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**2024 TOBACCO WORKERS CONFERENCE**

**JANUARY 16, 2024**

**KNOXVILLE, TN**



- Non-profit Agricultural Organization (501 c 5)

- **Mission**

- GAP Connections provides leadership for the adoption of agricultural standards and practices which produce a quality crop while protecting, sustaining or enhancing the environment, ensure the safety and rights of farm laborers, and recognize those producers who are committed to a higher standard.

- Governed by a Board of Directors

- Tobacco Companies
- Growers
- Grower Associations





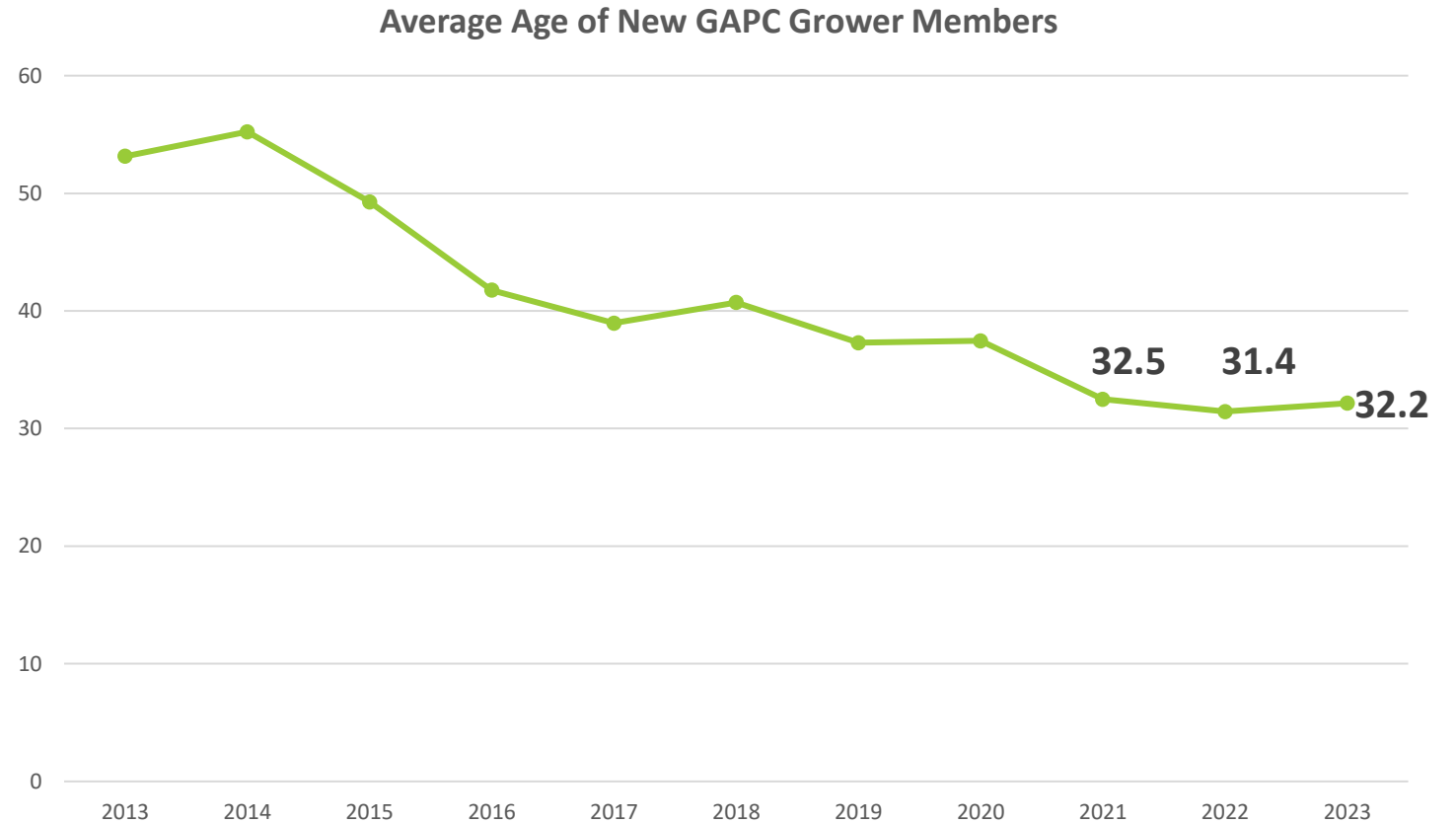
Any GAPC Grower Member on a farming operation that has had at least one GAPC Grower Member attend training or participate in a GAPC Program **within the last three years.**

State	Active GAPC Grower Members
Florida	12
Georgia	84
Illinois	9
Indiana	37
Kentucky	1,796
Maryland	2
Missouri	6
North Carolina	1,249
Ohio	46
Pennsylvania	249
South Carolina	126
Tennessee	521
Virginia	278
West Virginia	1
Wisconsin	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,427</b>

