We live in the age of uncertainty, under a continuous assault that undermines the integrity and sense of wellbeing of ourselves and our children. As a migrant farmworker organization, our membership is fully aware of this reality. For most, it is the struggle to survive that guides their actions. However, for some this realization is a call to action to strive for a better life by deciding to do something to change their situation. They understand that alone they cannot make it and seek a collective effort for the possibility for achieving their dreams. We call for all our friends and allies to unite for the achievement of the dream; the moment is now to join us in our Food Justice Campaign.

We would say that we are not alone in the struggle to survive. The challenge for all of us is how to learn to act together in order to create a new reality that will be grounded in a society that is just and fair for all. **We realize that our struggle is a workers’ rights struggle grounded in Food Justice.**

We understand that in our current society, we live for the benefit of a few at the cost of many and of the world that we live in. Most people realize this but fail to take a stand to stop and change this reality. There are also those that are speaking out but don’t see how they are connected to others that are in the same situation and, as a result, are isolated from each other. As a migrant farmworker organization, **we realize that it is in the collective action of all that we can bring about change.** That is the challenge we face today.

We cannot accept the current food system as something that is immutable and never changing. We cannot trust that elected officials will act representing our best interests. We cannot let the injustices that have become so
El Comité de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agrícolas (CATA)
The Farmworker Support Committee

CATA  
P.O. Box 510  
4 South Delsea Dr.  
Glassboro, NJ 08028  
(856) 881-2507  
Cata@cata-farmworkers.org  
www.cata-farmworkers.org

66 Atlantic St.  
Bridgeton, NJ 08302  
(856) 575-5511

P.O. Box 246  
220 Birch St.  
Kennett Square, PA 19348  
(610) 444-9696

229 W. Main St.  
2nd Floor Unit 2-100-01  
Salisbury, MD 21801  
(410) 572-5959

CATA is a non-profit, migrant farmworker organization governed by and comprised of farmworkers who are actively engaged in the struggle for better working and living conditions.

Staff
General Coordinator:  
Nelson Carrasquillo
Administrator:  
Marge Niedda
Organizers:  
José Manuel Guzmán  
Jessica Culley  
Kathia Ramirez
Communications Coordinator:  
Meghan Hurley
Immigration Specialist:  
Leila Borrero Krouse

Photos: CATA Staff

Notice of nondiscrimination
In accordance with 40 CFR 5.140 and 7.95 of Title IX better known as the Civil Rights Act, Comité de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agrícolas (CATA) does not discriminate against anyone from participating in our educational programs or activities based on race, color, national origin, age, or physical/emotional abilities. If you have any questions or complaints, please contact Nelson Carrasquillo, Executive Director, or Marge Niedda, Administrator, at 856-881-2507.

Collective Action... Continued from page 1

common create in us a kind of powerlessness that pervades our thinking and leads us to assume an attitude of submissive acceptance.

We can’t live like this. The struggle of our membership forces the realization for the need to transform passive acceptance to resistance and alternatives. In order to control our lives we need to start with realizing that we can’t act alone, that we need to be in solidarity with all people both here and abroad, and we need to protect our environment so that it would be there for our children’s children.

We invite you join us in our Food Justice Campaign as a step in the right direction. By acting in solidarity we will support each other and enable ourselves to move from stagnant acceptance to a proactive sense of value of ourselves.

How to Support the Food Justice Campaign

Our main instrument for achievement is the Food Justice Label promoted by the Agricultural Justice Project as it represents the real possibility of what can be achieve in a Food System grounded in the respect of human life and of Mother Earth. It is based on the just treatment of workers and fair payment to farmers and growing food free of pesticides within an environment that affirms the sanctity of life.

You can support the campaign and buy Food Justice Certified products. Some Whole Foods stores carry Food Justice Certified lentils, beans, and grains in the bulk bin section. Look for this label to know you are supporting workers rights and food justice with you purchase.

If you have a farm or business and are interested in more information about certification, call us at 856-881-2507 or email catanj@aol.com

Also, knowledge is power! CATA can come and speak on Food Justice issues, call us for more information, 856-881-2507.

