

Farm Workers in Western Canada: A History of Injustices and Activism

Farm workers in Western Canada have a long history of facing injustices. These include exploitation, discrimination, and lack of access to basic labor rights. However, farm workers have also fought back against these injustices, forming unions, organizing protests, and advocating for change. This article will explore the history of farm worker activism in Western Canada, from the early 20th century to the present day.

Early History of Farm Worker Activism

The first farm workers' unions in Western Canada were formed in the early 20th century. These unions were small and localized, but they began to lay the foundation for a broader farm worker movement. In the 1930s, the Great Depression led to widespread unemployment and poverty among farm workers. This in turn led to an increase in farm worker activism. In 1935, the United Farmers of Canada (UFC) formed the Farm Workers' Union (FWU). The FWU was the first national farm workers' union in Canada.



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Post-World War II Era

After World War II, the FWU continued to grow and organize farm workers across Western Canada. However, the union faced significant opposition from growers and governments. In 1956, the FWU was expelled from the UFC. This was a major setback for the farm worker movement. However, farm workers continued to organize and fight for their rights. In 1966, the FWU merged with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). This merger gave the FWU access to more resources and support.

The Farm Workers Union Today

The Farm Workers Union (FWU) is the largest farm workers' union in Canada. It represents over 25,000 farm workers in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. The FWU fights for the rights of farm workers, including fair wages, decent working conditions, and access to health care and other benefits.

The FWU has been involved in a number of important campaigns in recent years. These include the campaign for a minimum wage for farm workers, the campaign for paid sick leave, and the campaign for better housing for farm workers. The FWU has also been active in advocating for immigration reform, which would allow more farm workers to come to Canada and work legally.

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Further Reading

* [Farm Workers Union website](https://www.fwu.ca/) * [Canadian Labour Congress website](https://www.clc-ctc.ca/en) * [United Food and Commercial Workers Union website](https://www.ufcw.org/)



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