69% of growers are in Kentucky and North Carolina

# New GAPC Grower Members

- On average add about **80-85** new GAPC Grower Members each year







Online  
In-person

Crop  
Environmental  
Labor

State	2023
FL	9
GA	64
IL	3
IN	21
KY	1,068
LA	0
MD	0
MO	3
NC	937
OH	22
PA	140
SC	89
TN	327
VA	174
W VA	1
WI	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,859</b>



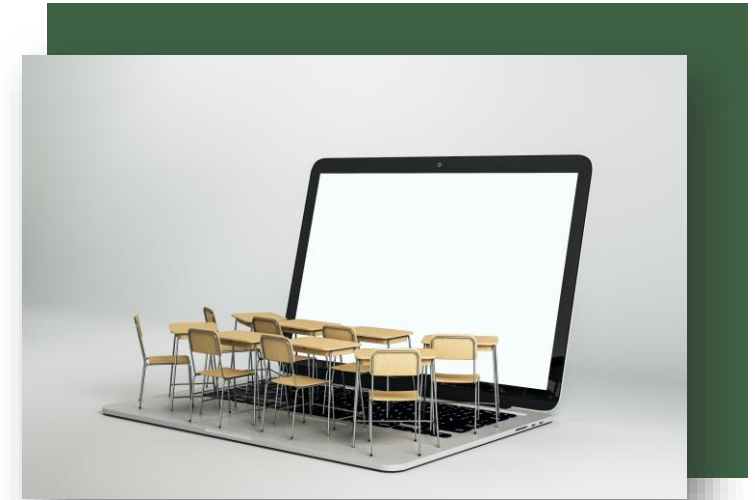


## ■ Most Viewed Online Training Videos

- Crop and Environment
  - Cover Crops for Tobacco Production
  - Soil Test Interpretation & Fertilizer Reporting
  - Disposal of CPAs and CPA Containers
- Labor
  - Farm Succession Basics
  - Tobacco Growers and Stress
  - Field Sanitation

## ■ Webinars

- Understanding Workers' Compensation
- Human Trafficking and Farmworkers: What does it mean to a grower?









- 790 Farmworkers
- 25 Customized Training Events
- 5 States
  - Georgia = 6
  - Kentucky = 280
  - North Carolina = 353
  - Tennessee = 107
  - Virginia = 32



## Customized Farmworker Training

English and Spanish

## ■ Cost Share Program

- The cost-share program allows growers to schedule and have farmworker training on their farm at a fifty percent (50%) discount using sponsorship funds from the tobacco industry.

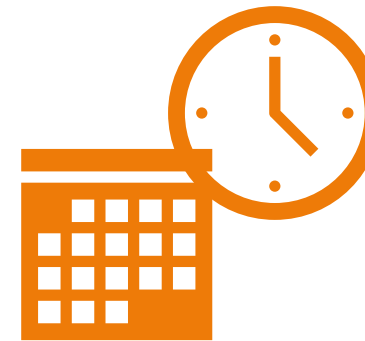
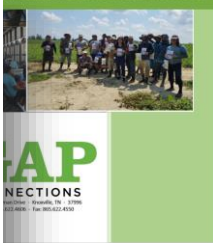


Altria





Contents	
Introduction: Training Program Overview	1
Topics	1
Introduction of the Program	1
OSHA Training Topics	1
Food Safety (Produce Operations)	1
OSHA 30 Hazardous Waste	1
ETA & FSI Act	1
Health and Safety: First Aid & Emergency Response	1
First Aid	1
General Farm Safety	1
General Safe Operation of Farm Equipment & Machinery	1
Green Tobacco Solvents (GTS) (Produce Operations)	1
Heat Stress	1
Prevention of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (Produce Operations)	1
Food of Animal Origin (Produce Operations)	1
Worker Health and Hygiene (Produce Operations)	1
General Farm Safety (GAPC)	1
Labor Training Topics	1
Working Conditions for Worker Provided Housing	1
Worker Training Assessment & Evaluation	1
Small Business	1
GAPC Worker Rights and Responsibilities and Worker Consent Initiative	1
Gap Training Topics	1
Training for Agricultural Preparation (Produce Operations)	1
Non-Tobacco Animal Material (NTAM) (Produce Operations)	1
Essential Topics	1
Specific to a Certification Scheme (Produce)	1



## CUSTOMIZED

- Pick your topics from standard list or have a custom topic(s) designed for your operation.

## INTERACTIVE

- Trainer is bilingual, bicultural and very experienced in dealing with all types of labor and operations.

## FLEXIBLE

- Virtual and in-person training options scheduled at a date and time convenient for your farm.

## COMPLETE

- Satisfy various requirements for training...GAPC Certification, OSHA, Food Safety and more.



