

# New Yorkers Support Legalization of Undocumented Farmworkers

## Overview of the Study and the Results

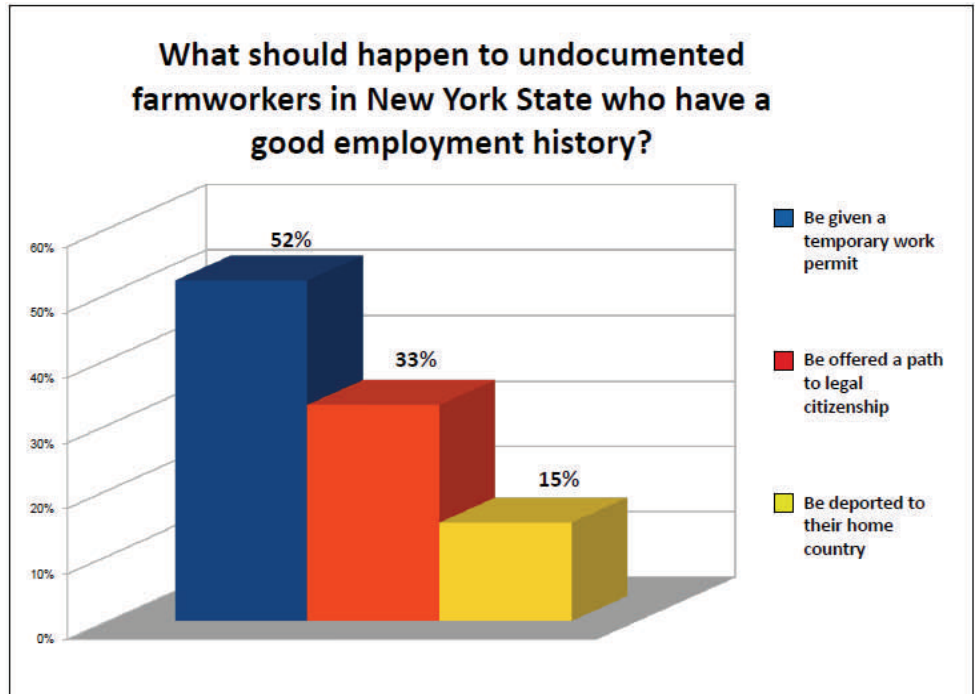
Over the past two years the Cornell Farmworker Program (CFP) has been engaged in research that examines public perceptions of undocumented immigrant farmworkers in New York State. These research results were gathered through the Empire State Poll's annual survey conducted by the Survey Research Institute (SRIC) at Cornell University. The SRIC interviewed a total of 1,100 New York State residents. The group included a random cross sample of 800 households and an over sample of 300 rural households. The results are representative within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points. Respondents answered questions on the topics of immigration, community impact and overall interest in agriculture.

The 2007 and 2008 polls show that the vast majority of New York State residents do not support deportation of farmworkers who are currently working without proper documentation. In fact, most support the implementation of measures to create paths towards legal status.

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Source: Cornell Farmworker Program, Empire State Poll Data, 2007, 2008

## What Should Happen to Undocumented Farmworkers in New York State?

By **Mary Jo Dudley** and **Sarah Alexander**, Cornell University

When asked “What should happen to undocumented farmworkers in New York State with a good work history?” New Yorkers indicated strong support for legalizing the situation of undocumented farmworkers in the state either through a path to legalization or work permits. This marked support towards legalizing measures did not shift in any significant way between 2007 and 2008. Of those core respondents who specified an option in response to this question, 33% selected “be offered a path to legal citizenship,” 52% selected “be given a temporary work permit” and 15% selected “be deported to their home country.” Currently there is no option for a temporary work permit for farmworkers who live in NYS throughout the year. Current guest worker programs exclude dairy workers and other year-round farmworkers. In sum, 85% of those surveyed favored some kind of change in policy to open legal avenues.