

FROM THE GROUND UP

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Support Needed for Grape Boycott

In early 1984, due to increasing exploitation of farmworkers and an increasing decline in working conditions, the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) called for a boycott on California table grapes. The goals of the boycott are to ban cancer and birth defect-causing pesticides which are currently used on grapes, to bring about union elections free of intimidation, violence or coercion, and to insure good faith collective bargaining.

The United Farm Workers of America have targeted the table grape industry in particular due to the fact that some of the most dangerous pesticides are used on grapes. In fact, grapes receive more restricted use pesticides than any other fruit. In addition, one-third of the approximately 12 million pounds of pesticides used on grapes annually are known to cause cancer. Furthermore, the majority of these pesticides are

(see "Boycott", page 4)

ITF Begins with Training Weekend

Helping some of the thousands of migrant and seasonal farmworkers who harvest crops in the Carolinas every year and encouraging college students to become more active in work for social justice was the focus of a training conference held at Duke University from Oct. 8-10. Sponsored by SAF, the training involved students and staff from ten North and South Carolina universities and colleges who are part of the Into the Fields: SAF Summer Internship and Leadership Development Program.

SAF recently received a \$133,250 grant from the federal Commission on National and Community Service to help fund the Into the Fields program for two years. The Commission was created by Congress to support national community service efforts. SAF was one of thirteen new programs in the area of higher education selected to receive funding this year. SAF will use the funds to assist nine universities in North Carolina and one in South Carolina in their efforts to develop their own service-learning programs which focus on farmworker issues.

The training weekend marked the beginning of the partnership between SAF and the following schools: Appalachian State University, Central Piedmont Community College, Duke University, Fayetteville State University, North Carolina Central University, North Carolina State University, Shaw University, the University of South Carolina-Columbia, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and Warren Wilson College.

The weekend included workshops on how to raise awareness of the problems facing farmworkers, recruit a diverse group of interns, find financing for the internships, and create service-learning classes on farmworker issues. Charlotte Jones, the Into the Fields Program

(see "Training", page 5)



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The SAF Mission:

To bring students and farmworkers together to learn about each other's lives, share resources and skills, improve conditions for farmworkers, and build diverse coalitions working for social change.

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Editor: Felice James

New Staff Member Joins SAF

As Student Action with Farmworkers prepares for a new year and the summer 1994 Into the Fields Summer Internship and Leadership Development Program, SAF also welcomes its newest staff member, Debbie Rosenstein. Debbie joined SAF in mid-September as the Coordinator of the Into the Fields (ITF) program. Debbie, who is a 1992 graduate of the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources, comes to SAF with a history of involvement in social justice and service-learning programs. In the past Debbie has been involved in documenting the obstacles small farmers in South India face converting to organic methods and in facilitating a coalition of paperworkers and environmentalists in Mobile, Alabama.



When Debbie was asked to talk about how her past internships relate to her new job with SAF she stated, "I've had many unique experiences that, in my opinion, should be more common and accessible. I would like to see more students involved in internships and that is what I see as SAF's purpose, offering students a meaningful way to coalesce activism with their education." When asked what brought her to SAF Debbie

remarked, "I was really impressed by SAF's philosophy; the fact that SAF isn't a charity organization. It's a group of students, farmworkers and agencies striving for the self-determination of farmworkers."

As her first month with SAF came to an end, Debbie expressed her excitement for the future, "I've learned a lot but there's still so much to discover and understand. Every day is a challenge." As SAF continues to grow with its new ITF program, Debbie also hopes to grow and develop.

by Felice James

For more information or to submit articles, contact:

SAF, PO Box 90803, Durham, NC 27708.

919-687-0486/ 919-660-3652 (after 1/1/94)



NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Learning from Lechuga:

Vanderbilt Alternative Spring Break-San Juan, TX

Lechuga. In English, "lechuga" translates to "lettuce." But during our week-long stay in San Juan, TX, Lechuga, a 50-year-old farmworker, became a point of enthusiasm and adventure. Lechuga is a farmworker who spent almost all of his life travelling from south to north and back to the South again to work while raising a family.

Lechuga was raised in the migrant life. "When we were kids my brothers and sisters and I used to work in the fields with my parents. When the planes would spray—and back then they used to spray while the farmworkers were still picking—my brothers and sisters would chase the plane and roll around in the mist. That was real fun. Of course, at the time, pesticides were just coming out on a big scale and nobody even thought to think about the possible effects on the farmworkers."

Although pesticides constituted one of the main points of focus for the *Campesino* Union, particularly in their joint struggle with United Farm Workers nationwide for the boycott against grapes, our group also learned of the complexities of the
(see "Lechuga", page 4)

FSU Volunteers Help Migrants

Rural Gadsden County, located twenty miles west of Florida State University, depends on migrant labor to harvest and pack its tomato crop every year. Migrants frequently arrive in Gadsden County without places to live. Because the migrants have been coming to Gadsden County for only the last ten years, the social and educational services are not yet geared to meet their special needs. Florida State University instituted Project *Amistades* (Friendships) through the office of Campus-Community Partnerships in 1992 to help with these community problems.

Project *Amistades* was established for the dual purpose of providing assistance to the migrant and seasonal labor force and teaching FSU students about the civic responsibility of performing volunteer service in their communities. The project is comprised of various programs which are collaborative efforts between FSU and several area service providers and churches.

School-related Programs

Campus Community Partnerships works in cooperation with the Gadsden County School Board and PAEC (a non-profit migrant education corporation) to staff an in-school tutorial program in which they act as teachers' assistants in classrooms with migrant students. A Saturday Fun Day operates at a local church; migrant students are given homework assistance, English instructions, a hot lunch, and recreational activities by the FSU student volunteers. FSU student volunteers also operate an evening English as a Second Language program in another area church; migrant adults receive instruction in English, and their children receive additional homework assistance.

Field Trips

Migrant students attended a College/Career Day at FSU, during which they visited the campus, learned about financial aid options, and explored career opportunities at FSU's Career Center. Another field trip was to the Saturday-at-the-Sea Program sponsored by FSU's marine biology department, during which the migrant students collected specimens at sea and examined the under a microscope.

Migrant Clinic

The migrant clinic was established by a group of concerned citizens and health care providers to meet the various needs of the Gadsden County farmworker population. Volunteer doctors, nurses,
(see "FSU Volunteers", page 6)