# 2023



1,352 Farming Operations with GAPC Certified Growers



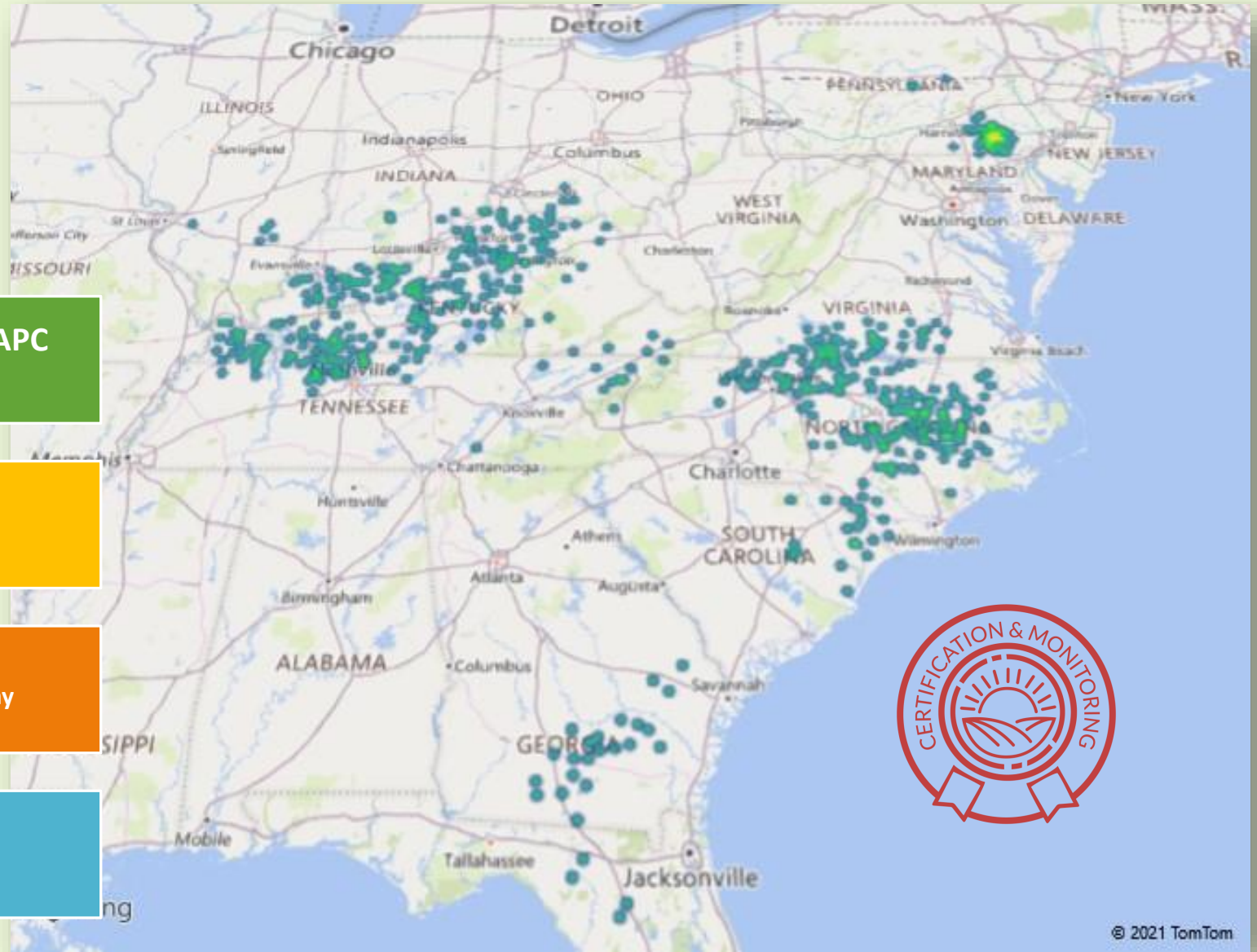
2,008 GAPC Certified Growers



1,403 GAPC visits conducted  
(Certification Monitoring Visits & Company Assessments)

