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**FARMWORKER JUSTICE APPLAUDS EXECUTIVE ORDER  
WHICH MAY STRENGTHEN PROTECTIONS FOR AGRICULTURAL  
WORKERS**

Farmworker Justice President Bruce Goldstein participated in a White House press conference Thursday where President Obama signed a new Executive Order governing labor practices by federal contractors that could benefit American farmworkers, whose existing labor protections are often violated.

The President's [Executive Order](#) requires prospective federal contractors to disclose findings of labor law violations and gives agencies more guidance on how to consider labor violations when awarding federal contracts. Because the federal government is a major purchaser of food for school lunch and other programs, the order could reach into the fields and ranches supplying big food contractors, where workers often are victims of wage theft and work in illegally unsafe circumstances.

The [Executive Order](#) includes the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, the principal federal employment law for farmworkers. In addition, the EO applies to certain subcontractors, which can mean that when a wholesaler of produce is the government contractor, the grower that supplies the produce to the wholesaler may be subject to monitoring for violations of labor protections.

“We believe the President’s Executive Order, while no substitute for needed congressional action raising the minimum wage, is an important step forward in protecting workers, including those in agriculture. Government contractors and their subcontractors should comply with labor protections. We applaud President Obama for taking these needed steps,” said Goldstein.

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*Farmworker Justice is a nonprofit litigation, advocacy and education organization that seeks to empower migrant and seasonal farmworkers to improve wages, working conditions, immigration policy, health, occupational safety and access to justice.*