much less attention in Canada, researchers and migrant advocates suggest that non-status individuals face multiple vulnerabilities, including inadequate access to health and other services, limited recourse in the event of exploitation at work or in other arenas, and deportation (Goldring et al., 2007). Most recently, unauthorized migrants have been subject to considerable intimidation resulting from a series of high-profile, US-style immigration raids in areas of labour-intensive agricultural production (Hill, 2009; United Food and Commercial Workers of Canada, 2009b).

Cases of migrants deserting their designated employer have in turn generated new exploitative practices designed to control migrants' mobility. For example, migrants reported employers withholding their passports or threatening their jobs if they left employer-provided property. Among measures to compel migrants to com-

plete their contracts, Thai migrants claimed that they were asked to leave paperwork with their recruiter: 'I was also asked to deposit my land owner registered document at the agent's office as a guarantee not to run away. I can get it back when I complete work for two years' (Interview, July 2007). In addition, from 2003 until 2011, Guatemalan workers were obliged to pay a \$400 bond by International Organization for Migration (IOM) officials in Guatemala that was only refunded when they completed their contracts (United Food and Commercial Workers of Canada and Agriculture Workers Alliance, 2011; Valarezo, 2011). Arguably, the liberalization of immigration controls on the employment of migrants in lower occupational statuses has increased the instances and forms of unfree labour relations in Canada. These cases further illustrate how the state, private intermediaries and employers collude in the discipline of migrant labour.

The greater availability of migrant workers through the extension of the SAWP and the implementation of the NOC C&D Pilot has had other implications for labour arrangements in agriculture. Some firms formerly dependent on piece rates to achieve productivity targets for harvesting have substituted domestic workers with migrants on hourly wages, such as mushroom producers (Preibisch, 2010) and fruit farms (Otero and Preibisch, 2009). The fact that migrant labour on hourly rates has rendered unnecessary the use of piece rates – a strategy often implemented to increase labour control – underscores the degree to which migrants supplied under these programs represent a subjugated form of labour. In terms of mushroom harvesting, the shift away from piece rates and subsequent drop in wages led domestic harvesters to exit their jobs (Preibisch, 2010). This corroborates evidence across high-income countries that the availability of migrant labour has had a negative effect on wage levels and working conditions in the food system for both migrant and non-migrant workers (Castles, 2006; Rogaly, 2008; Rye and Andrzejewska, 2010).

The onset of the global financial crisis in 2008 has led to only slight decreases in the number of confirmed migrant worker positions for agriculture-related occupations. It is difficult to determine if this is the result of decreased employer appetite for migrants, a greater supply of domestic workers displaced from other economic sectors, or increased government restrictions on advertising requirements. The government did tighten advertising requirements in 2009, requiring employers to prove they attempted to recruit local workers or provide a rationale as to why Canadians could not be employed, and also replaced initiatives that exempted specific industries and regions from proving that local workers were unavailable in order to be eligible to hire internationally by a national requirement obliging all employers to advertise for 14 calendar days (Fudge and McPhail, 2009; Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2009). The government has also responded to public pressure to put a regulatory framework in place to curb migrant exploitation, but the pace of policy development has been slow and led by the provinces, despite the fact that immigration is a federal responsibility. Indeed, Manitoba (a relatively small employer of migrants) implemented the first legislation to protect migrants in 2009 with the Worker Recruitment and Protection Act (WRAPA), legislation that enhances the regulation of employment placement agencies and creates new protections for migrants, particularly regarding recruitment (Sharma, 2010). Other provinces have since amended or introduced legislation regarding the right of recruiters to charge fees to workers.<sup>5</sup> At the federal level, it was not until 2010 that the government introduced a scheme for employers to demonstrate compliance with the terms of their offers of employment to migrants, but this remains voluntary. That year the

government also instituted a two-year prohibition from hiring migrant workers for non-compliant employers and created an on-line black list of offenders (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010). While these measures begin to address the abuses that have accompanied rising temporary labour migration to Canada, federal measures remain weak and their sluggish development contrasts markedly with the swift implementation of policies designed to facilitate employer demand for migrants.

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

The implications for farm workers and labour–capital relations in agriculture as a result of the restructuring of the global food system have been under-researched in both ‘developing’ and ‘developed’ countries. Through this article, I have attempted to illuminate these processes in a high-income country context, arguing that capitalist accumulation in agriculture in Canada continues to benefit from the incorporation of new groups of migrants into the labour force, a process mediated by the state through managed migration schemes. While the state has shifted most recently some of the management (and costs) of its migrant system of labour to the private sector, I contend that this should be interpreted as a form of neo-regulation of the labour market adapted to contemporary economic and political exigencies rather than a withering of the state. Further, although recent versions of political economy by Sharma (2006) and others have been criticized as portraying the immigration bureaucracy as ‘simply a tool in the hands of the economically powerful’ (Satzewich 2007, p. 258), the analysis of work-place (Burawoy, 1985; Rogaly, 2008) or labour regimes (Selwyn, 2012) provides a nuanced political economy approach in which capitalist interests are not granted invincible power to determine labour market policy (in this case through formal immigration) but rather, viewed as one of several actors in the negotiation of production politics. Within current understandings of contemporary processes of globalization then, this approach cautions against perceptions of a diminished state in favour of characterizations that elucidate its modified role.

As has been shown here, state policy has played a key role in enhancing flexibility within the labour market for farm and food industry workers by increasing the availability of migrants, by granting access to the global labour market to a wider range of agribusinesses, and by broadening the global pool of labour reserves, including from countries with high levels of economic marginalization and political unfreedoms. These changes have held significant implications for labour regimes, including an astonishingly rapid diversification of the non-citizen labour force in agriculture, as well as wholesale shifts in the dominant nationalities of migrants employed in some regions. These changes have resulted in greater job insecurity from heightened competition between workers, as the threat and practice of labour replacement diminishes the ability of migrant-sending governments, migrants themselves, and all farm workers to influence their working conditions. Furthermore, failure to monitor and regulate increased labour migration at the lower end of the occupational spectrum has kindled the industry offering recruitment services and provided the scope for abusive recruitment and employment practices to emerge. These changes have positioned agriculture and food industry workers more precariously within the labour market and increased the instances and forms of unfree labour relations in Canada.

At the current juncture, the NOC C&D Pilot appears not to have supplanted the SAWP but rather increased the pool of employers hiring migrants within the food

system. However, while numbers of confirmed positions for agriculture-related jobs under both programs dropped in 2009, the NOC C&D Pilot continued to show increases in SAWP-eligible commodities, suggesting that the program's appeal is growing among agricultural employers. Although these programs are valued in part for their ability to precisely deliver and return migrants, providing growers with enviable control over seasonal labour supplies compared to guest-worker programs in the United States or the United Kingdom, ultimately, what the SAWP has over the NOC C& D Pilot is a 45-year track record in quietly providing migrant workers to industry. It is unlikely that Canada's powerful agricultural lobby will threaten their historical access to migrant workers by placing all their stakes on an initiative that may indeed be a *temporary* migration program. The industry is highly cognizant of the negotiable aspects of production politics – that access to migrant workers is subject to political negotiation and that ensuring circularity is part of this. While there has been little public outcry regarding growing numbers of undocumented workers permanently remaining in Canada as a result of failings in the NOC C&D Pilot, historically xenophobia has been a threat of the SAWP and other guest-worker programs. So too has public outrage over migrant exploitation, in the case of the Bracero program in the United States, and social exclusion, in the case of guest-workers in Europe (Plewa, 2007).

The spectre of public pressure is a fitting note on which to conclude this analysis of work-place or labour regimes. While I focused this article on the role of the state in constructing regimes of accumulation that weaken workers' bargaining power, critical to this discussion is an acknowledgement (the subject of a forthcoming paper) of how the processes taking place in the social relations of Canadian agriculture have been highly contested by other actors seeking to re-balance the politics of production. Within the labour movement, the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) of Canada began a concerted campaign in 2002 targeting migrant farm workers that led to the creation of the Agriculture Workers Alliance in 2009 and the opening of 11 resource centres across the country between 2002 and 2011. Legal challenges have also figured highly in UFCW Canada's campaign, including cases against provincial governments, the Canadian federal government, and individual employers. While some of these have focused exclusively on labour issues more generally, such as the prohibition of farms unions in Ontario or farm workers' exclusion from health and safety legislation, others have taken up issues unique to migrants, such as migrants' contributions to social programs (e.g. federal employment insurance that they cannot access). In addition, UFCW Canada local unions have challenged employers before provincial labour relations boards for deporting migrants for unionizing activities or overcharging rent. Further, the union has been responsible for the first collective agreements involving temporary visa workers. Of particular note is how these negotiations have led to the realigning of principles of unionization to suit the demands of a migrant work-force, such as the option to choose overtime hours paid at regular rates, a position insisted upon by migrants who did not want to compromise their opportunities for additional hours and who are legally prevented from migrating with their families through the programs they participate in. Finally, of considerable significance is the success of UFCW Canada in negotiating contracts with meat-packing plants that require employers to hire only those migrant workers who qualify for provincial immigration programs (Provincial and Territorial Nominee Programs, PTNPs) and to process migrants' applications for permanent residency under such initiatives within six months. Through such

actions, the labour movement has been able to secure residency rights and a path to citizenship for migrants in programs designed precisely to avoid permanent immigration.

In addition to efforts by the formal labour movement, migrant workers have organized outside unions with the support of social justice organizations (Dignidad Obrera Agrícola Migrante, DOAM) and researchers (Asociación Civil Guatemaltecos Unidos por Nuestros Derechos, AGUND) (Encalada Grez, 2010; Valarezo, 2011). Collective efforts at increasing public awareness and increased networking across civil society in the defense of migrant worker rights and the problems of temporary migration has also changed the arena in which rising migrant employment plays out. Although a more detailed examination of how the labour and immigrant rights movements are influencing the politics of production is beyond the scope of this article, they indicate that while the incorporation of migrants is creating greater precariousness within Canada's agricultural labour markets, work-place regimes may also be changing in ways that benefit – and reflect – the presence and needs of an increasingly globally sourced proletariat.

## Notes

1. Of the migrants interviewed, 108 participated in the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program and 14 in the Pilot Project for Occupations Requiring Lower Levels of Formal Training.
2. Most recently, the list of eligible commodities under the SAWP grew to include animal production (bovine, dairy, duck, horse, mink, poultry, and sheep) as well as 'pedigreed canola seed' (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2011d).
3. The data do not track entries and do not include those positions for migrants that do not require a work permit owing to exemptions provided for in the General Agreement on Trade in Services and the North American Free Trade Agreement. Further, the data do not reflect the overall stock of temporary migrants, as work permits are valid up to 24 months.
4. All amounts expressed in Canadian dollars.
5. These include British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island.

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## **Keeping Them in Their Place: Migrant Women Workers in Spain's Strawberry Industry**

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**Abstract.** The idea of guest-worker migration has resurfaced in recent decades as the global agri-food industry has confronted a shortage of workers willing to take low-wage and often seasonal jobs. To date, there have been very few cases studies of these twenty-first century guest-worker programs and their role in managing contemporary labor migration. This article examines guest-worker migration in the strawberry industry of southern Spain. In this case, guest-worker programs attempt to regulate and enforce the circular migration of foreign workers in Spain. By making future work contracts contingent on migrants' return to their country of origin, by recruiting migrant workers from various countries, and by targeting women with dependent children, these programs help to discipline migrant workers into the rigors of circular migration. We argue that although the program has been lauded as a model of twenty-first century labor migration, it succeeds primarily by keeping foreign, low-wage, women workers 'in their place'.

### **Introduction**

Since the 1980s, agri-food restructuring has transformed many marginal rural communities into centers of high-value food production (Watts and Goodman, 1997). Such revitalization has created a demand for low-skilled workers in communities once defined by high rates of outmigration. Invariably, the workers lured into these low-wage jobs are immigrant workers, who have been moving beyond traditional immigrant gateways and into new destinations as a result. From the plains states of the U.S. Midwest (Gouveia et al., 2005), to farming communities in southern Europe (Kasimis, 2005), the arrival of foreign-born workers has caused more than a little tension. Many of these destinations are ill-equipped and often unwilling to serve a culturally distinct, linguistically diverse, and mostly low-income immigrant population (Goździak and Martin, 2005; Massey, 2008). In addition, the rise in undocumented migration that typically occurs in these contexts inspires social anxiety and a call for closed borders. Business demands for immigrant workers and community

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demands for closed borders have left many rural communities at something of an impasse. In response, some policy-makers have embraced an alternative: bring immigrants in as temporary guest workers and send them home when the work is done (Martin, 2003).

In the mid-twentieth century, guest-worker programs were popular in both the United States and Western Europe, where labor shortages frustrated seasonal labor recruitment. Such programs came to an end in the 1960s and 1970s as political opposition grew and economic crises deepened on both sides of the Atlantic (Martin, 2003; Castles, 2006). But talk of guest workers resurfaced when the agri-food industry reorganized in the 1980s. By the 1990s, countries like Germany and Spain were reinventing guest-worker programs for twenty-first century economic needs and political realities (Castles, 2006). And though guest-worker programs are still controversial in the United States, they have been debated, most recently in the Utah legislature (Romboy, 2011). The contemporary appeal of guest workers is more or less the same as it was mid-century. Employers can access a steady supply of low-wage workers, control workers through the terms of the contract, adjust the size of their work-force with ease, dismiss guest workers as they see fit, mitigate anti-immigrant sentiment in the local community, and avoid some of the social anxieties that surround undocumented migration. The advantages of guest workers are perhaps all the more critical in an era of 'lean' agri-food production, since securing a flexible, low-wage work-force is central to employers' ability to provide quality, low cost products to the market-place (Rogaly, 2008). Guest workers may also prove critical to new immigrant destinations, where the presence of immigrants has become politically and socially contentious.

What do these twenty-first century guest-worker programs look like? And how do they work? To explore these questions, we examine a set of guest-worker programs that have arisen in southern Spain, where strawberry production has expanded in recent decades. Strawberry harvesting is extremely labor-intensive and done exclusively by hand. With few resident workers willing to partake in such work, growers have recruited heavily from outside of Spain, from Eastern Europe and North Africa in particular. They have targeted mostly women with children. Growers not only perceive women as being a more obedient work-force, but they view women's more 'delicate' hands as being ideal for high-value food production. To the architects of the guest-worker programs, women's family responsibilities also tug them back to their country of origin once the harvest ends. Spanish and European Union (EU) officials have lauded these programs as an 'ethical' approach to migration because they resolve Spain's demand for seasonal labor while ensuring the return of workers, and the money they earn, to labor-exporting countries (Martin, 2008a). We shall argue that the real appeal of these programs is that they help keep foreign, low-wage, women workers 'in their place' – obedient, hard-working, and ultimately back in their country of origin.

### **Global Foods, Migrant Workers**

To understand the role that guest-worker programs play in managing labor migration, we must first consider restructuring in the agri-food industry. Since the second half of the twentieth century, there have been at least two major trends in agricultural production. The first trend is the globalization of agri-food production and distribution. Though a global agri-food system has existed since at least the sixteenth cen-

tury, economic and technological changes in the second half of the twentieth century made the global sourcing of food more extensive. Specifically, free trade agreements and advancements in long-distance transport and refrigeration gave agri-food firms the ability to supply global food chains year round (Watts and Goodman, 1997). The second trend is the flexibilization of labor. In a competitive global market-place, wherein profit margins are slim and consumer tastes are volatile, firms want flexibility in adjusting the size of their work-force, the wages paid to workers, and the conditions under which work is performed. To this end, many agri-food firms have mirrored strategies in the industrial sector by contracting out production (Little and Watts, 1994), hiring workers through temp agencies or on short-term contracts (Raynolds, 1994), and relying on women, migrants, and minorities to meet labor needs (Collins, 1993). Though flexible work arrangements can be advantageous to workers, they tend to result in less employment security and fewer labor protections (Kalleberg, 2000).

These trends in agri-food production have changed the landscape of rural communities in various ways. To begin, new crops and food industries have expanded into many communities, revitalizing rural and regional economies (Raynolds, 1994; Gouveia et al., 2005). Because labor market flexibility is so central to these new agri-food industries, new patterns of labor force participation have often cropped up alongside these industries (Rogaly, 2008; Preibisch, 2010). Migrant workers, for example, feature prominently in these industries because they can be paid less and/or hired and disbanded with relative ease. Such workers may not have documents to work and reside in these communities, resulting in a social layer of workers that are stripped of most labor and social rights. Social scientists have looked at how the recruitment of immigrant workers by agri-food employers has given rise to immigrant communities in non-traditional destinations (Goździak and Martin, 2005; Massey, 2008). These non-traditional immigrant destinations tend to feature weaker immigrant social networks, fewer ethnic-based services, and less adequate social services, which can strain community relations and immigrant well-being (Bump, 2005). Of course, not all migrant workers permanently settle in these destinations. In countries that have guest-worker programs, the push for flexibility has led many employers to hire temporary foreign workers, who live temporarily in host communities, returning home to their country at the end of their contract (Rogaly, 2008; Preibisch, 2010).

