Science Solutions to Labor Challenges

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NIFA Mission:

- Invest in and advance agricultural research, education, and extension to solve societal challenges
NIFA Listens:

• Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) Conference of the Joint Council of Extension Professionals
  —Current & future challenges in agriculture?
Current & future challenges in agriculture:

Labor concerns dominated the discussion
Issue:

• Agricultural producers need consistent labor supply
  – Qualified and in sufficient numbers
    • Seasonal labor for harvesting specialty crops
    • Long term workers
      – Livestock management
      – Processing facilities
Issue:

• Immigrant labor - documented and undocumented
  — Current H-2A policy governing temporary agricultural workers doesn’t fit the needs of agriculture.
Issue:

• Farm workers are the key to the U.S. food system
  – An inadequate labor supply results in food waste - unharvested crops
    • Economic loss to producers
    • Higher costs to consumers
Answer?
Let’s hear what our panel of experts has to say.