



2nd International Symposium on Work in Agriculture

Thinking the Future of Work in Agriculture

March 29th – April 1st, 2021

Workshop 5 - Wage-earners

Convenors: Priscila Duarte Malanski - State University of Maringa, Brazil
Michael Santhanam-Martin - University of Melbourne, Australia

Despite the increasing prevalence of corporate farming in some areas family farming is still the predominant model of farm ownership and management across the world. At the same time, wage-earners (employees) represent 40% of agricultural workforce around the world and they are making increasingly important contributions to the labour force and overall functioning of farms. This trend is apparent in both developing and industrialised countries, although the specific dynamics are different. The category of wage-earners covers a wide range of different types of workers (e.g. seasonal/permanent, high-skilled/low-skilled, securely-employed/precariously-employed), which intersect with major dynamics in farming system change such as diversification/specialisation, migration, agroecological transitions and digitalisation. Understanding the lived experience of wage-earners also required understanding farms as workplaces, and farmers as employers.

This workshop will explore all aspects connected to wage-earners' experiences and roles in farming systems including:

- Statistical or empirical studies of the diversity and abundance of different types of wage-earners (e.g. permanent, temporary, seasonal), in different regions, farming sectors and farming styles (large vs small, corporate vs family, conventional vs agroecological etc);
- The situation of migrant workers;
- Prevalence and implications of precarious and informal employment conditions, including labour outsourcing;
- The role of labour Unions to assure employees legal rights and solve conflicts;
- Frameworks and methods to analyse changes in wage-earners' work;
- Human resource management strategies and practices (attracting, hiring and retaining people; farmers as employers);
- Design of attractive workplaces for hired workers (including job design);
- Career pathways and journeys for farm employees;
- Skills requirements and skill levels for different types of workers; skills acquisition and education/training;
- Experiences with/models for collective management of wage-earners across multiple enterprises, cooperatives or farmers collective actions.

We welcome case studies, empirical or statistical data as well as methodological and theoretical contributions to think about the current state and the future of wage-earners in agriculture.

References

- Calus, M & Van Huylenbroeck, G 2010, "The Persistence of Family Farming: A Review of Explanatory Socio-economic and Historical Factors", *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 41(5): 639-60.
- Graeb, BE, Chappell, MJ, Wittman, H, Ledermann, S, Kerr, RB & Gemmill-Herren, B 2016, "The State of Family Farms in the World", *World Development*, 87:1-15.
- ILO 2007 "Agricultural workers and their contribution to sustainable agriculture and rural development". ILO-FAO, Geneva



2nd International Symposium on Work in Agriculture

Thinking the Future of Work in Agriculture

March 29th – April 1st, 2021

Suess-Reyes, J & Fuetsch, E 2016, "The future of family farming: A literature review on innovative, sustainable and succession-oriented strategies", *Journal of Rural Studies*, 47:117-40.