In addition to migrant workers, studies have identified the growing use of women workers in agri-food industries (Collins, 1993; Raynolds, 1994). Indeed, Standing (1999) argues that the growing preference for women workers and the rise in more precarious forms of work signal a 'feminization of labor' in industries worldwide. By putting a premium on cost-cutting competitiveness, economic restructuring has led to employer preferences for workers who are willing to take low-wage, insecure jobs (Standing, 1999, p. 585). These workers are most often women who have entered competitive labor markets to help sustain their families in the face of economic crisis and household poverty. The growing reliance on low-wage women workers has been well documented in studies of export manufacturing (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Lee, 1998; Salzinger, 2003) and agri-export production (Collins, 1993; Raynolds, 1994; Lee, 2010) in the global South. There is also research on the growing number of immigrant women workers in the global North (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001; Parreñas, 2001; Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002). Most of latter research focuses on immigrant women in female-dominated occupations like domestic work.

To date, few studies have analysed women migrant workers in the agri-food industry of the global North. One notable exception is Preibisch and Encalada (2010), who study the participation of Mexican women in Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program. Under the terms of this guest-worker program, employers are allowed to select their employees on the basis of nationality and sex (Preibisch and Encalada, 2010, p. 297). For the most part, employers in this program prefer men, with women constituting as little as 2% of the migrant work-force. To explain this preference, the authors point to long-held perceptions in Canada that farm-work is men's work. On the supply side, women are constrained by prevailing gender norms, which frame their outmigration as an act of bad mothering and a sign of sexual indiscretion. Thus, female migrants in this case are viewed as 'unusual participants' in seasonal labor migration (Preibisch and Encalada, 2010, p. 290).<sup>1</sup>

The Spanish case highlighted in this article reveals employer preferences for women migrant workers. And in this regard, the guest-worker programs coming out of southern Spanish may be viewed as constituting a flexible labor strategy *par excellence*. The workers, in this case, are migrant, seasonal, and female – flexible (read: vulnerable) in almost every respect. Moreover, and perhaps more interesting, these guest-worker programs are being touted as examples of 'ethical' migration (Gerson, 2007a) and a model that should be replicated in other countries considering long-term migration fixes (Márquez et al., 2009). If the Spanish case is being viewed as a model for twenty-first century migration, we should look closely at the features of these guest-worker programs and the migrant labor forces on which they rely. In the section that follows, we trace the rise of these programs and our methods for studying them in depth.

### **Return of the Guest Worker**

Countries in North America and Western Europe experimented with guest-worker programs during and after World War II in response to labor shortages (Martin, 2003; Plewa and Miller, 2005). Most of these programs ended by the mid-1970s as unemployment and opposition to guest-worker programs rose among native-born workers. By the 1990s, western countries began to experiment anew with circular migration programs. Having ended the Bracero program in 1964, for example, the United States established limited guest-worker programs like the H-1B program for skilled professionals and the H-2A program for agricultural workers (Martin, 2003). Guest-worker programs also sprang up in countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Spain (Martin, 2003, 2008b). In contrast to earlier guest-worker programs, which were structured as large-scale national programs, the newer programs tended to be small in scale and negotiated through bilateral agreements with individual labor-exporting countries.<sup>2</sup> Martin (2008a, p. 9) estimates that there were some 200 such agreements in the world by 2000.

As a country currently playing host to guest workers, Spain is something of a unique case. Historically, the country was a net *exporter* of migrants. Demographic and economic changes, however, turned the country into a net *importer* of migrants in the 1980s. During that decade, the country's birth-rate declined dramatically, leaving the country with one of the lowest fertility rates in the world. Also during the 1980s, Spain joined the EU and experienced a major economic boom that lasted throughout the 1990s (Martin, 2008a). These changes meant that Spain faced labor shortages in industries like construction and agriculture. Faced with expanding op-

portunities elsewhere in the economy, native-born workers all but abandoned these industries, leaving employers to look to immigrants to fill these jobs. The resulting growth in Spain's foreign-born population has been nothing short of spectacular. In the early 1980s, less than one percent of Spain's population was foreign born. By 2010, 12% of the country's population of 45 million was foreign born, the vast majority from Romania, Morocco, and Ecuador (*Migration News*, 2010).

Until 1985, Spain had an 'open door policy' toward immigrants, who were assumed to be in Spain only temporarily as they made their way northward into other parts of Europe (Plewa and Miller, 2005). Immigrants, for example, were not required to have a visa to enter the country.<sup>3</sup> By the mid-1980s, the growing demand for foreign workers and Spain's ascension into the EU changed the country's overall approach to migration. As the economy expanded, the country's undocumented immigrant population grew. Immigrants from Africa, for example, began arriving by small boats across the Strait of Gibraltar to work without permits. The question for Spanish authorities became how to balance the economic demand for foreign-born workers with the political need to control undocumented migration (Arango and Martin, 2003). In response, the country implemented its first modern immigration policy (*Ley de Extranjería*) in 1985. The law included fines, though no criminal penalties, for employers who knowingly hired undocumented immigrants. By 1993, Spain also had a system in place (*contingente* system) to grant temporary work visas to immigrants, though immigrants could apply while living in Spain (Plewa and Miller, 2005).

The piecemeal attempts by the Spanish government to regulate the influx of foreign-born workers were not exactly successful. Immigrant workers regularly overstayed their work visas, creating a layer of Spanish society that had no rights. In addition, undocumented immigrants were regularly legalized, creating a system of 'hidden regularization' (Plewa and Miller, 2005; Márquez et al., 2009). Facing mounting pressure from the EU and its own citizens, the Spanish government passed a new immigration law in 2000 (*Ley de Extranjería LO 8/2000*). Although this law gave documented immigrants similar rights and freedoms as Spanish citizens, the law ended mass legalizations and required that foreign workers obtain temporary work permits *before* entering the country (Arango and Martin, 2003; Plewa and Miller, 2005). As part of this immigration overhaul, the Spanish government signed bilateral migration agreements with countries who agreed to assist in controlling undocumented migration to Spain. In exchange, workers from these countries received preference in obtaining temporary work visas (Plewa and Miller, 2005, p. 73). Those countries with which Spain signed agreements included: Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Colombia, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, and Morocco (Márquez et al., 2009).<sup>4</sup>

In this article, we consider one Spanish province's experience with temporary migrant workers. The province of Huelva is located along the coast in southern Spain and is dominated by agriculture, the cultivation of strawberries in particular. The vast majority of guest-worker contracts issued each year by Spain are for work in Huelva, making this province a good case of guest-worker migration. In addition, a number of guest-worker pilot projects have been developed by officials in Cartaya, a locality in the Huelva province that produces much of the strawberries that Huelva exports. Given the expansion of the strawberry industry, Cartaya has seen a dramatic influx of foreign-born workers. By 2009, its population of 18000 was over 17% foreign born (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2009). The guest-worker experi-

ments that Cartaya initiated have catapulted it into the international limelight due to their apparent success. One project receiving much attention targets women with dependent children in Morocco. The idea behind the program is that women will be more likely to return to their country of origin at the end of their contract if they have children at home waiting for them. In the remainder of this article, we consider these experiences and experiments with guest-worker migration. We are particularly interested in how particular immigrant workers have been constructed as ideal guest workers.

To explore the Huelva case, we draw on secondary literature and field-work on migrant workers in Spain's strawberry industry. Most of the academic literature on the subject has been limited to the fields of economics and political science, though the subject has received some sociological attention by academics in Spain. To investigate some of our more sociological questions, we conducted preliminary field work in Morocco and Spain. In 2008, the second author traveled to Morocco to study development initiatives in a rural Berber village in the Ouarzazate Province of southern Morocco. Historically, the village has been characterized by high rates of male outmigration and female subsistence farming. Women's paid work has been minimal, typically involving the selling of eggs or bread. But the women became a target of recruitment for Spain's strawberry industry in the years preceding the second author's field-work. Over the course of three months, the second author conducted some 30 interviews with women in the village about various development initiatives in the area. Of these women, six were considering applying for Cartaya's guest-worker program and one woman had already participated in the program. The second author explored how the women in the village perceived this opportunity, why the women considered applying to the program, and what the experience was like for the woman who participated.

In 2011, the first three authors followed up on this information by conducting qualitative research in Cartaya. During the strawberry harvest, they spent 10 days in Cartaya interviewing migrant workers, strawberry employers, and local officials. The first author speaks Spanish and acted as translator for interviews with Spanish employers and officials. The second author speaks Moroccan Arabic and acted as translator for interviews with migrant workers. In total, they conducted interviews with eight migrant women workers from Morocco. Though this was a relatively small number, the interviews were intensive and involved multiple visits to the women's residences. They also conducted structured interviews with three trade union officials, two industry representatives, two city officials, and two academics that have studied the case. One of the city officials was the mayor of Cartaya, Juan Millán Jaldón, who was the primary architect of the guest-worker programs. They supplemented these interviews with field observations of three migrant worker houses, a large strawberry farm, a strawberry co-operative, and community life in Cartaya. In the sections that follow, we report the major findings from this research.

### **Modeling Circular Migration**

The strawberry industry serves as a prime example of agro-restructuring in Spain and the increased reliance on migrant workers, guest workers in particular. Since the 1960s, coastal land in Spain's southern province of Huelva has been taken up in the production of strawberries, otherwise known as 'red gold' (Márquez et al., 2009) (see Figure 1). Such production expanded markedly after 1986 when Spain joined



**Figure 1.** Map of Spain.

the EU (*Rural Migration News*, 2008). By 2008, Spain was producing some 300 000 tons of strawberries per year, most of which was exported to Germany, the United Kingdom, and France (Martin, 2008a, p. 19). Today, Spain is the leading exporter of strawberries, producing almost 10% of the world's strawberries (*Rural Migration News*, 2010). Though some aspects of strawberry production have been mechanized, the process of planting and picking is still done primarily by hand.

Historically, strawberry production in Huelva was dominated by family farms and family labor. This changed when Spain joined the EU. The larger Spanish economy was flourishing and Spaniards were eager to take advantage of other, more lucrative job opportunities. Between 1985 and 2005, the percentage of the Spanish workforce employed in agriculture declined from 16% to 5% (Martin, 2008a, p. 17). As a result, export agriculture in Huelva, which was expanding rapidly, became a 'magnet for migrants' (Martin, 2008a, p. 17). In our interview with Mercedes Gordo, a historian at the University of Huelva, Gordo emphasized that it was not simply a labor shortage that created a demand for migrant workers. It was a shortage of *flexible* workers – those willing to take precarious, low-wage, and labor-intensive jobs in agriculture. Indeed, as Rogaly (2008) explains, there has been a concentration of power among global retailers (e.g. Walmart), who have been able to appropriate a greater share of the value of fresh produce. Faced with lower profit margins, growers have sought out workers who are willing to work under intense working conditions, at low wages, and for whatever period of time is demanded of them (Preibisch, 2010). These are often immigrant workers (Rogaly, 2008).

As the previous section noted, Spain first admitted temporary foreign workers in 1993 under an earlier *contingente* system. Under this system, employers who could not find enough Spanish workers could request temporary foreign workers. Immigrants, both documented and undocumented, could apply for temporary work permits while living in Spain (Plewa, 2009). Between 1997 and 2000, some 25 000 permits were issued annually for the Huelva Province alone (Plewa, 2009). Moroccan immigrants, who had become a sizable undocumented population in Spain by this time, obtained the vast majority of these permits (Plewa and Miller, 2005).<sup>5</sup> As with most foreign workers who obtained such permits, Moroccans rarely returned

to their country of origin at the end of their contract. Instead, they resettled into Spain as undocumented immigrants. It was, in part, the growing size of this undocumented population that prompted the Spanish government to implement a new system of temporary work visas. Beginning in 2001, those workers whose countries had signed bilateral agreements with Spain were given preference in obtaining temporary work visas. By signing such agreements, these countries agreed to assist Spain in controlling undocumented migration and to help Spain recruit temporary workers. From this point on, the only legal route for immigrants to work and reside in Spain was to obtain a temporary work contract while in their country of origin. These contracts are referred to as 'contracts in origin' because they are negotiated in the migrant's home country.

The first wave of guest workers to arrive in Huelva in 2001 under this new temporary work program included 540 Polish workers and 198 Moroccan workers (see Table 1) (Plewa, 2009, p. 226). In the years that followed, the use of guest workers expanded dramatically, both in terms of sheer numbers and in terms of the sending countries involved. Between 2006 and 2008, some 30 000 guest workers were contracted annually. In addition to Poland and Morocco, they came from such countries as Romania, Bulgaria, Ecuador, and Colombia (Plewa, 2009, p. 226). Workers typically come on six-to-nine month contracts to work during the strawberry harvest, which begins in February (*Rural Migration News*, 2010). Before recruiting temporary foreign workers, strawberry growers must first certify that they cannot find enough Spanish, EU, or legally resident foreign workers to fill their labor needs and they must do so some 105 days before the expected start date (Martin, 2008a, p. 19). Five employer organizations have sprung up in Huelva to assist growers in this certification process: Freshuelva, ASAJA, APCA, COAG and UPA-CORA (Martin, 2008a; Plewa, 2009). Individual employers submit their request for guest workers to one of these organizations, which then submit employer requests to a Labor Migration Taskforce, which certifies the labor shortage and approves the employer requests (Plewa, 2009). These requests must be approved a second time at the national level. Typically, the government approves fewer requests than employers submit (Plewa and Miller, 2005).

Though the certification process is meant to ensure that a labor shortage actually exists, there has been much controversy around the process.<sup>6</sup> One strawberry grower we interviewed indicated that the process of certification was more symbolic than anything. Even in the present economic crisis, he cannot find resident workers to work the strawberry harvest. In 2010, the Spanish government gave him a list of 30 names registered with the unemployment office. He was required to call these

**Table 1.** Huelva's temporary foreign workers by country of origin, 2001–2008.

Country	2000– 2001	2001– 2002	2002– 2003	2003– 2004	2004– 2005	2005– 2006	2006– 2007	2007– 2008
Bulgaria	0	0	0	508	604	941	2,577	4,000
Colombia	0	149	177	105	82	8	2	0
Ecuador	0	0	15	8	64	26	12	0
Morocco	198	336	95	635	1,094	2,330	1,946	12 000
Poland	540	4,954	7,535	8,811	7,361	9,796	-	3,500
Romania	0	970	4,178	10 933	13 186	19 153	26 278	11 000
Ukraine	0	0	0	0	0	0	724	4,000
Total	738	6,409	12 000	21 000	22 391	32 254	31 539	34 500

Source: Plewa, 2009.

names before his requests for temporary foreign workers would be approved. Out of 30, only three showed up to work. And in all three cases, the individuals worked for a month before quitting. By law, agricultural workers must work 35 days to qualify for 180 days of unemployment benefits. According to this and other employers (Plewa, 2009), many resident workers simply work the 35-day minimum to qualify for unemployment.

Union representatives are skeptical of these claims (Plewa and Miller, 2005). In an interview with representatives from one of Spain's major trade unions, for example, representatives insisted that there are plenty of resident workers who would take these jobs. It is difficult to assess the validity of either claim, but it is clear that one of the incentives of contracting guest workers, at least where employers are concerned, is that the contract ties guest workers to a specific employer for an established period of time (usually six to nine months). In short, the guest worker, unlike the Spanish, EU, or legally resident foreign worker, cannot leave to seek employment elsewhere (for a similar finding in Britain's horticultural industry, see Rogaly, 2008).

Once certified to import guest workers, growers rely on the five business organizations to recruit workers. These organizations work with labor recruiting offices in labor-exporting countries (Martin, 2008a; Plewa, 2009). Job applicants must fill out a questionnaire, provide medical and criminal records, and complete an extensive interview about their work experience, family structure, and future plans. After selection, guest workers are issued personal identification numbers by the Spanish Ministry of the Interior, which authorizes them to obtain temporary work visas (Martin, 2008a, p. 19). As part of the bilateral agreements, growers must supply housing that conforms to state regulations, organize transportation to and from Spain, and pay for half of the worker's transportation costs (Márquez et al., 2009). While they are under contract, guest workers are entitled to most labor and social rights, including a minimum wage, free health care and medical aid, and social security benefits (Plewa and Miller, 2005, pp. 76–77). Workers who complete a harvesting cycle, return to their country of origin, and check in with a Spanish consulate are given hiring preference in subsequent years. This hiring preference is the primary incentive for workers to return home at the end of their labor contract. Guest workers who complete at least three years of fulfilling their contracts, including the stipulation that they return home, may apply for permanent residency. These applications are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Huelva's wholesale adoption of these reforms and the sheer volume of temporary foreign workers that it contracts have prompted Spanish and EU officials to watch Huelva's experience with guest-worker migration closely. Their overall assessment is that it has been a resounding success, so successful that, in 2007, the European Commission Vice President began encouraging other countries to adopt the 'Huelva model' (Gerson, 2007a; Márquez et al., 2009). The criteria such officials are using to deem the model a success are not altogether clear. But one area in which the Huelva model is arguably successful is in providing a semblance of control over the migration 'problem'. In an era of agro-industrial restructuring, immigrant workers are touching down in new destinations where there is a demand for flexible, low-wage labor. Whether it be rural Virginia (Bump, 2005) or rural Greece (Kasimis, 2005), there has been a 'settling out' of immigrants into rural places. This trend puts pressure on the social service infrastructure of rural communities and sparks anxiety among local residents, who fear an increase in crime, economic competition, and a dilution of core community values and identity (Gozdziak and Martin, 2005). Huel-

va's guest-worker program resolves some of this pressure and anxiety by regulating the employment and working conditions of migrants and by ensuring that migrant workers return home.