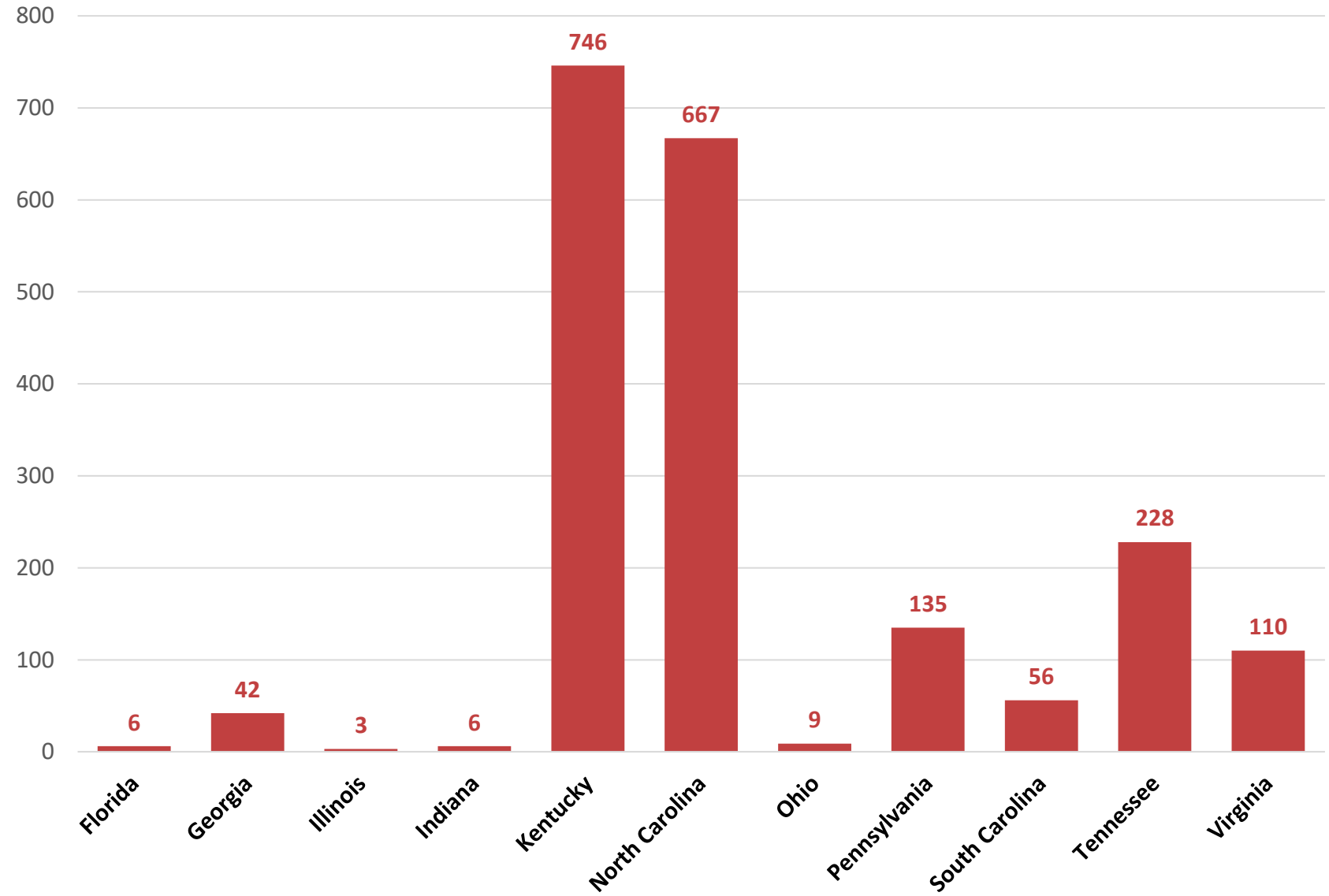


Over 2,800 farmworkers were interviewed





## Number of GAPC Certified Growers





- **99%** of farms that had a grower apply for GAPC Certification were Certified
  - **1,999** U.S. and International Certification
  - **9** U.S. GAPC Certification
- **58%** of farms that had a grower apply for GAPC Certification had some form of remediation. However, this includes making payment to monitoring firm and self-assessment, without those closer to **25%**.



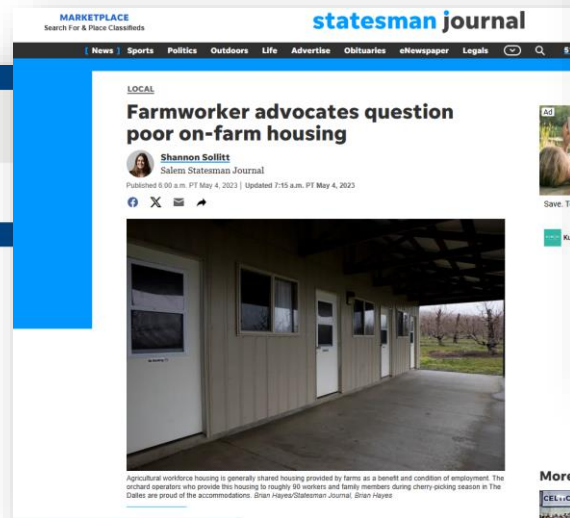
**162,676** acres of tobacco grown by a GAPC Certified Tobacco Grower in 2023 which is **85%** of the tobacco that was harvested. *(USDA NASS)*







- Piloting ways to highlight further the progressive actions of U.S. Tobacco Growers
  - *Elevated Housing Classification*
  - *Advanced Labor*
- Creating Record and Policy Templates to match the Standards & Questions



**Investigate Midwest**

HELP US REPORT, INVESTIGATE / ENTERPRISE, UNDERWRITTEN / SUPPORTED

**In the Midwest, state oversight has forced some employers to provide better housing for migrant farmworkers. But regulations remain spotty.**

