



The Ethical Charter Implementation Program for Farm Labor Contractors

Following the 2014 Los Angeles Times “Product of Mexico” series on labor abuses in the agroexport sector, the Produce Marketing Association and United Fresh Produce Association formed a joint committee to create the Ethical Charter on Responsible Labor Practices. Published in 2018, the Charter outlines 13 principles to guide the management of agricultural labor, covering areas such as legal compliance, professional conduct and human rights.

While these principles established a strong and common foundation, they lacked a mechanism for enforcement or verification, leaving buyers no basis to determine which of their suppliers were actually upholding the Charter. Four retailers worked together to pilot several approaches to Ethical Charter implementation, and worked with their suppliers to launch ECIP in November 2023.



Learn, Assess, Benchmark (LAB)

LAB helps FLCs self-assess their operation on 56 different work areas, systems and policies to support their ongoing assessment and continuous improvement.



Scan this code to begin your journey with FLC LAB

Through FLC LAB, FLCs are invited to:

Learn

about the management systems required to align with the Ethical Charter.

Assess

their own management systems and explore resources to strengthen them.

Benchmark

their performance over time on a continuous improvement journey.

How to Build a Positive Engagement Profile in FLC LAB

Here's a breakdown on how FLCs can get started in building their engagement profile: Use the QR code on page 1 to fill out the form and request an invite to FLC LAB. Create a login and invite others from your operation to join.

- Assess management systems in FLC LAB by evaluating the operation's performance in 56 different work areas, systems and policies.
- Access resources and additional information about each area. Specific self-assessment on each of the management systems is for internal use only, and will not be seen by your customers. ECIP is a capacity-building tool, not a compliance test, responses will not be seen by anyone outside those you invite within your operation.
- As the operation is assessed, an engagement profile will populate. Over time, as the FLC credibly engages with FLC LAB, accesses resources and re-assesses management systems, the engagement profile will increase.
- Get ahead of future updates—growers in ECIP will soon earn credit for working with FLCs who participate in FLC LAB.



Scan this code to learn how FLCs earn engagement stars



How to Respond to the Assess Channel

The Assess channel is designed to help evaluate current labor management systems and identify areas for improvement. When completing the assessment, it is important to provide honest and accurate responses. FLC LAB is a learning tool that supports a continuous improvement journey. As FLCs assess the operation, the engagement profile will populate. Over time, as the FLC credibly engages with FLC LAB, accesses resources and re-assesses its management systems, the engagement profile will improve.



The Value of ECIP to FLCs



Capacity Building

ECIP offers resources and a marketplace (ethicalcharterprogram.org/marketplace) of expert service providers who can help employers address key challenges in labor management, strengthening systems and responding to retail customer requirements.



Common Program

By participating in ECIP, the entire produce industry can engage in social responsibility reporting that is aligned with multiple buyers. FLCs can showcase their social responsibility efforts and certifications and highlight areas where they are actively improving.

How is My Data Being Collected, Used and Stored?

FLCs have access to their own data, but this information is aggregated and anonymized when reported to suppliers and buyers. This approach encourages honest self-assessment without fear of commercial repercussions, while also providing valuable insights into industry-wide labor practices. Data is used to track progress and identify trends within the industry, helping to shape future resources and support provided through ECIP. This aggregated, anonymous data is used to track engagement and improvement over time, helping to drive the continuous improvement process that is at the heart of ECIP.

More questions?
Check out the FAQ
page