Strawberry growers and government officials declared in interviews that immigrants were well received in Huelva. There were no community tensions, they insisted, and no xenophobic response to the seasonal influx of migrant workers. Because we did not survey a cross-section of Huelva communities, we cannot say whether this is the case. But assuming this is true, it could be that the guest-worker programs helped to ease tensions that had been brewing as a result of a lax migration policy and a large population of undocumented workers. Indeed, it was the growing issue over undocumented migration that prompted the Spanish government to overhaul its migration policy and to tackle its temporary foreign-worker program.

Under the new system, immigrants wishing to work in Spain must obtain a temporary work contract in their home country and they must leave at the end of their contract. Though guest workers are guaranteed considerable labor and social rights under this system, the terms of these contracts help keep foreign workers in low-status jobs, in one place of employment, and, ultimately, in their country of origin. In a sense, the new approach to guest-worker migration helps ease the tensions wrought by undocumented migration by keeping immigrants 'in their place'. Of course, the system is not perfect. Martin (2008a, p. 18) estimates that some 40% of guest workers fail to return to their country of origin under this system. Thus, Spanish officials and employers have had to use other tools to ensure that foreign workers fall in line with the dictates of the new guest-worker model.

### Constructing Temporary Workers

The bilateral labor agreements that serve as the centre-piece of Spain's experiment with guest workers tend to be with labor-exporting countries with which Spain has some geographic, economic, or political relationship. For example, Spain's colonial history with Latin America helps explain the agreements with countries like Ecuador. Likewise, Spain's inclusion in the EU and the ties to this regional block among Eastern European countries help explain the agreements with countries like Romania. Geographic proximity to and historical migration streams from countries like Morocco help explain agreements with particular African countries. After the 2000 immigration law was passed, and after various bilateral agreements had been signed, Huelva's strawberry growers had a choice of countries in which to recruit strawberry workers. Though they would eventually contract a small pool of workers from Ecuador and Colombia, most growers were never enthusiastic about contracting from Latin America due to the high transportation costs involved (*Rural Migration News*, 2008; Márquez et al., 2009). Instead, they turned initially to workers in Morocco and Poland.

Morocco was not at all an unusual country from which to recruit workers. After all, Moroccan workers had long been contracted to work the strawberry harvest under the earlier *contingente* system. But Spain had a history of strained diplomatic ties with Morocco. Moreover, the much-publicized murder of a Spanish woman by a Moroccan national in a neighboring province had resulted in ethnic tension (Plewa and Miller, 2005). Thus, Huelva concentrated most of its recruitment efforts in Poland. According to Mercedes Gordo, who has studied the recruitment of Polish guest workers extensively, Spain had a special interest in Poland. Poland's looming ascen-

sion into the EU signaled the potential for new consumer and investment markets. Thus, Spain had an interest in furthering diplomatic ties with the up-and-coming EU member. Poland, of course, had its own interests in negotiating the agreement. With high rates of unemployment, it was interested in job opportunities abroad for Polish workers. Whatever the case, the decision to concentrate recruitment in Poland caused more than a little resentment among resident Moroccan workers, who had enjoyed most of the temporary work visas up until this time (Plewa, 2009).

Polish guest workers remained the preferred labor source in Huelva until 2004. Under the terms of the guest-worker program, migrants who return home at the end of their employment contract are given preference for hiring the following year. Thus, many of the guest workers in the early 2000s were Polish 'repeaters'. But it is also the case that the number of guest workers expanded dramatically and growers continued to bring in more Polish workers. Indeed, the number of Polish guest workers contracted in Huelva rose from 540 in 2001 to 8,811 in 2004 (Plewa, 2009, p. 226). Gordo attributes the preference for Polish workers to the fact that employers were prone to stick with workers with whom they were familiar. In 2004, however, Poland was admitted into the EU. As members of the EU, Polish citizens have full labor mobility, meaning that they may reside and work in any EU member state. Poland's ascension into the EU signaled a decline in Polish guest workers for at least two reasons. First, the infusion of EU dollars into Poland meant a more dynamic Polish economy that could retain at least some of its work-force. Second, the ability to work anywhere in the EU compelled many Polish workers to migrate elsewhere in Europe where opportunities were more lucrative (Plewa, 2009). Anticipating the departure of Polish workers, Huelva had begun looking to Romania to fill a greater share of its guest-worker contracts in 2002. Thus, by 2004, the number of Romanian guest workers (10933) had surpassed the number of Polish guest workers (8,811) (see Table 1) (Plewa, 2009, p. 226). Until 2007, Romanian workers constituted the largest contingent of temporary foreign workers in Huelva.

Like Polish workers in 2004, many Romanian workers left the strawberry fields for more lucrative jobs once Romania became a member of the EU in 2007 (Martin, 2008a). Though many Polish and Romanian workers continue to work as seasonal laborers in the strawberry industry, their numbers are far lower. Faced with another shortage of temporary foreign workers, Huelva decided to grant an increasing number of seasonal contracts to Moroccans workers. In 2008, following Romania's ascension into the EU, 12000 of the 34500 contracted workers in Huelva were from Morocco (35%), up from 635 (3%) in 2004 (see Table 1) (Plewa, 2009, p. 226). Again, Moroccan workers have long been a major source of low-wage labor in Spain and in Europe more generally. Indeed, since gaining its independence from France in 1956, Morocco has become one of the world's top labor-exporting countries (Haas, 2007). But as immigration policies tightened in Europe throughout the 1980s, Moroccan migrants began to remain in Europe permanently rather than attempt a more circular pattern of migration. As a result, circular migration rates among Moroccans are among the lowest of all immigrant groups in Europe (Haas, 2007). This has given Moroccan workers something of a bad reputation as guest workers. According to Mercedes Gordo, Spain turned to Morocco as a last resort after facing a shortage of Eastern European guest workers.

Whether the racial and cultural features of the Moroccan population exacerbated the poor reputation of Moroccan immigrants is difficult to say. Moroccan immigrants are overwhelmingly Muslim and have physical features that tend to mark

them as North African. Walking through the heart of Cartaya, it is indeed easy to distinguish Moroccan from Spanish, especially where the women are concerned. Moroccan women typically wear ankle length skirts and head scarves. They rarely sit in cafes and are more likely to congregate in small groups on the plaza. The language differences between them and the Spanish population cement this segregation, such that Moroccan women tend to live on the fringes of Spanish society. Given that Moroccan men historically dominated Moroccan migration to Spain and have been in Spain longer, Moroccan men tend to be a bit more integrated. They know more Spanish, they interact more socially with Spaniards, and they blend in more in terms of dress and appearance. But by our observations, there were no significant numbers of Moroccan men at cafés, which would be customary in Morocco. And it is clear that even Moroccan men tend to restrict themselves to Moroccan-dominated social spaces such as Moroccan shops.

The Spanish growers and officials we interviewed insisted that there were no racial or cultural tensions between the Spanish and Moroccan populations. One grower admitted that he was nervous when recruiters first started sending him Moroccan workers. He was unfamiliar with the culture, he explained, and he was accustomed to Eastern European workers at that point. But once they started working, he was impressed with their work ethic. As another grower explained to a reporter for the *Christian Science Monitor*: 'Any business owner wants people who will get up early, work all day, that don't smoke, don't drink, don't go to the discotheque' (Gerson, 2007b). One of the growers interviewed continues to employ Polish and Romanian workers on a seasonal basis. But he also asks for Moroccan guest workers each year. Unlike the Polish and Romanian workers, the Moroccan workers do not have labor mobility. Their contracts are tied to a specific employer. Thus, the grower never has to worry about them leaving to work on another farm, for another industry, or in another country. As for any tensions that the seasonal presence of Moroccan workers might produce in the surrounding communities, they are minimized by housing most guest workers outside the towns and near the strawberry fields.

From the history of Huelva's guest-worker program, it appears that Spanish growers and officials are constantly chasing a new labor pool to meet the seasonal demand for workers. Just when they secure one pool of workers (e.g. Polish workers), the supply dries up and they must look elsewhere (e.g. Romania and Morocco). Though Morocco has no plans to enter the EU, Spain is not settling on Morocco as its sole source of guest workers. In recent years, Spain has conducted pilot guest-worker programs with countries like Senegal, the Philippines, and the Ukraine. It has also considered programs with Mali and Moldova.<sup>7</sup> However arduous this constant searching for guest workers might be, there is some logic to constructing a pool of diverse guest workers. Sachs and Alston (2010) note that agricultural employers rely on hiring a diverse work-force as a way to stoke ethnic tension and discipline workers. Under the terms of Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, for example, employers are permitted to pick the social characteristics (i.e. the gender, race, and ethnicity) of guest workers. Using racial essentialisms (e.g. Jamaicans are stronger), employers segment migrant workers into different jobs. This practice allows them to discipline workers by encouraging ethnic competition, preventing inter-ethnic socializing, and reminding workers of their 'disposability' (Preibisch and Encalada, 2010, pp. 304–306).

Interviews with strawberry growers and migrant workers indicated that Polish, Romanian, and Moroccan workers are not channeled into different positions. And

observations of strawberry harvesting confirmed this. In addition to working side by side, migrant workers from different countries typically live together in dormitories, houses, or trailers. Inter-ethnic relations appeared to be relatively co-operative. Even so, the presence of migrant workers from other countries serves as a constant reminder to migrant workers that theirs is not the only country participating in the program. At any moment, another bilateral agreement might be signed and another nationality might come to dominate the strawberry harvest. The Moroccan migrants interviewed, for example, were concerned about their reputation as Moroccan workers. They wanted to be known as hard workers and reliable migrants. Though we cannot say whether it is a conscious strategy on the part of Spain, recruiting guest workers from different countries has the effect of reminding guest workers of their replaceability and ensuring that guest workers will work hard to protect their future work prospects. In their efforts to keep workers compliant and otherwise 'in their place', Spanish officials and employers have at least one other tool in their arsenal, namely the use of a feminized work-force. To this final, critical ingredient in Huelva's model of migration we now turn.

### Managing Migrant Mothers

From the beginning, the guest-worker agreements developed in southern Spain targeted women migrants. When employers first started recruiting from Poland, for example, they expressed a preference for women workers, though this was not a requirement. And when Spain and Senegal signed a bilateral labor agreement in 2007, strawberry growers requested women in particular (Martin, 2008a, p. 20). Given this preference for women workers, well over 95% of the guest workers recruited to Huelva have been women (Márquez et al., 2009). Growers justify their preference for women with the argument that strawberries are delicate produce, requiring 'delicate' hands for harvesting (Márquez et al., 2009). These arguments echo justifications for the predominance of women in global assembly plants, where women's 'nimble' fingers and 'agreeable' disposition supposedly make them well suited for routine assembly work (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Lee, 1998). In reality, the preference for women is due primarily to women's lower wages and weaker attachment to labor markets, which make them an ideal source of cheap, flexible labor (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Lee, 1998). Indeed, it was not until export agriculture expanded and growers came to rely on immigrant workers that the area's agricultural work-force became feminized. Before this time, farm-workers were predominantly men.

According to Mercedes Gordo, the first wave of women Polish guest workers were mostly between the ages of 18 and 25. They tended to be single and childless. As such, they had a reputation for partying, mingling with men, and showing up late for work. Thus, between 2002 and 2003, the profile of the woman guest worker began to change. As Huelva expanded its recruitment into other countries in Eastern Europe (e.g. Romania and Bulgaria), growers expressed a preference for women a bit older (25–30) who were married with children.<sup>8</sup> Of the temporary work visas issued in Romania in the 2000s, for example, over half were to women between the ages of 26 and 55, suggesting a major target was women who were married with children (Bleahu, 2004). Whether these older women were, in fact, more productive as workers, we cannot say. But it is clear that employers began to have a particular idea of the most appropriate women workers for the strawberry harvest, namely

women who would focus on work and limit their movements to the strawberry fields and residential camp.

Married women with children were construed as the ideal strawberry worker in at least one other respect, namely that they would return to their families in their country of origin at the end of their employment contract (Márquez et al., 2009). According to Mercedes Gordo, the strawberry growers are less concerned about the possibility that guest workers will not return to their country of origin. They are solely interested in workers that will come in on short-term labor contracts and work hard for the duration of the contract. It was the Spanish government that was most interested in ensuring that guest workers returned home at the conclusion of their contract because it was the Spanish government that was concerned with controlling undocumented migration. To officials, mothers were ideal migrants. They had family responsibilities, which ensured both their hard work under contract and their return home to their country of origin. Here, Spanish officials were drawing on particular notions of privatized motherhood, which assume that women are tied to family responsibilities and emotionally attached to children such that they would be unlikely to risk permanent or long-term separation from home and hearth (for more on the notion of privatized motherhood, see Nakano Glenn et al., 1993).

The targeting of women with children comes into sharp focus when we consider the case of Morocco. In 2004, the city of Cartaya received a \$1.6 million grant from the EU-sponsoring agency AENEAS to develop a circular migration program between Spain and Morocco that had 'co-development' features (Gerson, 2007b; Martin, 2008a). 'Co-development' features refer to those program features that are aimed at enhancing economic development in the migrant's country of origin and ensuring the migrant's return to their country of origin (Martin, 2008a). In its first two years, the program was a colossal failure; fewer than half of the Moroccan guest workers returned to Morocco at the end of the work contract (Martin, 2008a, p. 20). The problem of non-return prompted an important change in the program, namely *only* mothers under 40 with children in Morocco could participate (Gerson, 2007b; Martin, 2008a).<sup>9</sup> It is a little unclear who came up with this strategy, though at least one Huelva official and all three union representatives we interviewed insisted that it was the Moroccan government. Regardless, some 26 000 Moroccan mothers applied for the program and 5,500 were selected in 2007. As one strawberry grower remarked 'We are looking for women with family responsibilities, so that when they finish their work and collect their money they will want to go back to see their family, their children' (Gerson, 2007b).

For their part, the migrant women interviewed understood clearly why they were being targeted as guest workers. They had heard that the guest-worker program had been open to all Moroccans, but that Moroccans had not been returning, thus the requirement that the workers be mothers. In order to submit an application, the women were required to show documents indicating the ages of their children. The migrant women themselves reinforced the case for recruiting migrant mothers. Men, they argued, sit around too much and are more likely to complain, whereas women, and mothers in particular, are more hard-working and less likely to talk back to the boss. Though they were all mothers, the women were an otherwise diverse group. Their ages ranged from 26 to 42. About half were married and half were divorced. The number of children they had ranged from one to eight, though five of the eight women had only one to two kids. The majority of the women was from rural areas and had worked in agriculture before participating in Spain's strawberry harvest,

thought at least two were from towns. Almost all of the women left their children in the care of their parents while they traveled to Spain to work. And most were using the money to build houses in Morocco.

When asked whether they had ever considered not returning to Morocco at the end of their employment contract, the women insisted that they had no incentive to do so. Though they knew of other Moroccan workers that had chosen not to return, these workers ended up working as undocumented workers for less than minimum wage. The women had seen that by returning, they would be given preference for rehiring the following year. And by having temporary work permits, they would earn the minimum wage and enjoy basic labor rights. Though the women mentioned missing their children, especially since most of these women were on nine month contracts and had been coming to Spain for well over three years, it was not their family responsibilities that convinced them to return. Rather, it was the fragile promise that they would be able to earn money each year in Spain. Regardless of the mechanism making these women compliant guest workers, the targeting of women with children appears to be resolving the issue of non-return. In 2007, more than 90% of the workers returned to Morocco at the end of their contract. The approach of targeting migrant mothers has been considered a resounding success and an example of 'ethical migration' by Cartaya's mayor, Juan Millán (Gerson, 2007b).

The centrality of motherhood to notions of the ideal worker in this case is noteworthy. Though the literature had examined how women have been constructed as an ideal global work-force, few studies have found mothers to be a target of global labor recruitment. Certainly, motherhood has figured prominently in narratives of women's international migration. But in most cases, it has been constructed as an *obstacle* to women's migration. Women are expected to take care of households and families, remaining literally in the home to do so. Their departure to work outside the home or, worse yet, outside the country, is taken as a transgression of traditional gender norms and the ideal of privatized mothering. Thus, employers, the state, and women themselves must go to great lengths to facilitate women's labor mobility and construct their work in gender-appropriate and respectable ways (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001; Parreñas, 2001). The discourses that endorse women's work and outmigration – what Oishi (2005) refers to as social legitimacy – typically emerge as countries are brought into the fold of the global economy and experience a feminization of labor. Social legitimacy is an important determinant of large-scale female outmigration (Oishi, 2005).