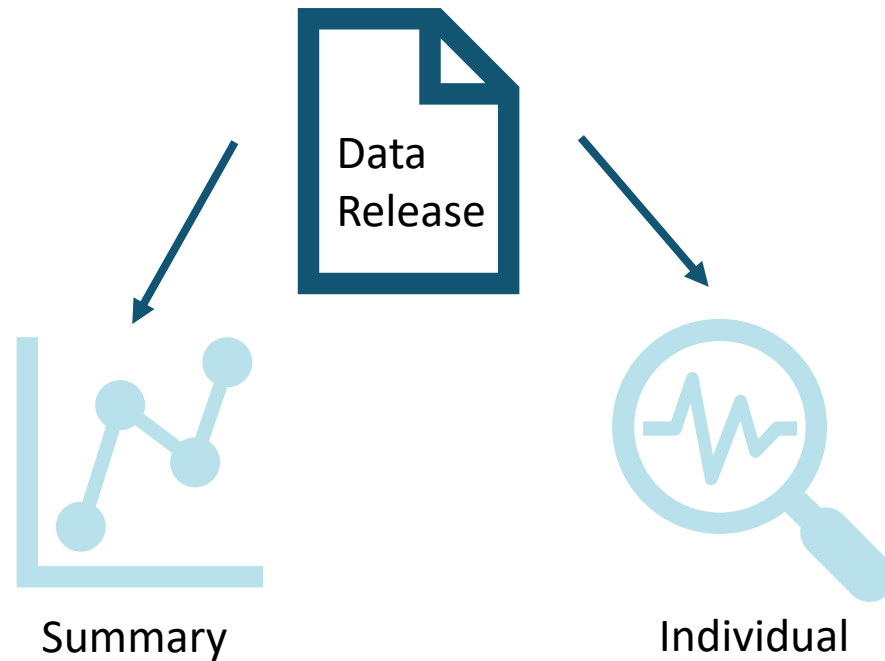
*While oversight of H2A farmworker housing is enforced by the federal government, migrant farmworker housing is state jurisdiction. Some Midwestern states inspect twice – others not at all.*





- **Growers and Companies** can view:
  - Profile Information
  - Training Information
  - Certification Information

24/7 Access to Data for GAPC  
Growers and Companies





Average Tobacco  
Operation

- **Data based on the 1,403 farms we visited:**
  - Certification and Assessments
  - Includes those denied (1%)



**Average Tobacco  
Operation**



Flue (505):  
**227.7 acres**



Org. Flue (48):  
**52.6 acres**



Burley (579):  
**43.2 acres**



Dark Air (33):  
**13.5 acres**



Dark Fire (315):  
**34.3 acres**



## Average Tobacco Operation

- **Diversified Farms**
  - **80** percent reported other enterprises
  - Average of **3** other enterprises, most common:
    - Corn
    - Soybeans
    - Wheat
    - Brood Cows
    - Hay/pasture
- **17%** enrolled in a biodiversity or conservation program, most common:
  - Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
  - Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

<i>Alfalfa</i>	<i>Kenaf</i>
<i>Hay/pasture</i>	<i>Sod</i>
<i>Corn</i>	<i>Barley</i>
<i>Wheat</i>	<i>Popcorn</i>
<i>Soybeans</i>	<i>Logging/Timber</i>
<i>Sorghum</i>	<i>Blueberries</i>
<i>Cotton</i>	<i>Millet</i>
<i>Peanuts</i>	<i>Bahia Grass</i>
<i>Sweet Potatoes</i>	<i>Pecans</i>
<i>Watermelon</i>	<i>Brood Cows</i>
<i>Rye</i>	<i>Feeder/Stocker Cattle</i>
<i>Cucumbers</i>	<i>Dairy Cattle</i>
<i>Rapeseed</i>	<i>Horses</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>Turkeys</i>
<i>Strawberries</i>	<i>Ducks</i>
<i>Speltz</i>	<i>Chickens</i>
<i>Produce</i>	<i>Rabbits</i>
<i>Pumpkins</i>	<i>Goats</i>
<i>Other Small Grains</i>	<i>Mules</i>
<i>Oats</i>	<i>Guineas</i>
<i>Hemp</i>	<i>Hogs</i>
<i>Sweet Corn</i>	<i>Sheep</i>
<i>Triticale</i>	<i>Geese</i>
<i>Nursery Plants</i>	<i>Egg/Egg Houses</i>
<i>Sage</i>	<i>Donkeys</i>
<i>Canola</i>	<i>Dairy Goats</i>



## Average Tobacco Operation

*Nutrient Management  
Soil and Water Health  
Pest Management  
Biodiversity*

	Non-Certified	Certified
Is conventional tillage implemented in tobacco production at the farm? <i>Most common was strip tillage (12-13%)</i>	94%	81%
Was a soil test conducted on each tobacco field no more than three years old before the time of transplanting?	77%	93%
Do you use results from soil testing to base fertilizer application decisions?	81%	100%
Do you have a documented scouting and monitoring program for your tobacco production?	64%	98%
Do you use low-toxicity or pest targeted CPAs instead of more toxic broad-spectrum CPAs? Lower toxicity CPAs are labeled with a signal word of "CAUTION", rather than "WARNING" or "DANGER"	72%	89%
Do you use any of the following environmentally and biologically friendly practices on your farm in tobacco production? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Establish attractant / repellent plants</i></li> <li>• <i>Apply biological control agents (i.e. examples are Bt, Dipel, Blackhawk)</i></li> <li>• <i>Plant barrier crops</i></li> <li>• <i>Promote or release natural predators in your fields</i></li> </ul>	28%	36%



