# Equitable Food Initiative

**Responsibly Grown. Farmworker Assured.™**

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## Our History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>First stakeholders meetings to discuss &quot;new approaches&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Kevin Boyle facilitates multi-stakeholder group</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Standards development and organizational design begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Peter O’Driscoll hired as Executive Director</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Prototype training begins at Andrew &amp; Williamson Fresh (A&amp;W)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>EFI standards completed and published on website; 4 farms initiate training</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>First certifications granted to A&amp;W, Oxnard and Earthbound, Holtville</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Incorporation as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit; Certified farms in Mexico and Canada</td>
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## Who is EFI?

The Equitable Food Initiative (EFI) is transforming agriculture by bringing together workers, growers, retailers and consumers in a program to provide **Responsibly Grown. Farmworker Assured.™** fruits and vegetables.

EFI was incorporated as a nonprofit in 2015 after nearly a decade of consultation among food system innovators committed to transforming the produce industry to respond to an increasingly interdependent and global food chain. The group set out to address environmental issues, food safety and fair treatment of farmworkers and developed a program of standards, training and certification.

EFI partners with produce farms for workforce development to facilitate compliance with the EFI Standards and to help growers adapt to opportunities and threats in a shifting agricultural marketplace.

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Certifying Bodies: SCS Global Services and Underwriters Laboratories
Quick Facts

- Certified Farms: 13, with another 14 in progress and 14 beginning soon
- Workers on EFI-certified farms: 6,548
- Trained Leadership Team Members: 405 (41% women, 59% men)
- Acres Growing Certified Produce: 4,526
- Unique Commodities Certified: 22

EFI Board Members

Mission
To transform relationships across the produce industry, recognizing the role farm workers play in the supply chain. We improve labor practices, environmental stewardship and food safety for the benefit of workers, agricultural communities, businesses and consumers.

Vision
A thriving produce industry, built on a culture of collaboration. Farmworkers are respected and engaged professionals, living and working in safe, dignified conditions. Growers, buyers and consumers are assured that their produce is safe and responsibly grown.

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Business Benefits of EFI

EFI’s vision of a safer and more sustainable produce industry is being built farm by farm, grower by grower, retailer by retailer. The benefits of this vision permeate all aspects of the produce industry, beginning with farmworkers. Produce companies who invest in their workforce are seeing benefits to their business that go behind social compliance. EFI’s model of labor-management collaboration has resulted in increased assurance that fresh produce is harvested as safely as possible, in conditions that respect the dignity of workers. By engaging farmworker unions, growers, retailers and consumer groups, EFI encourages open dialogue across all stakeholders in the produce industry to promote value-adding approaches to social responsibility and food safety.

The Women of EFI

Creating a safe work environment and leadership opportunities for women is an important focus for EFI. Through EFI Leadership Teams, women have the opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns on the farm. While women make up 34 percent of the workforce on EFI certified farms, they hold 47 percent of the Leadership Team positions.

EFI is working with the University of Washington to produce training resources for the prevention of sexual harassment, a major concern in the produce industry.

How EFI Got Its Start

EFI was created by a consortium of “strange bedfellows.” The initial discussions among major food buyers, growers, farm worker unions, consumer advocates and pest management scientists recognized that the sustainability of the produce industry required new thinking and new forms of collaboration. EFI was designed to provide a higher level of assurance to all stakeholders that fresh produce was grown and harvested responsibly. EFI founders also acknowledged that the system had to create real value for all participants.

Including Farmworker Voices

Farm labor is skilled labor. No one knows more about fresh fruits and vegetables than the experienced workers who harvest them. EFI works to bring worker insight and experience to bear on industry challenges from food safety to pest management to responsible labor practices. Leadership Teams on each certified farm include representation from across the workforce, giving workers, managers and owners a space to understand compliance problems and collaborate on their own solutions.
Story Ideas

Branding Produce Beyond a Commodity

Forward-thinking companies see produce as more than a commodity. They want to create a brand experience based on social responsibility that gives consumers both peace of mind and a sense that their purchase is supporting an ethical business. EFI backs up that brand through third-party certification and a program of continuous worker verification of compliance with our rigorous standards.

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