It is also the case that motherhood and the cultural ideals thereof can help discipline a feminized work-force. In Lee's (1998) analysis of factory production in China, one factory exploited women's roles as wives and mothers to increase managerial control. Referring to the 'matron workers' employed in the plant, Lee (1998, p. 158) notes that 'their children's well-being and needs anchored women in a constrained working mother's life, and their children's future justified the hardships it brought'. Preibisch and Encalada (2010) find a similar situation among the Mexican women recruited to work as guest workers in Canada: 'Women frequently spoke of their migration as a sacrifice that could create alternative futures for their children by providing the education they never had' (2010, p. 300). In the case of Moroccan migrant mothers in Spain, the possibility of returning each year to earn money for their families was enough to convince them to comply with the labor-intensive work regime and the conditions of the labor contract. Thus, in this case and others, women's ties to families and children may help discipline them into being obedient migrant

workers. And motherhood may be construed by employers and state officials as a basis for, rather than an obstacle to global labor recruitment.

## Conclusion

In Sassen's (1998) view, globalization makes national borders economically *meaningless* but politically *meaningful*.<sup>10</sup> Goods, money, and people move across national borders in greater numbers, but political life remains organized around national political bodies, borders, and identities. Labor mobility in particular inspires anxiety in host societies about labor competition, ethnic diversity, and increased crime. Against the real or imagined threat of immigrants, national constituencies push for a tightening of 'porous' borders and protection from the 'flood' of immigrants from the global South (Sassen, 1998; Parreñas, 2001). This is especially true in the rural communities that are now the destination for a new generation of migrant workers. The contradictory impulses of globalization – to transcend and reinforce borders – often lead to symbolic gestures by the state to control and/or restrict immigration. In the United States, for example, law-makers attempt to placate nationalist sentiments by militarizing borders, while turning a blind eye to the rampant use and abuse of immigrant workers (Massey, 2003).

A more comprehensive solution to the immigration 'problem', according to Massey (2003) and others (Castles, 2006; Martin, 2008a), is a guest-worker approach that would accommodate the needs of businesses searching for low-wage workers, communities searching for secured borders, and migrants searching for a livelihood. Spain's guest-worker program offers a migration model that fits somewhere between closed militarized borders and open labor mobility. As a migration alternative, it has been watched closely by policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic. By restricting immigrant entry to these guest-worker programs, Spain has attempted to control its undocumented population and ease the social anxieties that undocumented migration begets. In some respects, this model is quite successful. Migrants have gained access to job opportunities abroad and they have sent money back home to help support families. Spanish growers, in turn, have enjoyed a steady supply of workers and Spanish officials have managed to ensure a good portion of these workers return home. But we have argued that the Huelva experience is successful in at least one other respect, namely in keeping migrant workers 'in their place'. By this, we mean that under the Huelva model, migrant workers are restricted to particular employers and to low-status jobs that resident workers reject; they are compelled to work hard through the threat of their replacement by migrants of other nationalities; and they are encouraged to return home with the promise that they will receive another opportunity to earn money for their family. Thus, at the end of the employment contract, migrants go back to their country of origin, workers retreat as a reserve army of labor, and women disappear back into the home.

To the extent that the Huelva model institutionalizes a temporary, insecure form of work and harnesses a predominantly female labor force, it represents the feminization of labor in the starkest of ways. Though it is clear that most temporary migration programs draw explicitly on gender constructs (Martin, 2003), very few studies have examined temporary labor migration management through a gender lens. For example, in Basok's (2000) otherwise superb comparison of the US Bracero program and Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Workers' Program, the gender of the worker is neither a key variable, nor a key mechanism through which states manage tempo-

rary migration and return. Likewise, Plewa's work on European guest-worker programs does not address the gendered nature of these programs (Plewa and Miller, 2005; Plewa, 2009). As we have shown with respect to the guest-worker agreements coming out of southern Spain, essentialist ideas about women's abilities and responsibilities help ensure that migrants will not stay in Spain and will not challenge low wages and bad working conditions. Gender, in this case, is crucial to how employers harness and discipline a temporary, migrant work-force. And motherhood, in particular, has become a basis for labor recruitment and control. It would be interesting to see if women migrants redefine motherhood over time and/or use it as a basis for protesting the decline in temporary work contracts and/or working conditions.

With the global recession, Spain's economy has slowed. In 2010, the unemployment rate was almost 19%, the highest in the EU (*Migration News*, 2010). Thus, in 2011, only 5,000 Moroccan women were contracted as guest workers and many of the migrant women interviewed complained of a lack of work. It is clear that Spain's current economic crisis has caused a decrease in the hiring of migrant workers. Even so, Spanish growers insisted that resident workers – even unemployed resident workers – would not take these jobs and that they would have to continue importing guest workers to sustain the agro-export industry. The mayor of Cartaya, Juan Millán, predicted that as soon as the economy picked back up, the numbers of guest workers would rebound. He also pointed to the looming fertility crisis in Europe and in Spain in particular, which will create a labor shortage regardless of the state of the economy. At a fertility rate that is below replacement, Spain will have to accept immigrant workers in some form or fashion. All the more reason, he argued, to promote a migration model that is not so much about keeping migrant workers out, as it is about (to use our own words) keeping them 'in their place'.

## Notes

1. This is not to say that Canadian employers do not express preferences for women migrants in certain instances. For tasks like packing fruit and cutting flowers, women are seen by employers as having 'a finer, lighter touch' and more patience (Preibisch and Encalada, 2010, p. 302).
2. According to Martin (2003), twenty-first century guest-worker programs also have more goals and objectives. Their purpose is not simply to fix temporary labor shortages, but to reduce illegal migration in labor-importing countries and to encourage development in labor-exporting countries.
3. This policy changed in 1991, when Moroccans were required to have a visa to enter the country (Arango and Martin, 2003). One year later, Spain imposed a visa requirement on individuals from Latin America, as well.
4. More recently, Senegal has been added to this list. Note that bilateral migration agreements with Poland, Bulgaria, and Romania are no longer necessary since these countries are now part of the EU. As EU citizens, individuals from these countries may enter and exit Spain without restriction.
5. The majority of these immigrants were men, who tended to dominate Moroccan migration to Spain (Haas, 2009, p. 4).
6. See Ruhs and Anderson (2010) for an in-depth discussion of how labor shortages are defined and tackled through immigration policies.
7. This information was provided by the Mayor of Cartaya, Juan Millán, and Piotr Plewa, a Polish scholar who has studied this issue extensively.
8. There was also some indication that recruiters started targeting women from rural areas who had experience with agriculture. For example, the first wave of Polish women who arrived in Spain as guest workers tended to be from the industrialized western part of the country. Beginning in 2002, recruiters moved to the eastern part of the country, which is more agricultural.
9. We do not have figures for the composition of the Moroccan guest work-force before this time. As such, we cannot say what this guest work-force looked like previously in terms of gender, marital status, and family composition. We can only say that after this point, only women with children were targeted.

10. In using the term 'globalization', we recognize that this is contested concept in the social science literature. Our purpose in using the term is merely to showcase the argument made by Sassen (1998) that global labor mobility invokes contradictory responses. Since Sassen uses the term, we do so too.

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## **Labor Recruitment and Immigration in the Eastern North Carolina Food Industry**

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**Abstract.** The food industry has been responsible for much of the immigration into North Carolina, with fruit and vegetable agriculture and factories for processing poultry, pickles, pork, and seafood central to the economies of the state's eastern coastal corridor. Different sectors of the food industry, however, influence communities of the region differently and have varied influences on the communities from which immigrants come. This article compares three branches of North Carolina's food industry – 1. poultry, pickle, and pork producers; 2. seafood producers; and 3. fresh fruit and vegetable producers – in terms of their labor recruitment methods and how those methods have influenced receiving and sending communities. It concludes with a brief consideration of the relationship between immigrants and new food movements oriented toward eating healthier, more locally, and more organically.

### **Introduction**

In 1898, in New Bern, North Carolina, a pharmacist named Caleb Bradham mixed together sugar, carbonated water, and a handful of secret flavorings and ingredients, creating a soft drink he called Pepsi. The drink was meant to please the palate while lifting the spirits and curing indigestion. Caleb's vision was to combine foods and remedies together in such a way that pharmaceuticals would become relegated to the treatment of exceptional illnesses. Yet Pepsi caught on as a beverage more than a remedy, and Caleb's vision got lost in its success. His original bottling plant became two, then three, then dozens across the South and North-east, eventually becoming the keystone product of a food and beverage empire that today boasts over \$11 billion in food sales per year and spends over a billion on advertising in the United States (Nestle, 2001). PepsiCo is but one of two leading world food companies founded in North Carolina and one of three with strong ties to rural North Carolina products. RJR/Nabisco and Altria (formerly Philip Morris) – both founded on North Carolina and Virginia tobacco – have strong historical ties to the state and

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have joined other large food companies in setting up manufacturing centers in the state, underscoring the importance of the political and moral economies of food production across the region (Griffith, 2009).

Eastern North Carolina is a complex food- and beverage-producing region, not only having given birth to world famous soft-drink brands like Pepsi and Dr Pepper but also home to fairly well-known foods like Mt. Olive Pickles, Butterball Turkeys, Smithfield Hams, and Purdue Chicken. Less well known are local delicacies like soft-shell blue crabs and blue crab meat, Bogue Sound water-melons, and White Lake and New Bern blue-berries. Through most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, food and beverage production in North Carolina was accomplished by African-American and white women and men working in agricultural fields and food processing plants. Beginning in the 1980s, most Eastern North Carolina farms and food processing plants began recruiting migrant and immigrant Mexican and Central American workers to their work forces through a variety of mechanisms. Poultry, pork, and pickle industries, for example, recruited Latino immigrants by hiring them directly from the agricultural work force and thereafter utilizing network recruiting, while cucumber, sweet potato, blue-berry, and other food-producing farmers drew upon a combination of farm labor contractors (who in turn hired migrant Latino crews), long-established ties with Florida winter-growing communities, and temporary foreign workers carrying H-2 visas. The state's seafood industries, located in small towns on or near the Atlantic coast, also used temporary foreign workers with H-2 visas. Given their somewhat different recruiting strategies, I consider these three groups – poultry–pork–pickle producers, fruit and vegetable producers, and seafood producers – as distinct from one another in terms of the consequences of their labor recruiting for migrant sending and receiving regions.

Generally, of these three branches of the food industry, the poultry–pickles–pork industries have stimulated more settlement of Latino families in the region and have been responsible for more of the formation of a complex, heterogeneous, yet increasingly self-aware Latino community in Eastern North Carolina than the other two. As families become rooted to Eastern North Carolina, particularly through children, individual immigrants are less likely to consider returning to Mexico or Central America, although most still maintain ties to natal communities through wire transfer services and other forms of communication. Both Latinos' awareness of themselves as members of an ethnic community and their communication with sending communities have been facilitated by the growth of an entrepreneurial and civically engaged class of Latinos in the region, as well as by the work of universities, community colleges, and state agencies.

Seafood production – although growing through the late 1980s and 1990s largely due to access to legal temporary foreign labor brought in from Mexico with H-2B visas – is currently in a state of decline due to a variety of factors, including competition from imports from Mexican seafood producers. Despite the industry's decline, the roles that Mexican seafood processing workers have played in the origins and growth of the Latino community have been significant, in part by contributing individuals to the region's Latino entrepreneurial class. Returning home for several months every season, most Mexican migrants in seafood production maintain close, ongoing, physical, emotional, and material connections with their communities in Mexico. By contrast, most also have little long-term impact on communities in Eastern North Carolina.<sup>1</sup> Over 20 years of this cyclical migration, however, has enhanced the local Latino community. This has occurred specifically because several former

contract workers have remained in North Carolina, marrying locals or settling in towns near where they worked, with some even founding businesses, and these individuals have provided a basis for other contract workers to work outside of the terms of their contracts and, if they so desire, become undocumented immigrants.

Finally, the labor recruitment practices of fruit and vegetable producers have resulted in both some settlement of Latinos in the region and in the persistence of a highly mobile, temporary, migrant Latino labor force whose presence is most visible during the spring, summer, and early fall. Migrant farm-working Latinos thus occupy a middle group in terms of their attachment to and effects on North Carolina rural communities; their attachments to their home communities in Mexico and Central America tend to be mixed as well. Many migrant farmworkers' experiences vis-à-vis both North Carolina and Latin American communities, further, have been mediated by South Florida's winter fruit and vegetable producing region.

These observations are based on several studies I have conducted over the past 25 years as a research anthropologist working in Eastern North Carolina, South Florida, Georgia, Mexico, Honduras, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica. They include studies of the impact of immigration on rural communities in south-eastern North Carolina, Florida, and Georgia (Griffith, 2005, 2008); several studies focusing on H-2 workers in seafood and agriculture (Griffith et al., 1995; Griffith, 2006) and on the state's fisheries (Griffith, 1999); a study of immigrant entrepreneurship in rural North Carolina; a study comparing migration's impacts on sending communities in Olancho, Honduras and Veracruz, Mexico; and an oral history project focusing on Latino leaders in Eastern North Carolina. Along with these research projects, working with Ricardo Contreras and East Carolina University's Nuevo South Research and Action Collaborative, I have participated in three community engagement projects that established partnerships with Latino organizations to address issues of concern to these organizations and to the Latino community in general (e.g. diabetes management, domestic violence prevention, improved opportunities for nutritious food and physical activity). Because these research and engagement projects and partnerships were developed to meet different objectives over different time periods, they utilized mixed methods that included ethnographic work, cultural mapping/ transect walks, surveys, cultural consensus tests, pile sorting tests, photo-voice techniques, and corresponding methods of analysis (e.g. statistical and text analysis).

In the main body of this article, I draw on these studies to focus on the relations between labor recruitment practices of three branches of Eastern North Carolina's food industry on sending and receiving communities. Part of this discussion considers how immigrants fit into the changing political economy of food, recognizing immigrants' critical roles as workers in agribusiness and that immigrant and migrant foodways often change as they move from place to place. Although less central to the article's theme, I also take note of the growing emphasis on community-based agriculture and fisheries in the face of increasing criticism of agribusiness and the fast-food industry, linking them to the importance of food to a nascent Latino entrepreneurial class and considering the immigrant community in relation to the growing moral economy of food production. I discuss moral economy later in the article, but here point out that I draw on E.P. Thompson's (1971, p. 79) use of the term as a 'popular consensus... grounded upon a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations, of the proper economic functions of several parties within the community' (Griffith, 2009). Below I briefly trace the history of Latino immigration into

North Carolina, including structural factors shaping this population flow and their implications for theories of migration, immigration, and the settlement process.

### **History and Theory of Latino Immigration into North Carolina**

Immigration as complex as that of Latinos into North Carolina is never due to mere economic processes of supply and demand. Several political economic processes converged during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s to stimulate and sustain Latino immigration into North Carolina and construct the state's food industry labor forces, including processes in Mexico and Central America as well as in the state and across the U.S. South. As the first significant populations of Latinos arrived as migrant farmworkers, changes taking place within the farm labor market contributed to the origins and growth of the state's Latino farm-labor crews. During the 1960s, the Mexicanization of farm labor – dating as far back as 1917 in the West, South-west, and Texas and greatly enhanced during the 1942–1964 Bracero era – began moving eastward, replacing and displacing predominantly African-American and some Puerto Rican crews (Hahamovitch, 1999). This process had its roots in the mechanization of sugar beets and cotton, which disrupted migrant farmworker itineraries and forced both farmworkers and farm-labor contractors to seek alternative employment; many moved into south Florida's expanding winter vegetable and citrus production, at times with the assistance of the U.S. Employment Service, and from there moved into the summer harvests further north, including the Carolinas (Commission on Agricultural Workers, 1992; Heppel, 1983; Heppel and Amendola, 1992; Hahamovitch, 1999).

At the same time, the Civil Rights movement and other developments expanded opportunities for African-Americans outside of agriculture. The expansion of Florida's hospitality, fast-food, and construction industries and recruitment into the military for the Vietnam War, a process also affecting large numbers of Puerto Ricans, joined increasing militancy and racial consciousness among African-American youth to erode the reproduction of African-American crews in Florida agriculture. As U.S. citizens, Puerto Ricans had similar opportunities (Duany, 2001). A tobacco farmer in North Carolina said of this period that African-American youth simply began refusing to take orders from white men; as elder African-American farm supervisors retired or died, it became impossible to work with African-American youth (Griffith, 2006, p. 61). While a handful of African-American crews and farm-workers lingered in agriculture (Amendola and Griffith, 1992; Griffith, 2007), both the supply of African-Americans and the demand for African-American crews declined through the 1970s (Commission on Agricultural Workers, 1992).