## Average Tobacco Operation

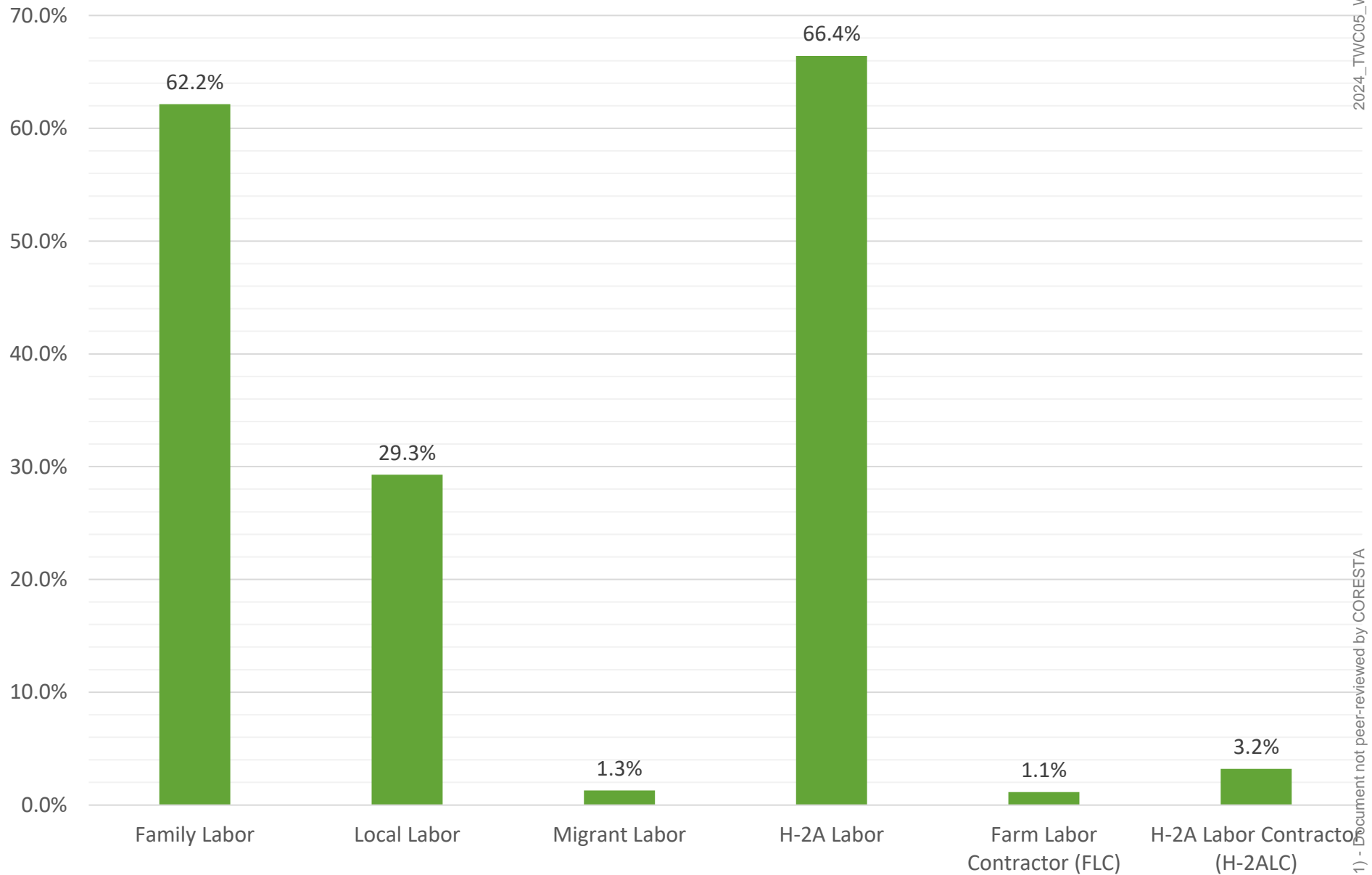
*Nutrient Management  
Soil and Water Health  
Pest Management  
Biodiversity*

	Non-Certified	Certified
Are CPAs stored in designated, enclosed, weather protected, lockable area with appropriate warning signs?	89%	100%
Are CPA containers disposed of according to disposal requirements on product labels?	92%	100%
Do you recycle your CPA containers?	36%	60%
Does CPA storage have an impermeable floor? This includes tubs, bins, containers with impermeable flooring that can hold more than the volume of CPA being stored.	70%	92%
Is CPA storage designed to retain runoff from leaks and spills? This includes tubs, bins, containers with impermeable flooring that can hold more than the volume of CPA being stored.	61%	92%





