This year has been a tumultuous one – one of constant change and attack against our immigrant communities. From Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids to the cancellation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS), to the travel ban, it has really been a long year. Yet, in the midst of all this we’ve seen many in our community come together to stand up and fight for the immigrant community.

This year, we’ve held meaningful rallies to fight for our Dreamers – youth who have been able to build a future and provide stability to their families through the DACA program. We’ve seen Bridgeton become the first community in Southern New Jersey to approve and implement a program to provide municipal identifications to all community residents regardless of immigration status. We’ve joined together with community allies and other organizations to build a solidarity support system for the immigrant community and fight together on these issues and more.

As we address the challenges in our communities, we receive vital support from a number of national alliances that help provide training, learning opportunities, connections for our members with peer organizations around the country, and the opportunity to amplify our local struggles within the national dialogue. CATA is a proud member of the following alliances:

Continued on page 3...
2017 Highlights

- CATA Organizers visited with over 1000 farmworkers on farm labor camps and communities throughout Southern New Jersey, sharing crucial information on workers’ rights, health and safety, and immigration.

- CATA members joined allies and supporters participating in advocacy activities throughout the year including marching for worker’s right on May Day, holding two rallies in support of DACA, and protesting in front of Perdue for poultry workers’ rights.

- CATA members in Salisbury, Maryland broke ground on their own organic community garden over the summer. The Salisbury garden joins CATA’s other community gardens in New Jersey and Pennsylvania providing much needed access to organic produce to the Latino and surrounding communities.

- CATA members and staff played a vital role in the creation of a Municipal Identification Program in Bridgeton, NJ this year. CATA members will be some of the first city residents to receive the ID this month.

- CATA held over 20 Know Your Rights Trainings with the immigrant community, providing legal resources and information on their rights when interacting with law enforcement and Immigration officials.

- CATA Organizers led 26 health and safety trainings with a total of 234 participants on heatstroke, pesticide safety, and HIV/STD awareness and prevention.

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.
Reflection…Continued from page 1

- Domestic Fair Trade Association
- U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance
- Food Chain Workers Alliance
- Grassroots Global Justice Alliance
- National Poultry Workers’ Coalition
- HEAL Food Alliance

While we are certain that 2018 will bring new challenges, we are equally certain that we will continue to build this movement for immigrant justice, for worker justice and for food justice in our region and, together with our allies and friends, we will achieve significant gains for our community! Some of the issues we anticipate working on in 2018 are Driver’s Licenses for the undocumented in New Jersey, raising the minimum wage in Maryland, and organizing mushroom workers in Pennsylvania.

At our Annual Assembly in October, the City of Bridgeton’s mayor, Albert Kelly, addressed CATA’s membership sharing with them his advice on how best to fight for and achieve changes in their communities. He told them that in order to create positive change in their communities they have to be present, come together, and make their voices heard. This is an important message, one that CATA members are always striving to live out and in this coming year we will continue to be present, to come together, and to raise our voices for justice.

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.
2017 in CATA

Students in Bridgeton, NJ helped design a new sign for CATA’s Organic Community Garden.

On April 28, 2017 CATA, Oxfam, and other allies stood in front of the main Perdue processing plant in Salisbury to show support for workers’ rights and to call on Perdue to do the right thing for their workers.

CATA members and allies marched for workers' right on May 1, International Workers Day.

CATA members met in October at the Annual Assembly discussed their plan of action for the next year.
Hundreds of members of the Bridgeton Latino community packed a City Council meeting to show support for a Municipal ID Program that CATA played a vital role in creating.

U.S. Senator Cory Booker, from NJ, met with CATA members to discuss issues important to the immigrant community.

CATA members broke ground this summer on an organic community garden in Salisbury, MD.

CATA held two rallies in support of DACA this year, one on the steps of the county courthouse in Bridgeton, NJ and one in front of U.S. Representative Frank Lobiondo’s office, demanding that Congress support Dreamers and pass a clean Dream Act.
Sowing Agroecology, Harvesting Food Sovereignty

By: Kathia Ramirez

Over the past two years, CATA has been exploring the concept of Agroecology and incorporating its principles into our work. In 2015, we participated in the first U.S. Agroecology Encounter and since this encounter, we have been actively participating in the Agroecology movement at the national and international level.