Developments in Latin America also contributed to Latinos flowing into eastern agricultural harvests, with sporadic influxes of Haitian labor and a sustained presence of Jamaicans in south Florida sugar and east coast apples (Richman, 2005; Griffith, 2006). In Central America, civil wars in the late 1970s and early 1980s occurred in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, with many Guatemalan refugees in particular ending up in Florida agriculture (Burns, 1996). Across Latin America, peasant communities began to see the erosion of state support for agricultural production and, somewhat later, the liberalization of trade that flooded Latin American markets with cheap commodities, including beans and basic grains (Fischer and Benson, 2006). Mexico, for example, began withdrawing from support of coffee production in the 1980s, following Venezuela's model of shifting its emphasis to support of pe-

troleum (Roseberry, 1983). The Mexican Coffee Institute (Instituto Mexicano del Café or INMECAFE) began to be phased out in the late 1980s and was disbanded completely in 1993. Similar developments took place in Guatemala and elsewhere, creating economic crises in peasant communities even before the trade agreements (e.g. NAFTA) of the mid-1990s further flooded Latin American markets with U.S. corn and other commodities. Developments such as these forced many more families into international migration streams.

By the mid-1980s most of the African-American farm-labor crews in the eastern United States had been replaced by Latino crews from Mexico and Guatemala. It was also during this time that significant changes were taking place in meat and poultry processing, laying the groundwork for recruitment of Latinos to those industries. The development of new 'further processed' product lines such as boxed pork and beef and boned chicken-breasts shifted demand for food processing labor from local supermarkets scattered around the country to rural processing plants (Skaggs, 1985; Griffith, 1993; Stull et al., 1995). The new products were developed in response to the increasingly busy life-styles of working women, to fuel the growing fast-food industry, and as a result of growing consumer demand for leaner meats and particularly for chicken, which surpassed beef consumption in the United States in 1987 (Griffith, 1993; Schlosser, 2001; Striffler, 2005). Ironically, it was into poultry, pork, pickle, seafood and other food processing that many African-Americans went from farm-work, yet in the late 1980s they began to suffer competition from Latino workers who were actively recruited into food processing, through networks, from farm-labor crews (Griffith, 1993, 1995b; Fink, 2001; Striffler, 2005).

A principal player in this process was the U.S. Congress, which passed the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) and work authorized around 1 000 000 farmworkers under the Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) provision of the law – the vast majority of them Latino (Commission on Agricultural Workers, 1992). Once work authorized, SAWs could move from agriculture into other occupations, including food processing, cross the Mexico–U.S. border freely, and spread the word that in order to be legalized in the United States it was best to work and live there first. IRCA also created two new visa classifications from one that were instrumental in fueling North Carolina agriculture and seafood processing: the H-2A and H-2B visas. H-2A visas were formerly H-2 visas issued primarily to Jamaicans working in sugar cane and east-coast apples and Basque shepherds working in the western United States; after IRCA the supply of H-2A agricultural workers shifted from the Caribbean to Mexico, with North Carolina tobacco and cucumber farmers spear-heading the use of the visa to import Mexican workers. H-2B visas were created to supply temporary foreign labor to non-agricultural seasonal occupations, such as seafood processing, and were used heavily by seafood processing houses in North Carolina, Maryland, and Virginia. The availability of this visa enabled seafood processors to import Mexican women during a time that the former African-American, female work-force was beginning to age out of the work-force and failing to reproduce itself (Griffith, 1987). Although some displacement of African-American workers by Latinos took place, the younger African-American women had been finding jobs in the nursing home, hospitality, and fast-food industries and entering community colleges as these colleges enhanced their recruitment of minorities and other non-traditional students (Griffith, 2006).

These diverse political economic processes in the United States and Latin America – including industrial restructuring, immigration and food policy, and changing la-

bor markets and consumption habits – have all influenced the growth of the Latino population in North Carolina and the construction of food industry labor forces. While the state was instrumental in providing seafood workers to North Carolina plants and legalizing large numbers of agricultural workers, capital and labor have joined to staff the poultry, pork, and pickle industries. Specifically, network recruitment, a practice familiar to international labor migrants (Massey et al., 1987), was critical to this process, with current workers recruiting family and friends and food companies offering incentives for workers to bring others into the processing plants.

The social construction of food industry labor forces has been accompanied by various practices designed to maintain power relationships in the food industry that keep wages low and working conditions and opportunities for advancement highly controlled. These include what Ann Kingsolver (2007) describes as ‘strategic alterity’, or the process where employers valorize their own productive work by devaluing the work of their employees, and the processes of stigmatization that Peter Benson (2008) describes in relation to the tobacco industry, where labor camps and other areas have become ‘Mexican space’ designed to confine Latino interactions to each other and to limited areas. Similarly, immigration researchers have outlined the process of ‘segmented assimilation’ (Portes and Zhou, 1993), in which immigrants are assimilated in different ways that have distinct economic consequences for themselves and for subsequent generations, with some emulating a white middle class, some persisting as an impoverished underclass, and some attempting to forge a new middle-class status by preserving their home country customs, values, and cultural practices.

Each of these positions represents the North Carolina case to some degree, yet one final note concerns the transformation of the Latino presence in North Carolina from predominantly single men and fewer women of productive age to an increasing number of families and households with complex legal status profiles. As in Iowa, Minnesota, and other so-called new destinations, this transformation seems to have taken place around seven to nine years after IRCA, when increasing numbers of women and children began joining their spouses in these destinations (Fennelly, 2008; Griffith, 2008). This development has resulted in people living in the same household representing a variety of legal statuses and thus having differential access to social and economic resources, manifesting a form of segmented assimilation within the same family rather than across ethnic groups or social classes. In the sections that follow, I compare three branches of North Carolina’s food industry that, paralleling legal status diversity in households, have resulted in overlapping yet somewhat distinct relationships between Latinos and communities in North Carolina and Latin America.

### **Poultry, Pickles, Pork, and the People Who Process Them: Immigration into Southeastern North Carolina**

Duplin, Sampson, and Pender Counties make up south-eastern North Carolina’s poultry, pork, and pickle corridor, roughly following Interstate 40 between Raleigh and Wilmington and including the recently heavily Latinized small towns of Newton Grove, Clinton, Mt. Olive, Faison, Rose Hill, Wallace, and Burgaw. The largest of these towns has a population of around 8,500, but most are between 600 and 3,500. All three industries, in the past 20 years, have sifted immigrant labor into their operations, which are vertically integrated, with linked sectors for growing, servic-

ing/ feeding, and processing their primary product (turkeys or chickens, hogs, and cucumbers). As such, new immigrants, nearly all Latino, have found work in the cucumber fields, on hog and poultry farms, and, in the largest numbers, in the processing plants. A few have found work in companies that provide materials or services to agriculture and rural industry, such as a company that provides specialized products for building and maintaining the large 'hog hotels' (confinement barns) found on farms throughout the region.

While most of the Latino immigrants are from Mexico, the region has been attracting a growing number of Honduran refugees and immigrants since the devastation following Hurricane Mitch in 1998, as well as Salvadorans and Guatemalans. As noted earlier, the settlement and elaboration of the population – more women and children, more school and church attendance, more accessing health care, etc. – dates to the mid-1990s, although migrant farm-workers arrived earlier. In part to service the migrant farm-worker population, regional health and service network staff have developed language and cultural skills to deal with Latin American Spanish speakers. One of the most effective health centers in the region at dealing with new immigrant Latinos is in Sampson County, just outside of Newton Grove, where it sits on the same road as an Episcopal Church that provides Sunday services in Spanish and follows with food distributions, also advocating on behalf of farm-workers. A second neighboring organization, Telemon, is part of the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs and dedicates itself to placing farm-workers in more stable, less seasonal jobs. A large Catholic Church in Newton Grove has attracted large numbers of Latinos, in part due to its name (Our Lady of Guadalupe), which preceded Latino immigration by nearly 20 years.

Although most of the region is rural, the nearby city of Wilmington and its surrounding metropolitan area, on the Lower Cape Fear River, is one of the fastest growing regions of the United States, with between 250 000 and 300 000 residents. Its booming construction industry draws many immigrants out of meat-packing and farm-work, and it is home to a handful of agencies and organizations that serve the Latino population in some capacity. In nearby Brunswick County, just south of Wilmington, the Mexican consulate has established a *Plaza Comunitarias* at Brunswick Community College; the *Plaza* provides a variety of services to new immigrants oriented toward attracting them into the state community college system. Finally, the development of several golf-courses and gated communities between Wilmington and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, a relatively well-known golf and beach resort area, has drawn immigration labor into land development (e.g. draining swamps, clearing forests), golf-course maintenance and landscaping, and the hospitality industry.

The character of the food processing sector and the regional economy, combined with a growing social service network with bilingual staff and a growing Latino entrepreneurial class, has made it relatively easy for new immigrant Latinos to settle into the region. One principal driver of this process has been the many components of the food processing sector – from farms to factories with several intermediate and support services, such as transportation and feed milling – and the many food companies operating in the region. Even if undocumented, immigrants can find work in one or more of the sector's components and can move among these components or among different food companies in cases where they are fired for not having papers or for other reasons, similar to Grey's (1999) observations regarding meat-packing workers in Iowa who migrate among meat-packing plants and other economic re-

sponsibilities. Latino businesses provide some cushion against economic fluctuations as well, at times offering credit to Latinos out of work and benefiting from the food industry for providing employment and disposable income for their customers and for members of business owners' families.

Magdalena Rodriguez,<sup>2</sup> for example, is a young woman from Veracruz who came to North Carolina with her parents at the age of 14 and, after graduating from high school, landed a job in a large turkey processing plant. Having spent several years in school while living in a Spanish-speaking household, she was completely bilingual and soon promoted to the personnel department to facilitate Latino hiring, a practice common in the food processing plants (Griffith, 1995a). In 2004, her parents opened a *taquería* (restaurant specializing in tacos) and in 2009 a small convenience store, both on a route between the large turkey processing plant and a large predominantly Latino trailer park that houses workers at the plant. The *taquería* has since become popular among Anglos as well as Latinos. Shortly after her parents founded the store, Magdalena lost her job in the plant during a renewed wave of document checking following Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) work-place raids elsewhere in the United States and North Carolina. After leaving the plant, she began managing her parents' convenience store, hoping to work until the food plants in the region begin hiring undocumented immigrants again.<sup>3</sup>

In a second case, the Honduran owner of a small Latino convenience store in medium-sized town in Duplin County offered a young woman a job after she was orphaned following a work-place raid that resulted in both of her parents being deported. While the parents worked on crossing the border a second time, accumulating money and connections, the shopkeeper paid the young woman enough to stay in the family's dwelling and purchase food. Although the shopkeeper didn't need the teen's labor, he was a friend of the family and felt responsible for her.

Latino entrepreneurs in the poultry-pickle-pork corridor provide several other functions that enable and enhance Latino settlement. Acting as cultural gate-keepers and conduits for information, they inform newly arriving immigrants of bilingual health care providers and others offering services of interest, create safe and comfortable spaces for the undocumented, sell Latin American foods and other nostalgia products, and assist in the replication of home country traditions such as *quinceañeras* (fifteenth birthday celebrations similar to debutante balls). In one of the heavily Latinized communities of the corridor, for example, a woman provides a service of customizing dresses with lace, ribbons, and other adornments for various celebrations. She is tied into a network of other Latino business people who alter dresses, bake cakes, and provide related services out of their homes, and her shop serves as the central location where her clients learn of the range of celebration-related services available. As an added service, she insists that those to whom she refers clients offer them fair prices and provide quality service; if she hears differently, she stops referring clients to them. Finally, at least two entrepreneurs in the region have founded media outlets – radio, newspapers, and television programs – to interview local leaders and educate immigrants regarding programs of interest, human and worker rights issues, and provide general information to the Latino community.

At the core of many Latino businesses and celebrations is food. Latinos dominate food sales at rural flea markets, selling prepared and cooked foods and fresh fruits and vegetables. Many of those selling food are tied into regional food distribution networks that include people who travel around as pin-hookers – independent merchants who buy ripe fruit directly from farmers after the main harvesting crews have

passed through the fields, selling the fruit in venues like flea markets or directly to restaurants (Griffith et al., 1995). Most Latino *tiendas* (stores) have sections devoted to fresh produce that include cactus, tomatillos, and other highly desired fruits and vegetables; home country snacks; tortillas that are often made in local *tortillerías* (tortilla factories) with home country recipes; dry and packaged goods; and a variety of dried chilies, spices, sauces, and other cooking ingredients. Many of these products are purchased in bulk at Sam's Club or Walmart and then repackaged for sale in more culturally comfortable settings and convenient locations.

Among the more valuable services that Latino convenience stores across North Carolina provide are wire transfer services for sending remittances to families in Latin America, their ubiquity a testament to continued connections between U.S. and Latin American communities among those settled here. As long as those connections exist, Latino communities across the poultry–pickle–pork corridor remain at least partially transnational. Data from a survey conducted as part of a 2002–2005 study of the region (Griffith, 2005) found that attachments to the region were split along three lines, with 27% saying they planned on staying in the region permanently, 42% saying they would stay if economic and political developments remained favorable, and around 30% reporting that they would not stay permanently in the region. These data indicate the presence in south-eastern North Carolina of a partially settled, partially transnational population.

It is, however, a population that has been gradually becoming more and more attached to the region, particularly as a second generation with full citizenship rights and few attachments to Latin America beyond their parents emerges. Elementary school enrollments indicate that such a generation is emerging, with some rural elementary schools boasting Latino enrollments of over 50% and many in the 30–40% range. Across North Carolina, Latino enrollment in the all public schools rose from 0.7% to 10.7% from the 1989–1990 to 2008–2009 school years; in some Eastern North Carolina counties, 2009 Latino public-school enrollments, for all grades, were between 30% and 40% (Department of Public Instruction, 2009). In addition, households visited in the 2002–2005 study were most commonly comprised of people representing multiple legal statuses – with some members U.S. citizens, some undocumented, and others possessing various kinds of work authorization or legal residence in the state. Such household profiles contrast markedly with most of those who come to the state to process seafood or who travel through the state as migrant farm-workers.

### **Temporary Foreign Labor in North Carolina Seafood**

Beginning in 1988, Mid-Atlantic seafood plants began importing workers from Mexico to work in blue crab and shrimp processing on temporary contracts, drawing on communities near the coasts of Sinaloa and Tabasco, where fishing and seafood processing were part of local economic landscapes. Most of the Sinaloa workers came (and still come, although in fewer numbers) from an area of industrialized agriculture combined with small fishing and farming communities between the urban marketing centers of Guasave and Los Mochis – a corridor that parallels the Pan-American Highway. Workers were primarily women carrying H-2B visas who were brought in to work from March or April through November or December, returning home during the winter months. Beginning in 2009, Ricardo Contreras and I began interviewing women working in a single crab plant in Eastern North Carolina, col-

lecting life- and work-histories from 20 of the women initially and subsequently visiting them and others in Mexico in early 2010 and 2011. This work built on over 20 years of research on the region's fishing and seafood processing industry – research begun before the transition from African-American to Mexican labor and continuing through the growth of the industry through the 1990s due to the availability of immigrant labor and into the more recent twenty-first century decline in production largely due to competition from imported seafood (Griffith, 1987, 1999, 2006).

While the seafood industry has been responsible for familiarizing these women with Eastern North Carolina, most seafood workers have had more of an impact on their home communities, where their families remain, than on North Carolina communities. Women arrive as individual workers, traveling without family members except in cases where they are related to other women and the few men working in North Carolina seafood. In most cases, seafood plants are located in small coastal communities that are far from major metropolitan centers. The women are housed in dormitory-like conditions, transported to and from work in company buses (unless the dorms are within walking distance of the plant), and tend to have limited interaction with either native North Carolinians or the growing Latino population in the state. Part of the reason for their lack of interaction with others outside of their work environment has to do with their amounts of work. When the volumes of crab, shrimp, or other types of seafood are high, women can work as many as 20 hours per day and typically work 12 to 16 hour days six to seven days per week, although the supplies of seafood vary through the season, from week to week, and from day to day. Such work-loads prevent them from interacting with anyone other than fellow workers, supervisors, and plant owners. Outside of work they have opportunities to interact with others on regular trips to Walmart and other shopping venues, but these excursions are also highly controlled in that they are taken there and back by busses driven by plant supervisors (usually Mexican labor contractors).

Despite these restrictions, interactions between seafood workers and other community members – Anglos and Latinos alike – are possible as conditions of work and living change over the course of the season or from season to season. For example, during the 2009 season, the supply of seafood to the plant Contreras and I were familiar with was low; women there were working an hour or two per week, leaving many days completely idle. During idle times, women often seek work in other sectors of the local economy, which is technically illegal but supported by plant owners and labor contractors. In 2009, for example, most of the women we met had spent time working on local blue-berry farms, picking blue-berries; one woman visited a friend in a nearby community – a woman who had formerly been a seafood processing worker but had dropped out of the program – and together they traveled to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to work with a painting crew. From such experiences, women learn more and more about the opportunities available in the local economy and increase their general knowledge about transportation routes, housing options, community resources, and so forth. During these idle times, as well, they are more likely to form relationships with local Latino and Anglo men or other members of local communities.

