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FUNDING FOR FARM WORKERS

*UMOS to distribute over \$1 million in financial assistance and PPE
to farm workers in 11 states*

UMOS has implemented a “Farmworker Protection Project” to assist migrant and seasonal farmworkers and employers in Wisconsin, Missouri, Northern Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Florida, Minnesota, Kansas, Texas, Indiana, and Michigan.

Industries within the U.S. food supply chain, including field agricultural work, have been deemed as essential industries. Migrant and seasonal farm workers who work in those industries have been deemed as essential workers. Yet, industry-wide worker protective measures, safety equipment, safety standards, monitoring efforts and hazard pay have not been uniformly put in place.

“To date, UMOs has distributed and/or shipped over 78,000 masks, 8,500 pairs of gloves, and will also distribute safety glasses and bottles of hand sanitizers to farm workers and farm worker serving agencies in 11 states,” says Lupe Martinez, President and Chief Executive Officer, UMOs. “Farmers and food processors will also be assisted with PPE equipment as needed.”

UMOS intends to provide up to \$623,000, through 2021, in financial and food assistance directly to migrant and seasonal farm workers impacted by COVID-19. “Farm workers and their families, can receive a one-time COVID-19 related financial payment that can be used for loss of income due to delays in farm or food processing plant openings, permanent or temporary closings to allow for deep cleanings in plants or farms, deaths in the family due to the coronavirus, and for loss of income due to quarantining or hospitalizations.

Financial assistance and PPE supplies, as well as distribution of COVID-19 information and resources have been made possible through a generous \$1 million contribution from an anonymous donor advised fund at the Chicago Community Foundation, with additional support from the Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation and Justice for Migrant Women.

“We are grateful to those supporters who stepped up to assist essential workers that were not included in previous government relief efforts,” said Martinez.

“We are also gratified that Governor Evers acknowledged the contributions made by migrant and seasonal farm workers to Wisconsin’s overall agricultural workforce in his original COVID-19 order #25 that specified specific employer safety mandates for farm workers, and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development’s (DWD) extended COVID-19 safety order.

According to DWD, there are over 4,000 migrant and seasonal farm workers, plus H2A workers, that contribute to the state’s agricultural industry.

Crops planted and harvested by migrant and seasonal farmworkers in Wisconsin include apples, cabbage, carrots, corn, cucumbers, onions, peppers, beans, peas, pickles, and strawberries.

For more information call 1-800-279-UMOS.

UMOS is a non-profit, advocacy organization that provides programs and services which improves the employment, educational, health and housing opportunities for under-served populations.