Agroecology promotes sustainable agriculture and centers on food production that makes the best use of nature’s goods and services while not damaging these resources. “It represents both a form of agricultural production and a process for organizing and building community self-determination. Agroecology brings communities together in the creation of their own solutions to produce healthy food and conserve soil and water. Agroecology is based on communities having access to and control of local resources like land, water and seeds and on working toward local food sovereignty. Because it is developed by communities and maintained through democratic social movements, agroecology nourishes the local and global struggle for food sovereignty and climate justice, which is growing more urgent every day.”

During this time, we have also become part of a process known as Formación which refers to a process in which we build on collective knowledge and learn from different successful methodologies, tools, and experiences of Agroecology Schools around the world. Some of the groups that we studied included MST- the Landless Workers’ Movement in Brazil, and ANAP- National Association of Small Farmers in Cuba. Also, as part of this process, we have initiated our own agroecology practices here in the U.S. and this year, we had the opportunity to participate in learning exchanges in Puerto Rico, Mexico, and South Africa.

Throughout these exchanges, we share and learn from other organizations’ experiences, practices and struggles. In April, we participated in an exchange in Puerto Rico, hosted by Proyecto Agroecológico El Josco Bravo in Toa Alta. During this exchange, we learned about Puerto Rican struggles and history of agriculture as well as how people are organizing and the fight they have against Monsanto and their seed corporation in Puerto Rico. In August, we participated in the International Agroecology Learning Exchange in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico. The exchange was a space to talk about Indigenous Peoples’ rights as well as women’s rights including the struggles that both of these communities face with government corruption and the role of big corporations in the destruction of land, families and lives.

Being able to participate in the Chiapas Encounter was an opportunity to connect with people from the same communities as many of our CATA members and to learn how they are organizing. Lastly, this past October, we participated in the U.S. South Africa Learning Exchange. Two years ago, representatives from the Mopani Farmers Association and the Surplus People’s Project in Cape Town South Africa were visiting farmworker


Continued on page 7...
Thank You!

We want to thank everyone who came out for our first ever Fundraiser for Immigrant Rights in October. With your help, we were able to raise over $5000. We appreciate all the support that our allies have shown to CATA this past year and we look forward to continue to work together in the coming year.

Agroecology…Continued from page 6

and farmer organizations here in the U.S. Then, this year, a total of 8 U.S. delegates participated and traveled to different provinces in South Africa learning about different agricultural methods, political struggles, and food insecurity in the region, as well as injustices within the food system.

All of these exchanges have given us the opportunity to connect and be in solidarity with other struggles across the globe. We see that this is not just a local or even national struggle, but a global struggle. We recognize that it is important to maintain our traditions of farming that have been passed on from generation to generation, but those traditions are disappearing rapidly. While on these exchanges we see many parallels with our own struggles including the need for land, impacts on underserved communities, violation of workers’ rights, no access to healthy fresh food, unfair wages, and so much more.

It is important to us to bring these experiences home to the work CATA members are doing on the ground. What we learn through these exchanges is applied within our Food Justice work both in theory and practice. Through our community gardens, we are able to apply such agroecological practices as compost, companion planting, pest control, and other methods of agriculture that do not rely on the use of hazardous chemicals.

We also have started visiting other local projects in the areas where we work learn from one another and share diverse agricultural knowledge. Through these exchanges, we also see our interconnectedness beyond the principles of agroecology to issues of racial and gender injustices and immigration.

Overall, these exchanges have given us a way to reach out to a broader audience and for CATA members to see the value of their work and culture. It is crucial for farmworkers to understand the importance of their role within the whole food movement because in order to move forward in improving the system, their realities need to be addressed. Our hope is to continue the fight for a fair food system and through our community gardens provide the space for people to grow their own food, practice working collectively and share sustainable agriculture knowledge to build food sovereignty in their communities.
I want to be an ally with CATA’s work for justice!

Here is my donation of:

$30____ $50____ $75____ $100____

$250____ $500_____ Other_____

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