In Belhaven, I met a young local fisherman who had married a former seafood worker and, with her, opened a Latino store to serve the seasonal seafood processing population. He described his good fortune by saying that suddenly every summer Belhaven would come alive with over one hundred young Mexican women with whom he couldn't communicate. 'Here I was', he said, 'surrounded by all these

young pretty women, and I didn't even know how to say "hey" to them. So I got some Spanish tapes and pretty soon was saying "buenos dias" and "que pasa" and before long I had a wife.' In New Bern, two women who left a seafood plant because of an abusive foreman met Latina chambermaids at a local hotel and secured work as chambermaids, staying in rooms provided by the hotel until they found their own accommodations. Working along the Gulf of Mexico coast, Rebecca Crosthwait (2009) found that workers with temporary H-2B visas working in the shipbuilding industry call their visas 'Visa Libres' because they can use them to acquire drivers licenses and other official documents and then seek work in the general economy.

Using similar mechanisms, former seafood workers have dropped out of contract labor agreements and settled in Eastern North Carolina, in some cases founding businesses that have remained viable for several years after their participation in the seafood. Among the more successful is a woman we call Sonia Rodriguez, who worked for two different seafood processing plants over the course of three years in the mid-1990s. At the first plant, while still in her early twenties, she made an effort to practice English, some of which she learned in Mexico, and completed much of the paper-work involved with getting visas and arranging international transportation. When the owners learned of this, they told her that if she filed tax forms for the workers they could get refunds. 'I spoke English', she said, 'but I had to get a big, big dictionary, because the words on the forms and in the instructions didn't look like they were in English.' The owners and managers at this plant, she said, were exceptional, stocking refrigerators in their dorms for their arrival, fitting their beds with fresh mattresses and bed-clothes, and repainting the rooms at the beginning of every season. Unfortunately, the plant went out of business after her second season, and she began working at a different seafood plant.

At the second plant, Sonia was less fortunate. Not only did they not recognize her expertise with the workers' taxes, conditions in the dorm and at work were far inferior to the first plant. After a few weeks there, she slipped away and found work at a local textile factory. Eventually befriending a woman from Michoacán who had worked at a local tax preparation company, they decided to found an income tax service that catered to Latinos. Working at first with little more than two desks, a lap-top, credit card debt, and offices in their homes, they established the business and now operate out of a large office in a small shopping center in one of Eastern North Carolina's larger metropolitan areas. While cases such as this are rare, I have encountered a number of other small business owners who began as seafood workers with H-2B visas, as well as other women who have married locals and remained in the area, enhancing its Latino presence.

Yet after over 20 years of Mexican seafood workers coming into Eastern North Carolina, the cyclical migration has had far more profound impacts on sending communities and families than in North Carolina. Uniformly, women we interviewed expressed disappointment with economic alternatives in Sinaloa and pride at being able to provide for family with these higher paying jobs. According to Ms. Jimenez, a 58-year-old woman in her nineteenth season in seafood processing, she decided to come to North Carolina 'because the work we do there [in Sinaloa] doesn't help too much. It is barely enough to eat and buy clothes. Working here [in North Carolina] allows me to buy a truck when back at home, to fix the house, all things I cannot do if working there'. Most women who have worked in North Carolina seafood plants have managed to expand their homes, purchase appliances or vehicles, and gener-

ally improve their material quality of life, suggesting that the migration was instrumental in the formation of a new, primarily female middle class in Sinaloa.

This is further supported by how much they value the education of their children, usually saying that they want their children to work in jobs superior to seafood processing, making an effort, in the abstract, to resist reproducing working class positions. Again, Ms. Jimenez:

'If I didn't come, I would not have been able to educate my child, allowing him to succeed. Now he is about finishing his higher education. He would not be able to do that if I stayed there. And he understands that, he understands that is the reason I am coming to the United States. People respect him now (because of his higher education degree).'

These successes, unfortunately, often come at great cost. Separation from family for long periods of time year after year strains family relationships and often leads to divorce, drug-abuse, and, in the case of single mothers, problems with the surrogate parents who care for their children during the months they spend abroad. The view of Ms. Luna, a 44-year-old woman who has been participating in the program for eight seasons, and whose children are 20, 23, and 28, is representative:

'I wanted to work so that my children would have a career, so that they wouldn't have to suffer as I did working in the fields, or that they didn't have to live away from home. I wanted my children to have good jobs when married. That was my desire, but I didn't accomplish it. Out of the three, only the youngest one is studying, she has a career in Political Science and Administration, but she has also suffered... My other son consumed drugs. He was using crystal... For months I don't know where he is, I am always looking for a phone to try to find him, calling other people to see if they have seen him... The one in California, he also takes drugs. He has no plans for his life, he sells his shoes, pants, shirts – all things that give him – things that I buy when I find sales here (in North Carolina).'

One final note about this migration concerns the role of agribusiness in Sinaloa in the development of North Carolina's seafood labor supply. The coastal Sinaloa corridor that follows the Pan-American Highway has been highly developed as a center of sophisticated agribusiness, where several U.S. and Mexican companies have established vast irrigated farms of tomatoes (the region's signature crop), corn, oranges, mangoes, and other crops as well as seafood processing plants, experiment stations, and green-houses. As an indication of the corridor's sophistication, well known and, in the view of many, infamous companies like Monsanto have been pushing for an expansion of genetically modified (GM) corn in Sinaloa, and were recently granted permission to experiment with GM corn in nearby Tamaulipas, which is 'home to 16 of the 59 remaining strains of native corn' (Acedo, 2011).

Agribusiness has been responsible in creating a working class for the farms and food factories of the area, and all the women in our study had had experience working in agribusiness – usually in agriculture and seafood processing both but always in seafood processing – before coming to North Carolina. In addition, the seafood plants in Mexico have stricter standards of hygiene than U.S. plants – primarily because most of the Mexican seafood is exported to the United States, like much of the farm produce – and thus the women are more highly trained in Mexico than required in North Carolina, giving North Carolina producers a ready, disciplined,

and largely captive labor force. Agribusiness in Florida provides a similar service for North Carolina farms.

### **Immigration into North Carolina Agriculture**

In an earlier section, I traced the transition from African-American to Latino labor in east-coast agriculture, a process that was underway by IRCA and nearly complete by the mid-1990s. In their search for work, Latinos early targeted counties producing tobacco, pickling cucumbers, berries, apples, Douglas firs (for Christmas trees), and sweet potatoes. From the mid-1980s through the early 1990s, as Latinos continued increasing the share of the state's migrant agricultural workers and food processing companies began recruiting Latinos to meet the rising demands for packing house labor, undermining the labor supply to agriculture (Griffith, 1993; Fink, 2001; Striffler, 2005), a variety of recruitment strategies emerged. The three most important recruiting strategies are: 1. continued reliance on Florida-based migrant crews, usually brought into the state by labor contractors; 2. the direct hiring of Latinos by farmers; and 3. the use of temporary foreign workers carrying H-2A visas. A small number of workers are local residents – some Latino, some African-American or white – who work on farms sporadically, combining farm-work with other jobs or other forms of economic support.

Briefly, labor contractors often bring crews into the state and either house them in labor camps that they own or assist them in finding local housing, transport them from housing to work in buses, supervise them in the fields and packing houses, and often buy food and cook for them, deducting some of the expenses of these services from their pay. Farmers who hire Latinos directly often have long-term relationships with crews who work in Florida agriculture or elsewhere part of the year and seasonally in North Carolina – crews that have been coming to their farms season after season. Most of the blue-berry growers around White Lake, North Carolina, for example, depend on crews of workers based for much of the year in Okeechobee, Florida. In some cases, these farms have had Latino foremen for many years who work year-round on the farm or who spend part of the year in North Carolina and part in Florida. Finally, H-2A workers – guest workers similar to those in the seafood processing industry – have been a part of the North Carolina agricultural landscape since 1989, primarily working in tobacco and cucumbers. From 168 H-2A workers brought in for the 1989 season, the program rose to import over 10,000 workers in the early twenty-first century and now imports between 6,000 and 8,000 workers annually (North Carolina Employment Security Commission, 2007). The vast majority of these workers are brought into the state through the North Carolina Growers Association, processed in a central location, and then placed in small groups on farms across the state. Their contracts and conditions of employment are similar to Mexican seafood workers, except that they receive free housing and more worker protections such as guaranteed amounts of work, wage-rates that exceed minimum wage, and free transportation.

With the exception of those crews that are composed of families and those who drop out of agriculture to work in food processing, construction, golf course maintenance, or other economic sectors, most North Carolina farm-workers remain migrants and thus continue to cycle through the region, having limited impacts on local North Carolina communities. Most neither bring nor form families in North Carolina, tend not to purchase houses or other real estate, and remain in the state

on a temporary basis. Due to the high turn-over in agriculture, they may work in agriculture only a few seasons, and thus in many cases it is not even the same individuals returning to the state. Of course, as a class, migrant farm-workers support an industry – North Carolina agriculture – that is critical to rural identities and ways of life, and their collective support of agriculture may be viewed as a significant impact.

And in small ways, they have an impact on the Latino community. Many Latino entrepreneurs depend on this seasonal population to boost food sales, the client bases of bars, restaurants, and game rooms, and the fees associated with wiring money, but as a whole the farm-worker population is temporary. Their impacts on Florida communities tend to be greater, because many use inland southern Florida communities like Okeechobee, Immokalee, and Belle Glade as home bases, leaving spouses, children, and other relatives behind as they migrate north. Still others – especially the H-2A workers – return to Mexican and Central American communities regularly or periodically, usually putting their earnings to use adding to houses or meeting household consumption and education needs. Agriculture continues to play a critical role in helping new Latinos become familiar with the state, but it is in the interests of farmers, labor contractors, and the growers association to keep the migrant labor force flexible, ready to work wherever and whenever they are needed yet disposable when the work ends (Hackenberg et al., 1993; Smith and Winders, 2007). Combined with dormitory-style housing in labor camps or on individual farms, these conditions select for single young workers, usually male, and against families, inhibiting settlement and encouraging physical (if not occupational) mobility.

## **Conclusion**

Labor recruitment practices in agribusiness have been responsible for much of the immigration into North Carolina and other new immigrant destinations in the United States, initially through agriculture and subsequently through food processing. While some overlap exists among the agricultural, poultry–pork–pickle processing, and seafood processing labor recruiting practices, the three sectors exhibit subtle differences that have distinct impacts on migrant sending and receiving communities. Briefly, the processing of poultry, pickles, and pork have contributed to the development and elaboration of Latino communities across Eastern North Carolina by providing year-round jobs to people in rural areas, including farm-workers, while the seafood and agricultural sectors have played smaller, if at times significant roles in the development of Eastern North Carolina's Latino neighborhoods, having greater impacts on sending communities in Latin America and Florida.

At the same time that food production has facilitated both Latino settlement and continued Latino migration, food consumption has also played a role in the character of Eastern North Carolina's Latino community. On the one hand, many Latinos have been forced to alter their eating habits as they negotiate the supermarket and fast-food nutritional landscapes of Eastern North Carolina, experiencing weight-gain and associated problems of high blood pressure, diabetes, and musculoskeletal disorders (McEwen et al., 2007; Arps et al., 2009). Farm-workers may have little to no control over the foods they eat, having food prepared for them by labor camp cooks, and isolated seafood workers may have few opportunities to acquire preferred foods in the small coastal towns where they work or at the supermarkets they visit weekly.

Settled Latinos, however, as well as those farm-workers and seafood workers lucky enough to live near established Latino neighborhoods, now have several shopping and food consumption alternatives available across North Carolina, in Latino tiendas, at rural flea markets, and in several authentic restaurants that cater to Latinos primarily or exclusively. As noted earlier, the consumption of traditional foods and their availability from Spanish-speaking merchants have been two of the more highly visible components of Latino settlement, tied to growing numbers of Latino celebrations, both public and private, in the state. Demand for Mexican and Central American foods has provided economic incentives for enterprising Latinos to move into direct food preparation, sales, and distribution. In addition to adaptations like pin-hookers, mentioned earlier, many Latinos work part-time preparing foods in traditional ways in their homes to sell by word of mouth or by arrangement with the owner of a Latino tienda. Some of these efforts are similar to current community-based programs to eat local foods, slow foods, organic foods, and healthier foods that by-pass large-scale agribusiness. Opportunities for gardening, raising livestock, and other food production on a small scale, in yards or on idle land, have been somewhat slower in materializing, but I have encountered several cases of families entering domestic production venues to feed their own families and to sell or gift small amounts of food surpluses (e.g. chicken eggs or fresh produce) to neighbors or others.

These efforts, too, signal a rejection of the current political economy of food production and a move toward a moral economy of food production, one based on shared sentiments regarding the right to a healthy diet not too dissimilar from the eighteenth century English crowd that E.P. Thompson (1971) described as demanding high-quality bread to perform high-quality work. If we consider a moral economy as one in which there is popular consensus about the proper economic roles of community members, the emphasis that Latinos place on high-quality, traditional home country foods signals an informal social movement to encourage 'proper' consumption habits among Latino families. Several initiatives, originating both within and outside of the Latino community, currently stress good nutrition and access to low-cost fresh fruits and vegetables, including a local Latino television station, research and outreach initiatives at East Carolina University's Center for Health Disparities Research Center, and efforts on behalf of a grass-roots organization called the Association of Mexicans in North Carolina (AMEXCAN) (Arps et al., 2009; personal communication, Luis Guzman, 12 July 2011; <<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-cas/anth/nuevosouth>>). Such efforts are likely to result in a work-force made healthier and more productive with more fresh fruits and vegetables, leaner protein sources like seafood and beans, and reduced consumption of fast food. Ironically, in North Carolina, the labor that immigrant workers seek to replenish with nutritious foods is directed, more often than not, toward producing food that enriches agribusiness.

## Notes

1. In this article, the 'impacts' I describe are largely qualitative in nature, having to do with processes of family formation and settlement, for example, or communication between Latinos and Anglos outside of work sites. Because they return to their home communities annually and remain fairly isolated, without family members, while in North Carolina, I consider the impacts they have on North Carolina less than Latino immigrants who settle, enroll children in school, and remain all year for many years.
2. All names of immigrants used in this article are pseudonyms.

3. Work-place raids tend to have this kind of impact, forcing companies to check documents and lay off workers for a time until their personnel departments believe ICE has shifted from work-place raids to other strategies, such as serving on inter-agency, anti-terrorist task forces.

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## **New Immigrants in Local Food Systems: Two Iowa Cases**

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**Abstract.** Integrating immigrants in local food systems involves negotiations between complex meaning systems. An experience in working with immigrants and local food efforts in two Iowa communities shows that new social relationships are intersected by critical aspects such as trust (a component of social capital), political power (political capital), knowledge (human capital), and ethnic and cultural world views (cultural capital). Our analysis identified subtle and unrecognized hegemonic behavior and racialization (an unacknowledged culture of whiteness within the local/alternative food system) that inadvertently excludes Latinos and immigrants from the local food system. For these Latino farmers and gardeners, sharing agricultural produce with family and friends was more important than market-oriented strategies. Food is a major transmitter of cultural capital and builds social capital with extended family and with others in the community. By substituting food produced by the family for purchased food, family and friends receive a better diet and perhaps lower food costs. Growing and preparing food offers a way to give back to the community. Participation in farmer training fostered an inclusive, diverse and participatory community, but that did not extend to effective inclusion of Latino residents in the local food group nor to an effective inter-cultural incubator farm. It may be that a farm incubator with a focus on immigrant farmers would be more successful if it were not directly linked to an educational institution. The outside organizers inadvertently strengthened a culture of whiteness, as they had different goals for the food system than did the local participants.

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## Introduction

Rural Iowa, like the rest of the United States, is increasingly investing in local food production and the creation of local food systems. A variety of actors and institutions are involved, all stressing the importance of local foods. However, these actors and institutions seek very diverse ends: stopping globalization and providing fair wages to food system workers, increasing local economic security of both producers and consumers, increasing social inclusion and interaction, contributing to local economic development, combating obesity, improving the ecosystem health and increasing animal welfare, and mitigating climate change (Flora, 2009). This article examines an under-examined issue in the light of a singular means with diverse ends: how can efforts to create local food systems be inclusive of diverse ethnic and racial groups?

We have chosen to use the concept of whiteness to analyse how people assumed to be of a different race or ethnicity, particularly new migrants (Cloke, 2004; Martinot, 2010; Erel, 2011), are inadvertently excluded simply because places where alternative or local food systems are unconsciously imbued with whiteness, a form of cultural capital.

Guthman argues that: '[T]he purpose of an engagement with whiteness is not to determine who is racist or not, but to uncover what whites think about being white and what effects that has on a racial system... one can be nominally nonracist and still contribute to a racial society' (Guthman, 2008a, p. 390). She highlights two implicit, but important, features of whiteness:

'[T]he doctrine of color blindness... does its own violence by erasing the violence that the social construct of race has wrought in the form of racism... [W]hiteness acts as... a set of expectations and institutional benefits... [that] work to naturalize inequalities... The other manifestation of whiteness is universalism, or the assumption that values held primarily by whites are normal and widely shared... This move erases difference in another way, by refusing to acknowledge the experience, aesthetics, and ideals of others, with the pernicious effect that those who do not conform to white ideals are justifiably marginalized' (Guthman, 2008a, pp. 390–391.)