For more information on the Food Justice Campaign, visit www.cata-farmworkers.org
RadioCATA is on the Air!

BY: MEGHAN HURLEY, COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

RadioCATA, CATA’s low-power, FM community radio station has started broadcasting! In September, CATA members, with the assistance of Prometheus Radio Project from Philadelphia, PA, built the station and installed the equipment and in October, we started broadcasting on the air and streaming on the internet. Members see the radio station as a crucial communication tool in order to unite the migrant Latino community as they struggle for justice in their workplaces and communities.

The station broadcasts from 102.5 FM in Bridgeton, NJ and streams online for the rest of the world to listen to at www.radiocata.com. We currently have community members who volunteer their time as DJs with programming that includes music, news, information on CATA’s activities and mission. The radio is also becoming a space where listeners can talk about questions and concerns they have in their workplaces and communities. Below are pictures from the station build and of our new studio.

CATA would like to thank Krista Zabor for designing and Kevin Wheeler for digitizing RadioCATA’s logo.
I’ve just returned from Paris, France from the COP21 (Conference of Parties) that took place the first two weeks of December 2015. COP21 is the UN Negotiations between almost 200 countries on how to address climate change across the globe. I spent 10 days as a member of the “It Takes Roots to Weather the Storm” delegation, comprised of 100 participants from across the Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, the Climate Justice Alliance, and the Indigenous Environmental Network. It was encouraging to be part of a collaboration supporting climate change while also showing our support for the people of Paris. I’m sharing here about what I learned and am bringing back to our work here at CATA.

We can’t rely on our governments to take action soon enough. As an immigrant organization, this is something we see all the time. We’ve been waiting for the federal government to provide leadership on immigration reform for the last 20+ years, and it is the same with climate justice. Instead of being a force to move the international negotiations forward, the U.S. proved to be the opposite. We can see this influence in an agreement that removed language addressing human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples and in an agreement that while purporting to hold the temperature increase to 1.5°C, actually could result in an increase of more than 3°C.

On December 10, 2015, International Human Rights Day, our delegation held an action to call out the U.S. role in hindering the negotiations. The statement we wrote for that day included the following,

“Here in Paris, as with every COP before now, we see the role of the US in holding back any efforts at real mandatory emissions cuts, and accepting true historic and current responsibility as a leading greenhouse gas emitter. The US has been leading other member states in a strategy of pollution trading that allows big oil to continue to pollute our communities and also threatens the livelihoods of indigenous communities from the Global North to the Global South. The decisions coming out of COP21 will lead to massive violations of human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples.”

Our movement is strong, vibrant, diverse, connected, and grounded. Despite what was happening during the negotiations, the delegation itself was a testament to the resiliency of grassroots communities around the country. Our organizations represented all types of communities of color and working class communities. We are working on fighting the industries that cause pollution and carbon emissions, whether it be industrial agriculture, coal mines, or oil refineries. We are building alternatives – workplaces based on respect and cooperation, food systems based on Mother Earth and where we can control how we feed ourselves and our communities, promoting and building access to renewable energy and more.

We connected the issues confronted by our communities in their workplaces, in their homes, with the water, with abuse by the police, with the growth of the military, with the scapegoating of immigrant communities, with the struggles of indigenous communities for rights to their lands and water – here in the United States and around the world. The connections were real and we stayed grounded, remembering the struggles of those

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who have gone before us, who give us love and power and strength. On December 9, 2015, we collaborated with local French organizers working within the Black African Muslim community to hold a solidarity action outside a migrant detention facility on the outskirts of the city. We came together in a true and powerful way to demonstrate that climate justice is human rights, migrant rights, and solidarity.

After the Paris Accords were signed, we released another statement as a delegation.

“We join the call for System Change, Not Climate Change because we know that the fundamental driving force behind the climate crisis is capitalism, and the very nature of the extractive economy as a whole. Climate justice is not only about the environment. It is tied to jobs, housing, poverty, migration, food security, gender equality, access to health care. System Change requires fundamental respect for human rights, particularly the rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the rights of Mother Earth.”