## Percent of Growers by Labor Source

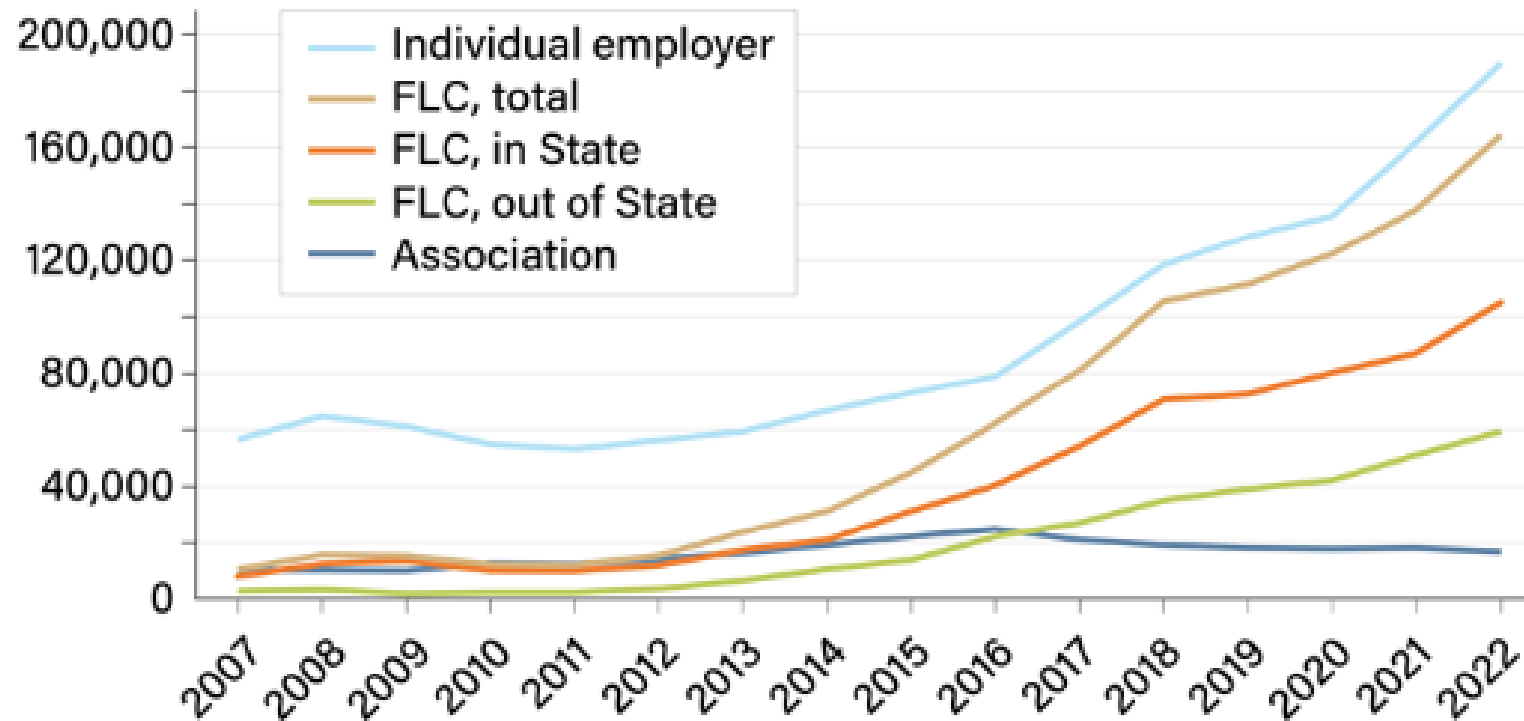




- **22%** of farms we visited reported using only family labor (less than avg. acres, majority located in PA)
- If we remove those family only operations and focus on only those operations hiring labor, **89%** hire H-2A labor (direct or indirect).

## Hiring of H-2A workers has increased for farm labor contractors (FLCs) and individual employers since 2012

Certified workers



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Labor.

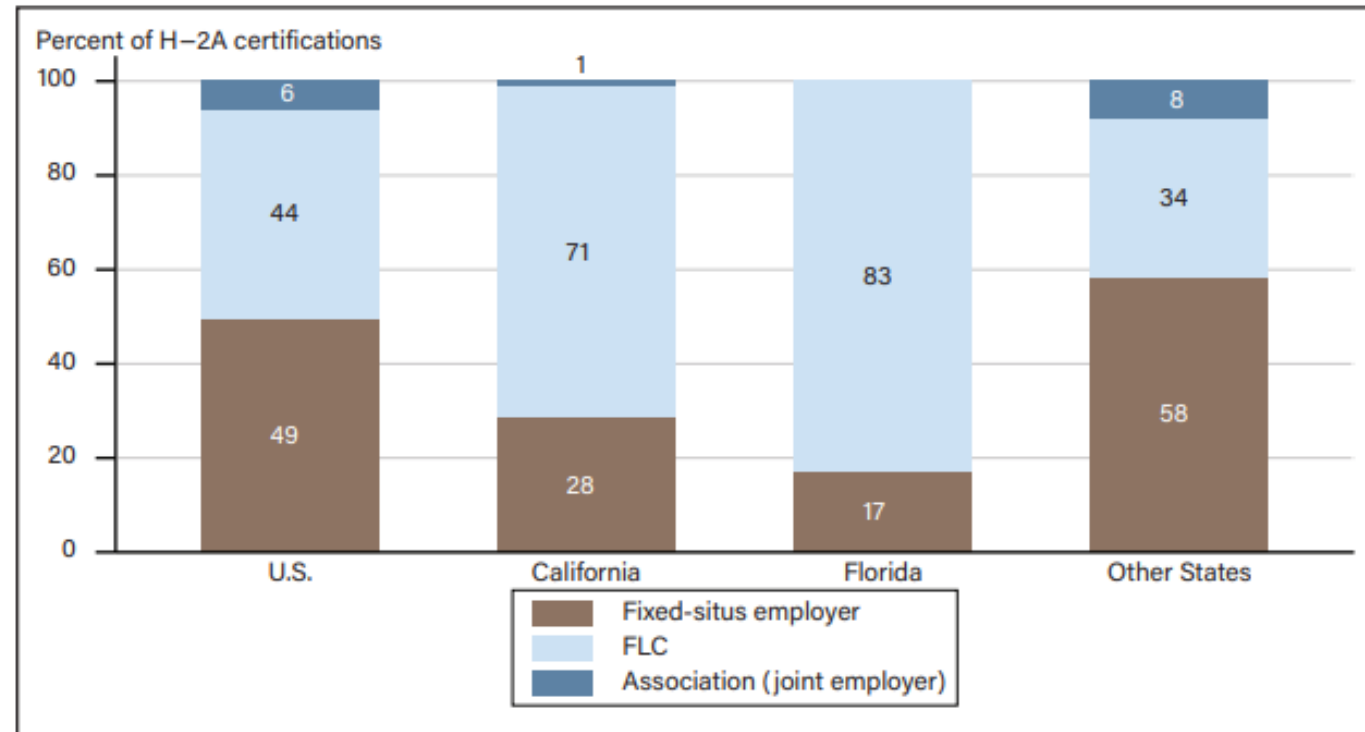
**More than half** of the recent growth in H-2A certifications comes from FLCs, so the FLC share of H-2A jobs increased from **13** percent in FY 2007 to **44** percent in FY 2020.