In what way does unconscious racialization affect the strategies implemented by the dominant group focused on utilitarian ends, but not process? How can two sets of goals – those of the dominant Anglo (European American) group and those of Latinos – be joined by setting aside racialized assumptions? By examining two projects designed to increase the inclusion of new immigrants in emergent local food systems, we attempt to identify key issues of social, cultural, political, financial and built capital that must be addressed for such inclusion to take place.

Working with ISU Sociology Extension and the local community college, the first community implemented a farm incubator program for both immigrant Latino farmers and beginning Anglo farmers. At the same time, a wider range of partners, with the local Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) in the lead, organized a local food group. In the second community, Sociology Extension and the local RC&D undertook the rejuvenation of a Latino community gardening effort.

Rural Iowa is, as most of the rest of the rural resource-dependent U.S., decreasing in population (ERS, 2011). Sixty-two of Iowa's 99 counties lost population between 2000 and 2010. Outmigration of rural youth is reflected in an increasingly older age

of farmers in the state. Extension's efforts to involve Latino immigrants in local food systems was based on the following assumptions.

1. Iowa needs a new generation of community-scale organic and sustainable farmers and market gardeners; and Latino immigrants, many of whom have previous experience in agriculture, whether in their country of origin or in other parts of the U.S., have much to contribute to the resurgence of food production for local use (Lewis, 2007; Thompson, 2011).
2. Building a local food system is a shared goal among different sectors of the rural population in an area.
3. Integration of immigrants through agricultural and food systems could be achieved by working with individual Latino farmers and gardeners and developing leadership and/or agency despite cultural and political power differences.
4. Immigrant participants are interested in marketing their produce and achieving successful business outcomes.

Analysis of these efforts made us readdress our initial assumptions. We found that:

1. farmers and beginning immigrant farmers need more knowledge of and experience in vegetable production in Iowa;
2. the outside organizers had different goals for the food system than did local participants – both Anglo and Latino;
3. cultural differences between organizers and immigrants and social and political vulnerability of Latino families in new immigrant destinations make it difficult for Latinos to actively participate and continue in these kinds of projects; and
4. for these Latino farmers and gardeners, sharing agricultural produce with family and friends had more importance than market-oriented strategies.

## **Background**

Local food systems across the United States are increasingly viewed as a part of a social movement<sup>1</sup> with the capacity of changing what is eaten and how it is grown and transported, thus creating healthier communities. Local food systems provide an alternative to transnational food companies and their focus on short-term profits (Kloppenburger et al., 1996; Allen, 1999, 2004; Feenstra, 2002; Allen et al., 2003). Supporters and followers of alternative/local food systems adopt the discourse of a social movement, thereby placing themselves as agents of change, where local food systems are depicted as instruments that can save urban and rural communities from their economic, environmental and social distresses (Buttel, 2000; Nabhan, 2002; Pollan, 2006; Macias, 2008). Since so much is expected of local food systems in terms of systemic change, it is not surprising that projects with a particular output – more production of local foods – might be joined by actors who seek very different outcomes. In particular, those seeking to increase the income of current local farmers and increase the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables may not be attuned to the social justice outcomes sought by other participants (Flora, 2009). Figure 1 shows the mixture of motivations of groups that make up the loosely allied Good Food movement in the U.S.

There are latent tensions between those in loose alliance around sustainable agriculture and the informal social justice-based alliances that happen to focus on local

food systems. Most of the consumers in alternative food systems, such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and Farmers' Markets, are European Americans (culturally white) from middle and upper-middle socio-economic classes (Buttel, 2000; Allen, 2004, 2008; Guthman, 2004, 2008a). Although alternative food systems have inherent benefits, many have proven to reproduce whiteness (Guthman, 2008b, p. 431), with the incorporation of social justice goals into these initiatives often being rather tenuous (Allen, 2008, p. 157).

Hinrichs and Kremer (2002) document an effort to include low-income persons in a collective CSA in Iowa by providing subsidized shares for those who qualified according to their current income. They found that those receiving subsidized shares tended to have social ties with existing members (this was often how they learned about the subsidized shares), and had relatively high levels of education and professionally oriented occupations. Although their current incomes were low, the authors argue that they had other resources that would allow them to obtain good food much more easily than the 'truly poor' (Hinrichs and Kremer, 2002, pp. 83–85).

Alkon and McCullen (2011) engaged in participant observation and conducted in-depth interviews with participants in the North Berkeley and Davis, California farmers' markets. They concluded that two imaginaries<sup>2</sup> are held by the liberal, affluent white group that predominates at the two farmers' markets and 'that resonate closely with the alternative agrifood movement':

'In what we call the white farm imaginary, market participants valorize the predominantly white vendors who "grow their food", rendering invisible the low-paid, predominantly Latino/a workers who do the bulk of the cultivation. Customers draw upon the complimentary [sic] community imaginary to depict themselves, as well as their friends and neighbors, as ethically motivated supporters of struggling family farmers. Many managers, vendors and customers unwittingly draw upon the community imaginary to justify or obscure the structural barriers that prevent the participation of low-income people and people of color' (Alkon and McCullen, 2011, pp. 938–939).<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the alternative food movement, by seeking to shorten the value chain so that producer and consumer can in some manner come to know one another, counts as one of its accomplishments the de-fetishizing of production, i.e. allowing consumers to know where their food comes from and how it is produced. However, this family-farmer imaginary may indeed be perpetuating a new fetishized view of the farmer. As Alkon and McCullen (2011) explain, this is done by identifying today's alternative/ sustainable farmers with (white) yeoman family farmers of the pre-industrial agriculture era. That may be a stretch in the Central Valley of California where large industrial farms with substantial hired labor forces have predominated for well over a century (see Pfeffer, 1983). The situation is different in the Midwest, where the yeoman farmer survived (with difficulty) until the Farm Crisis of the 1980s, when the farmer-in-the-middle (the medium-sized commodity farmer) became an endangered species. However, within the local food movement, the small-scale sustainable/alternative farmer is seen as the inheritor of the yeoman farmer mantle. This new fetishism, then, is the failure of the local food discourse to recognize that small-scale producers of fruits and vegetables and even so-called niche livestock producers must employ hired labor. This is true particularly if they are to scale up enough to provide a decent income to the farm operator family and to collectively satisfy

a growing demand for 'relationally' marketed food. Increasingly, hired labor, particularly in the Midwest and South, is immigrant ('non-white') labor. Buck (1997) conducted a survey showing that a majority of California farm-workers preferred to work on large farms over small farms 'because they experienced fewer abuses and received higher wages on the large farms than on the small farms'.

Slocum emphasizes the unconscious aspects of whiteness and the dominance of whiteness in many alternative food spaces:

'The connections among property, privilege and paler skin are evident in alternative food practice. There is a physical clustering of white bodies in the often expensive spaces of community food – conferences, farm tourism, community supported agriculture and alternative food stores – as well as the location, in the feminist sense, of nonprofit staffer vis à vis food insecure person' (Slocum, 2007, p. 526).

Slocum contrasts the Minneapolis farmers' market with markets in other parts of the world:

'The Minneapolis Farmers' Market is colourful, organized and sanitized. And almost no one shouts as they might in markets elsewhere. Couples and friends in pairs or small groups go to the market and walk through absorbed in looking; they smile or simply move through with peaceful expressions on their faces. The point here is to detail the elements of white food space that derive from the normalization of whiteness in the practice of alternative food... The positive feelings expressed on the faces of vendors and customers at the market are important to highlight in this effort to see both exclusion and possibility in alternative food (Slocum, 2007, p. 526).

In 2004–2005, Guthman (2008a) sent surveys to all CSAs and managers of farmers' markets in California and obtained a 37% and 35% response rate, respectively. She followed up this quantitative survey with in-depth interviews with a much smaller number of CSAs and market managers. She also engaged in periodic observation at eight farmers' markets, four of which were in predominantly African-American neighborhoods. Most managers (of both CSAs and farmers' markets) believed that their market spaces were universal spaces and, therefore, some saw no need to reach out to different communities of color (Guthman, 2008a, p. 392). One CSA manager indicated: 'Targeting those in our communities that are ethnic or low income would show a prejudice we don't work within. We do outreach programs to reach everyone interested in eating locally, healthily, and organically' (Guthman, 2008a, pp. 392–393).

A farmers' market manager was more blunt: 'Some of your questions are pretty intrusive – I also found some to be racist. I left these questions blank. This was intentional, not accidental' (Guthman, 2008a, p. 393). In explaining why persons of color did not participate in significant numbers in CSAs and farmers' markets, respondents repeatedly offered personal characteristics, rather than structural reasons, for their lack of participation. One CSA manager said simply: 'Hispanics aren't into fresh, local, and organic products'. These answers illustrate the contradiction of color-blindness: persons call upon personal, hence racial or ethnic, characteristics to explain the non-participation of persons of color.

Given the multiple desired outcomes of those in the local food movement as well as the entrenchment of the conventional food system, it is not easy to establish and

maintain local food systems involving diverse individuals and organizations. Furthermore, the processes implemented by some members of a local food alliance may be at cross-purposes with those of other members. Concretely, it is difficult to reconcile the social justice goals with the goals of the other parts of the movement.

However, it is easy to rationalize away these contradictions. Recent studies in the two communities we studied and elsewhere demonstrate the advantages of Latino/a participation of in agricultural enterprises in Iowa, including community gardens and farms (Thompson, 2011). Latino/a immigrants bring with them agricultural knowledge and social relationships established around food and agriculture. Their participation in gardening and farming was found to integrate them into their communities in ways that reflect the culture they bring with them (particularly food and agriculture) and to provide a venue for demonstrating the values they share with long-term residents (hard work, perseverance, family connections) (Lewis, 2007; Thompson, 2011).

Often, integration is assumed to be the same as acculturation and assimilation, historically determined by the dominant identity of European Americans (King, 2000). These processes have been characterized by an ideology that contends that American means white, and the Americanization (assimilation) process has been reflected in immigration policies that have historically reinforced this view (King, 2000). Immigrant workers are often racialized, as were the Portuguese in Hawaii (Glenn, 2002) and the Irish in Boston (Ignatiev, 1995). At a local level, dominant groups that have access to knowledge, information, and political power drive acculturation. In the U.S., policies from 1920s and 1930s still have strong influence in the Americanization process and in the dominant world-view, which requires immigrants to give up their previous sense of group identity in order for them to become Americans (King, 2005). But, this false sense of 'one people' is not real (King, 2005) in daily life, where perceptions of group differences make inclusion of immigrants and other minority groups more difficult. In small towns in Iowa, where cultural and ethnic diversity is a new (or renewed) phenomenon, the hegemony of white America is still palpable and the cultural and political differences with culturally diverse urban America 'are barely reconcilable' (King, 2005, p. 117). While issues of ethnic/racial dominance and subordination were at the forefront previously in these same communities, the current descendants of those who experienced both sides of those divides were not alive then and the strong force of 'Americanization' has limited or even erased the transmission of those experiences across the generations. The relationships, both social and economic, between long-term, native-born residents and 'ethnic' new-comers are sometimes driven by political rhetoric and discourses of increasing hostility in the everyday life of new immigration destinations (Flora et al., 2011).

Bonding social capital, as Portes (1998) suggests, can have negative consequences for both dominant and excluded groups. An important antidote to the negative aspects of bonding capital is complementing it with bridging social capital. Flora and Flora (2008, p. 126), in examining geographic communities, call the combination of moderate bonding and strong bridging social capital 'progressive participation'. Rusch (2010) examines multi-ethnic organizing in Detroit through a social capital lens. She argues that willingness to risk establishing multi-ethnic ties (bridging social capital) to build a multi-class, multi-ethnic change organization varies according to social position, and can be very much related to race and ethnicity. However, those concerns can be overcome if power relations are discussed frankly and inter-

personal trust (an aspect of bonding social capital) is established one on one. Equally importantly, diverse individuals acting collectively can also build interpersonal trust through their action. Under proper circumstances, bridging and bonding social capital between diverse individuals and organizations can be a virtuous cycle. Attention to political power (a component of political capital) and explicit recognition of cultural capital differences by race and ethnicity and of inequality (financial capital) are all highlighted in Rusch's conclusion regarding successful community organizing:

'Community organizing offers one philosophy of what is necessary for democratic bridging and a strategy for achieving it. The emphasis on power relations in leadership trainings encourages participants to initiate bridging ties that are pragmatic and respectful of diverse communities. Attention to power dynamics and systematic inequalities is not incompatible with the development of interpersonal trust... Organizing methods have been developed to create bridging relationships across deep social divisions. Their example suggests that without explicit attention to power relations, well-intentioned bridging efforts risk reinforcing inequality and compounding mistrust' (Rusch, 2010, p. 499).

However, when organizing local food systems while simultaneously attempting to integrate different groups, each on its own terms, it is difficult to initiate frank discussions of differential power within the group. The very nature of food systems focuses on practical knowledge, where the real interest is around what one uses for pest control or how one picks okra without getting pricked by its stickers.

### **The Project**

The implementing team focused on developing initiatives to prepare Latinos to be part of local food projects. Evaluation was built into each project. Data collection was carried out during the development of the projects involved in these two rural communities from 2008 and 2010. Data sources in both Spanish and English (as appropriate) included focus groups with gardeners and beginning farmers, community organizers, evaluation reports, field-notes, and materials previously presented in conferences and meetings (Emery, 2010).

The Community Capitals Framework (CCF) was used when designing, implementing and evaluating both gardening projects, since CCF provides a way of looking at system change by analysing the assets mobilized in community change work across the capitals and the subsequent impacts on the various capitals. Built, financial, political, social, human, cultural, and natural capitals are the seven overlapping capitals that inform this framework. When they come together, they can help to create sustainable communities with healthy ecosystems, vital economies, and social inclusion (Flora and Flora, 2008, p. 19). The Community Capitals Framework makes it easy to recognize that community gardening and production of high-value products for local consumption can have multiple ends and that successful integration of immigrants into local food efforts can imply the mobilization and interaction of cultural and social capital between the symbolic communities involved. The framework was especially useful in discerning the success of alternative food systems, since production and profit were not the key measures in assessing their accomplishments. However, this analysis was not part of a participatory process, but used later in reflection by the researchers.

At the community college site, the project developed an eight-week bilingual, bicultural training program for Latino and Anglo (European American) beginning farmers to prepare them to farm vegetables and to assist them in the first year as tenants on the community college incubator farm. The course was offered through the continuing education program at the community college. In addition, the beginning farmers received assistance from the farm manager in direct marketing through a regional farmers' market and aid through the project in selling to regional retail outlets.

The new farmers held other jobs that kept them very busy, so the class was offered from 2 to 5 p.m. on Sundays, the only day of the week that was available for Latino families. Since that time-period took up a large chunk of family time, it was decided that the classes should serve the entire family, with activities planned for the children to introduce them to agriculture and growing things. For these families, being active together around producing and preparing food was an important legacy and identity to pass on to their children. Adult students (the parents and others of their generation) took turns bringing foods of their ethnicity for snacks. Both Anglos and Latinos brought food. Interpretation was available to bridge the language barrier during the course and for the seed-selection process. Hand-out materials were in both English and Spanish. For each session of the class, farmer-presenters were paired with professionals – Iowa State University (ISU) extension specialists, a private food business consultant, a Practical Farmers of Iowa staff person, and students from ISU's Graduate Program in Sustainable Agriculture. The farmer-teachers had fruit and vegetable or mixed crop-livestock farms. They produced high-value products rather than commodities, and generally had small acreages compared to their corn and soybean farmer neighbors in Iowa. Thus, they could empathize with both Latino and Anglo students' aspirations to become small-scale market gardeners and small livestock producers. This combination of professionals and farmers demonstrated to the students that there are farmers with similar values to their own who are working to improve their farming practices. These farmer-teachers, apart from the formal content of their lessons, conveyed the message that healthy farming practices lead to healthy bodies and environment – and that one can actually make a living from diversified agriculture. They shared their practical knowledge with the students, making the class very accessible for the students. In addition, the Iowa Foundation for Microenterprise and Community Vitality (IFMCV) and a representative from the state Farm Services Agency (FSA/USDA) made brief presentations to the class to let the students know about potential sources of funding for beginning farmers.

Eighteen individuals, nine Anglo and nine Latino, were trained in the first class and of the six teams of farmers that rented land from the incubator farm five were Latino families. Three teams sold at least some produce in a large farmers' market in a metropolitan center an hour's drive from the incubator farm and one experimented with selling directly to local and regional retailers. Two of the Latino families did not sell any of their produce. It was only midway through the season that the leaders in the project became aware of the fact that these families preferred to give any surplus production that the family itself could not consume to family and friends rather than selling the excess. They were more concerned about cementing social ties (building social capital) than they were about earning the modest amount of cash that sale of surplus produce would bring. Furthermore, since the most available sales outlet

was the regional farmers' market, someone in the family would have had to give up much of their Saturday in order to sell their excess produce there.