This delegation had the name “It Takes Roots to Weather the Storm” to signify that the work of addressing climate change must happen by deeply engaging communities impacted by the effects of climate change. We must continue to build our roots by engaging the community and building a political analysis of the situation confronting farmworkers and immigrant workers around the impacts of conventional agriculture, the impacts of exposure to pesticides, and the exploitation faced in the workplace. We must continue to engage the community to build solutions – workers organizing together, building community gardens, controlling their own resources etc. Not only must we continue to build internally within the immigrant communities where we work, but we must continue to connect with other communities as well by building relationships and strengthening this movement.

In the end, the Paris COP21 gave me hope and excitement to see what we will achieve. We will weather the storm and we will build a better future. I will close by sharing one of the chants we used to ground ourselves at several moments and that moved me.

*It is our duty to fight for our freedom*  
*It is our duty to win*  
*We must love and protect one another*  
*We have nothing to lose but our chains.*

Photos from various actions during the Paris COP21.

CATA is a member of the Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, which in part sponsored this delegation. We want to also thank those who supported Jessica on this trip through donations, it was a meaningful experience that we will continue to build off of in our work.
Although Agroecology might be a technical word it is simply the knowledge and the consciousness of a peasant. Many agricultural workers were peasants back in their home countries therefore they have the knowledge not only to have access to chemical free food but to also share this wisdom with future generations. Pesticides are destroying our bodies and are contaminating our earth. It is important to put their knowledge into practice and to keep fighting for food sovereignty because as human beings we have the right to healthy and safe food produced within a system that respects the rights of everyone involved.

In February 2015, CATA was invited to participate in the first Agroecology Encounter in the United States that took place in Florida. As a follow up, we participated in a process of Formacion with other organizations nationwide. Formacion does not have a direct translation to English but it refers to political and pedagogical training to deepen our collective knowledge about the Peasant to Peasant methodologies and others with the objective to help us build an agroecology vision and movement among migrant and working families. As a third step of this process we participated in the 5th International Encounter on Agroecology that took place in Artemisia, Cuba to learn from other Formacion processes and how these methodologies have been implemented and have been successful.

From November 22 to November 27, 2015, CATA participated in the V International Encounter on Agroecology, Sustainable Agriculture, and Cooperatives in Cuba. There were 255 participants from 28 different countries. There were a total of 60 delegates from the United States which included non-profits, farmers, and farmworker organizations like ours. During this week, we had the opportunity to experience and observe the ways agroecology is implemented in this country. In total, there were 113 farm visits in 45 different municipalities of the country. Within those visits, we were also given the opportunity to see the cooperatives structure and how it is essential to farmers nationwide. In addition, there were presentations from other participants about the work that they are doing around the world around reviving ancestral knowledge of farming, climate change, biodiversity, and seed conservation.

During the second week, November 30 to December 4, 2015, we participated in a week-long course about the Peasant to Peasant Methodology. Additionally, other conversations revolved around climate change and how agroecology is an alternative to such. This was an opportunity to connect with other organizations nationwide and internationally who are working towards similar goals. As a farmworker organization, it is important to work together to better the conditions of workers and to get others involved in this struggle. Participation from all sides is extremely important because when we do something collectively, we can see changes and improvements.
CATA has a new website! Go to www.cata-farmworkers.org and check it out.

Keep up with CATA on Facebook! Just search for CATA - The Farmworker Support Committee to see pictures and updates of our members and the work that we do.

CATA is proud to be a member of EarthShare New Jersey (ESNJ), a non-profit organization created and directed by member organizations to represent us in employee workplace giving campaigns.

Please consider making a donation to CATA through your workplace. Don’t have a workplace giving campaign at your office? Contact CATA to assist you in setting one up. The code for CATA for the Federal Campaign is 39411 and the NJ State Campaign is 3341. Visit www.cata-farmworkers.org for a complete list. For more information on ESNJ go to www.earthsharenj.org.
Yes, I want to be part of the farmworkers’ struggle for justice!

Here is my donation of:
$30____ $50____ $75____
$100____ $250____ Other____

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