- FLC use in **2018** was **<1%**, FLC use in **2023** was **4.3%**

Figure 2  
H-2A jobs by employer type, fiscal year 2020





Average Age of a Farmer  
57.5

Average Age of GAPC  
Primary Grower:  
51.6

Average Age of GAPC  
Associate Grower:  
48.4

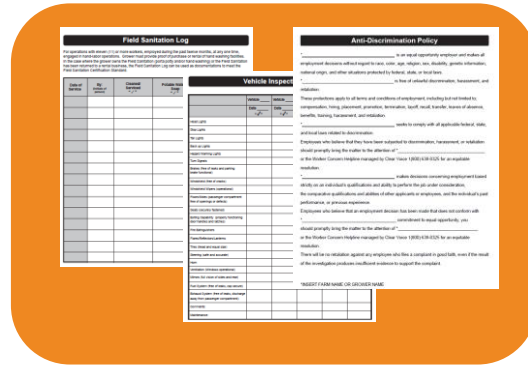
- Only half (**53%**) of the GAPC Grower Members who applied for GAPC Certification reported identifying a successor
  - *real barriers to entry for young people – at least those who weren't born into multigenerational farming families. It takes money and younger people have less wealth than older ones.*
  - *Young people born into family farms may have fewer opportunities to take them over due to consolidation in agriculture.*
  - *The overall stress of the agriculture industry is also a concern: mercy of weather, volatile markets and other factors entirely out of their control.*





## GAPC Tobacco Certification

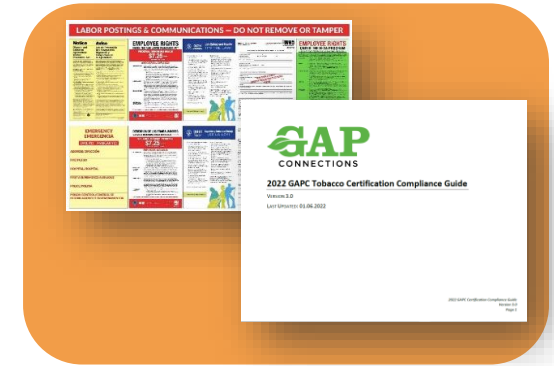
### U.S. Certification U.S. and International Certification



## Records and Templates



## Labor Laws and Regulations



## GAPC Certification Resources



## Farmworker Training Material



## HR Grower Helpline



## Worker Concern Helpline

- In 2023, roughly **88%** of tobacco harvested in the U.S. was visited by a **third-party** and **85%** was **verified** to follow standards that reflect best practices in crop, environmental, and labor management **some of which exceed U.S. regulations and laws.**



Crop



Environment



Labor





What other tobacco market can say that?



- Buying from U.S. GAPC Certified Tobacco Growers, means buying from growers who:
  - use informed and best agronomic practices to grow a quality crop,
  - strive to use water resources efficiently,
  - care for soil health and natural habitats,
  - follow soil testing and scouting guidelines to reduce the use of agrochemicals, and
  - respect workers' rights and well-being.

**CROP - ENVIRONMENT - LABOR**

# Get Involved

- Grower Membership
- Company Membership
- Associate Membership
- Grower Training Sponsorship
- Consultant Partnership





# Communication

- GAPC Annual In-person Training has begun, deadline is June 30<sup>th</sup>
- Online GAPC Annual Training will be available January 17<sup>th</sup>
- January 17<sup>th</sup> Application Opens, April 15<sup>th</sup> is deadline to avoid a late fee
- 2024 Annual Meeting and Annual Report to be released in March
- Monthly Newsletter
- Weekly Certification Tips
- Postcards & Letters
- Social media



Thank you!



For more Information:

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