The class was repeated in 2010 with similar numbers and diversity of students. The class was again about half Anglo and half Latino. A few of the Latinos had done the class the previous year. A greater emphasis was placed on developing farm plans. The section on obtaining external financing was dropped since it was clear from the first years' experience that people were not yet ready to expand their operations to a point where financing was an issue. Only two Latino families continued as tenants on the incubator farm in 2010, and several new Anglo farmers participated, essentially reversing the ratio of the two groups from the previous year. Because almost all of the participants held regular jobs, in retrospect we should not have been surprised by the lack of attention given by the participants to financial capital.

The effort in the other community was aimed at broadening the number of local organizations involved in planning and executing the community garden program that was initiated a few years earlier by the Human Relations Department of one of the meat-packing plants in the town in conjunction with the County Chamber and Development Council. In 2010 there were only two empty plots of the 20 offered for gardening. For the 2011 season, the second year of the rejuvenation project, the number and size of plots was increased and tenancy expanded from Latinos only to include Anglo gardeners.

This site involved collaboration of the regional Resource Conservation and Development entity (RC& D, an NGO that operated under the wing of the Natural Resource Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), the city government (which provided the land and installed a new hydrant in the first year of the project), the New Iowans Center, and Iowa State University Extension, which provided the co-ordinator, a co-author of this article. The collaboration of local organizations in the community gardens project was so strong and enthusiastic by the fall of 2010 that the ISU team relinquished its role and allowed the effort to be organized entirely by local partners, with oversight provided by the RC&D. The new volunteer co-ordinator was a Master Gardener, trained through the ISU Extension Master Gardener program.

The ISU team worked with the Chamber of Commerce in the incubator community to determine the demand for local food from both Anglo and Latino businesses. COMIDA (County of Marshall Investing in Diversified Agriculture) was set up to try to supply that need, with support from Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture in its effort to build local food networks. Both the success of the incubator farm and establishment of a local food group were goals of COMIDA. COMIDA was led by a Food Systems Leadership Team composed primarily of two community college faculty members who were the core faculty for the entrepreneurial and diversified agriculture major at the college, the ISU Sociology Extension team (which included three of the authors of this article), along with the incubator farm manager (hired with grant moneys) and the regional director of NCAT, Hannah Lewis, who in the early part of the project had been a member of the ISU Sociology Extension team. Two Latinos were regular participants in the leadership team. Both were international students at ISU, from Mexico and Uruguay. Claudia Prado-Meza generally chaired the meetings, which were run by consensus. None of the Latino residents of the community participated regularly in these monthly leadership meetings, although the incubator farmers were invited. We thus broke one of the rules that we sought to enforce – holding meetings at times that Latinos could participate. While

the training space was not racialized, the space reserved for leadership in COMIDA was.

## Results

The projects were intended to lead to more inclusive, diverse communities, organizations and institutions, and to stronger, more viable local food systems.

More specifically, this meant 1. developing a successful farm incubator to include Latino immigrant tenants, 2. Latino/immigrant participation in local foods systems, and 3. designing a model that could be applied elsewhere. None of these objectives was fully achieved.

### *Including Latino Immigrant Tenants in a Farm Incubator*

All of the participants in both of the projects indicated that they had previous knowledge about agriculture either from their original countries or from other parts of the U.S. However, in both of the sites they had important challenges with their crops that they did not know how to solve and could not be successfully solved by the manager or assistants of the programs. When the project was initiated, ISU Extension, which was experiencing severe budget cut-backs at the hands of the state legislature, had reduced its field horticulturalists to two – one covering the eastern half of the state and the other the western half. A mentorship program involving existing small-scale vegetable farmers or perhaps Master Gardeners would have been an alternative form of delivering technical assistance, and such an effort was mounted in the community garden community. Emery in her evaluation reported that Latino farmers in particular preferred brief, timely, and practical consultations at the plot site, rather than off-site presentations or lectures. That was particularly true for those with less than a high-school education.

The farm incubator now has a completed washing and packing shed on the premises (dedicated in June 2010), thanks to an ear-mark from the local Congressional representative and the support of a local foundation. The community college also suffered budget cuts and was unable to devote enough of its own resources to make the farm prosper. While there is strong moral support from the administration for the effort, the farm remains peripheral to the main function of the college, which is to provide post-secondary training through academic course work. The incubator (with the wash-and-pack station and perhaps later an institutional kitchen) may prosper in the future, but become more closely linked to the academic objectives of the community college. It may be that a farm incubator with a focus on immigrant farmers would be more successful if it were not directly linked to an educational institution.

### *Latino/Immigrant Participation in Local Foods Systems*

An effort to develop a local food system consisting of individuals throughout the food value chain was partly an outgrowth of the monthly leadership team meetings that governed the development of the incubator farm in the community college. However, the emerging Anglo local food community, with leadership from the RC&D and involvement of a number of the Anglo farmers from the cross-cultural

farmer training class, chose to develop a local foods network independent of COMIDA.

Why were Latinos not included initially? The most obvious answer is that they were not an organized group, and that considerable effort would have to be made by the leadership of the local food group to bring them in. COMIDA had been organized in their name, but it did not have local Latino/a leadership. Thus, a strategic decision was made not to expend precious human resources to assure that Latino immigrants (who now make up nearly a quarter of the population of the city) would be active participants, although a general invitation was made. One influential local leader expressed that both goals of establishing a local food group and involving Latinos in it were important goals, but that focusing on the former did not negate bringing in Latinos later.<sup>4</sup>

In the more recent effort, the regional RC&D took the lead in organizing a series of four community meetings (held on Monday nights, when most Latino families would be unable to attend) that culminated, at least initially, in the establishment of a vibrant local food organization. Some of the meetings began with a meal catered by a local restaurant, which was encouraged to include local foods according to the season. Having a meal was seen as an important element in building a local food group. On one occasion, a Latino family brought home-made tamales to the local food planning meeting held in a veterans' home, but was discouraged from doing so in the future because of liability issues around food made in an uninspected kitchen. The willingness to share one's culture with others was trumped by bureaucracy.

The local food group was launched in November 2009, with a celebratory meal and election of a board of directors. The first project was to publish a local food directory for the area 30 miles around the county seat and holds periodic dinners featuring local foods and a speaker. One Latino, a restaurant owner, serves on the board of the local food group, but does not attend regularly. A Latino family, the most loyal Latino participant in the farm incubator, attends occasionally.

In the community gardens case, we believe a successful handing off of responsibility to a local team for coordinating the effort occurred. Although Latino families from the meat-packing plant were involved in their own gardens, they were not successfully included in the planning and technical assistance meetings. Latino advocates on the team, Latinos making up nearly half the local population and an increasing number of Latino professionals in responsible positions in city government and elsewhere facilitated the transition. It is not clear that the meat-packing plant will continue to recruit its workers to participate in the garden. The shift of the space from Latinos only to the whole community will undoubtedly influence the number of Latinos participating and the quality of that participation both positively and negatively.

#### *Designing a Model That Can Be Applied Elsewhere*

Emery found that emerging Latino/immigrant farmers and gardeners had a systemic view of their participation, understanding the multiple capitals impacted by their participation. *By substituting food produced by the family for purchased food, family and friends receive a better diet (human capital) and perhaps lower food costs (financial capital).* The gardeners contribute healthy food to the daily diet in their households and community (*social capital*), thereby easing pressure on the household budget, although the farmers and gardeners were unable to put a dollar value on this benefit.

Among many Latino immigrants, food crops serve a more important function than increasing a household's financial capital.

*Food is a major transmitter of cultural capital.* Cultural capital provides a particular manner for seeing the world, defining what has value, and determining what things are possible to change (Flora and Flora, 2008). It includes world-view, language, ways of knowing, and foodways. Erel (2010) argues that migration results in new ways of producing and reproducing cultural capital that builds on, rather than simply mirrors, power relations of either the country of origin or the country of destination. Migrants create mechanisms of validation for their cultural capital, negotiating both white and migrant institutions and networks. While Erel does not discuss foodways, growing food that represents one's homeland helps new immigrants regain health and keep their identity. Not only are gardening and farming infused with strong cultural meaning, but what one grows – since at least part of what is grown has implications for the food that the family eats – creates a cultural space that is also laden with strong inter-generational cultural values imbedded in national and local culture of both the sending and receiving nation.

Evaluation of these two projects and the study by Diego Thompson (2011) indicate the importance of family in Latinos' agricultural involvement and in foodways. Neither the individual nor community levels are as important as family for immigrant inclusion in their new destinations. Families, however, are not nuclear as in the dominant definition, but include extended family and even fictive kin, such as god-children and *padrinos* (god-parents). Immigrant participation in these two rural communities is driven by families' activities in social and cultural events. The cultural meanings of food and agriculture are reinforced and relived in the daily life with family, traditional meals, and *eventos*. We found that involving children in traditional cultural activities related to farming is important to their parents. Parents were perhaps as proud of what their children did during the farm planning and marketing classes, as what the parents themselves learned.

*Growing and preparing food offers a way to give back to the community.* Social capital is measured through the quality of relations between individuals, in terms of trust, neighborliness and reciprocity; the quantity and extent of relations, in terms of access to or incorporation into networks, groups and institutions; and a shared culture that offers relatively stable and accepted rules for behavior and common frameworks for orienting to the future (Tovey, 2002, p. 1). Latino social relationships in these two rural communities are driven by cultural/traditional/family meanings for which food and agriculture are essential.

*Participation in the farmer training fostered an inclusive, diverse and participatory community.* The bilingual inter-cultural class on farm planning, vegetable production, and marketing is particularly important in that it provided a first opportunity for Anglos to interact with members of the Latino community, and *vice versa*, on an equal basis, centered on a mutual interest. The team learned a great deal about designing and delivering a multicultural farm-training program to both Anglos and Latino immigrants with widely varying levels of formal education. As a result of the conversations between the gardeners and the institutional actors or stakeholders in this project, both groups made progress in creating a common vision of future community gardening and the possibility of selling product at the local farmers' market or elsewhere.

## Discussion

Cultural capital is of particular importance when assessing the outcomes of gardening and local food production, since it relates to foodways, past and present inter-generational experiences with farming and gardening, and identity. In the case of immigrant gardeners and market gardeners, it is important to look at cultural capital from the vantage point of the dominant culture (whiteness) and from the perspective of the immigrants.

Often, we learn more from our mistakes than from our successes. A fundamental misperception with which we entered this project was the assumption that immigrant Latinos – particularly those from rural parts of Latin America – would desire to engage in agricultural production for financial profit. We assumed that their prior experience with diversified small-scale agriculture would make them perfect candidates to become high-value agricultural producers and marketers, and that at least some of those individuals would welcome such farming as an alternative source of income to the high-pressure and disagreeable work in meat-packing plants. We assumed that financial capital was central to their interest in growing things. In fact, the motivations for engaging in gardening and small-scale agriculture are much more complex, having to do with family (human and social capital), with cementing social ties (social capital), with concerns around foods (cultural capital), and communing with livestock. Participants were not consulted concerning the capitals that motivated their participation in growing food. This lack of consultation became critical and explains why some participants lost interest and participation. We inadvertently created space for whiteness that should have been more diverse. Our inability to intentionally construct a space that fosters diversity may explain why some participants lost interest in participating in the incubator farm.

Cultural hegemony has resulted in the devaluing of the cultural capital of the new immigrants and others who do not contribute to the larger economic development project. Part of the development project in the United States has been to inculcate dominant foodways and the technologies and life-styles that support them into peoples defined as ‘the other’. ‘The other’ includes all practitioners of alternative and local food systems, regardless of ethnicity, national origin, race, or sex. However, when one examines cultural, social, and political capital among those in this alternative food movement, some of the ‘whiteness’ of the dominant paradigm rubs off and governs relations among those groups.

In part, it might be that the racialized group around whom COMIDA was built (and whose language was used to name it, though Latino residents were not incorporated into its leadership) was viewed as a hindrance in bringing other Anglos into the local food group. The organizers of the local food group may have anticipated complications in terms of negotiating language differences, added efforts in securing Latino participation (had it not been difficult to get them involved in the leadership group of COMIDA?), and possible social and cultural misunderstandings between the two groups. After all, wasn’t organizing a local food group with participation of people all along the food chain difficult enough? Perhaps a step-by-step process would be preferable, they reasoned: build a functioning group and then bring Latinos into it. And, after all, a Latino restaurant owner was included on the board. (His failure to participate in subsequent meetings of the group may have been due to the whiteness of the space created.)

Some gardeners see commercial opportunities where they did not before, and participants learned that Latinos and Anglos can work together in spite of cultural

differences. From the community garden site, not one community gardener sold any produce. It was all consumed at home or given away to family and friends. Families' cultural values related to growing things and sharing them made selling the produce a much lower priority (Thompson, 2011).

## Conclusions

We sought to devise a program that would incorporate Latino immigrant farmers and gardeners into local food systems in Iowa and to learn from the process to inform future efforts in Iowa. Two approaches to that end were tried in two communities with substantial immigrant populations: one approach was to train both Anglo and Latino aspiring farmers to participate as tenants on a community college-owned incubator farm and the other was to rejuvenate a community garden program that had been started by the local subsidiary of a regional meat-packing firm for its employees with support of city government and the local economic development organization.

Collaboration to build and strengthen local food systems that feature multicultural value chains underpinned the project. We attempted to link Latino organizing efforts with grass-roots planning for local food systems. This included bringing new vegetable/specialty growers (immigrant and native born) together with experienced local growers and professionals; establishing a bilingual farmer training program with opportunity to rent plots for organic production at a reasonable rate; and planning and developing marketing systems that link these small-scale growers with local consumers looking for healthy, locally grown produce.

We found that the relatively high level of bonding social capital within the dominant group working for a local food inadvertently bars others from access to a particular group or network. The dominant group working for an alternative food system saw itself in opposition to the industrial agriculture paradigm of most of Iowa agriculture. This oppositional position strengthened their boundaries, and made it more difficult to integrate members who did not share their sustainable agriculture paradigm. Further Latinos identified with their families, not their community. These different approaches to local food issues made finding common ground difficult at times.

In our experience with immigrants in small towns of Iowa, human and political capital (knowledge and power) influenced social and cultural differences that are used either as attributes or barriers, depending on the dominant groups' interests. Community organizing and social change have an important role in overcoming these kinds of power barriers (Biklen, 1983), particularly for the inclusion of new immigrants in small towns in the Midwest. But, these efforts can also be determined by unpredictable results as a consequence of the dynamics of power between community organizers and participants (Biklen, 1983). Immigrants' inclusion needs to be analysed from complex dynamics approaches that need to leave room for unpredictability, uncertainty, flexibility, and innovation (Geyer, 2003).

Our experience in working with immigrants and local food efforts in Iowa shows that new social relationships are intersected by critical aspects such as trust (a component of social capital), political power (political capital), knowledge (human capital), and ethnic and cultural differences (cultural capital). Integration through food and agriculture could be achieved if minority groups are actively involved from the beginning of the projects from the bottom up and including inter-generational ap-

proaches that can enrich the comprehension of food and agriculture of immigrants and more political representation of the second-generation of immigrant families. Our objective, motivated in part by social justice goals, did not correspond with either the goals of the Latino families, who were interested in inter-generational cultural goals and intergroup social capital goals, or the goals of the Anglo local food movement, extremely concerned about sustainable agriculture and viable local economies. The relatively greater success in rejuvenating the community gardens as compared to the team's intervention in the farm incubator project is related to outsiders playing a more limited role in time and depth of involvement in decision-making in the former case than the latter. Whiteness as an unconscious mechanism of exclusion can be overcome by focusing on the actual diverse strengths of the new immigrant farmers, which need to be mutually discovered rather than assumed.

## Notes

1. Flora (2009) suggests that there are in fact many social movements that use good food as a rallying cry.
2. They define *imaginaries* as 'sets of values and symbols that shape the discourses and practices of a social group' (Alkon and McCullen, 2011, p. 998).
3. Alkon and McCullen observed efforts by individuals occupying different positions in the two farmers markets seeking to incorporate into the discourse discussion of the ethnic and social diversity of members in the alternative or just sustainability value chain: 'Thus we are neither completely dismissive nor completely laudatory of farmers markets' abilities to contribute to just sustainability, but recognize that any potential contribution requires that market participants recognize and confront the liberal, elite whiteness that pervades their discourses and practices' (Alkon and McCullen, 2011, p. 939).
4. In 2008, a different approach had been attempted by INCA, the Iowa Network for Community Agriculture, with support from the Chamber of Commerce, ISU Sociology Extension, and the Community College. In that instance, Anglos (European Americans) and Latinos were being organized separately, in anticipation of later being brought together into a single group. A couple of meetings were held with each cultural group (Anglo and Latino) with significant participation and interest from both groups. The effort was truncated by changes in INCA priorities and the organizer's need to find a full-time industrial job.

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