Abstract: Alternative food networks face both challenges and opportunities in rethinking the role of precarious employment in food system transformation. We explore how alternative food networks in British Columbia, Canada have engaged with flexible and precarious work regimes for farmworkers, including both temporary migrant workers and un(der)paid agricultural interns. Based on in-depth interviews, participant observation and document analysis, we find that alternative food actors often normalize a precarious work regime using a moral economy frame. This framing describes precarious farm employment as either a necessary challenge in the transition to sustainability, or merely involving a few individual “bad apple” farmers. Further, this framing involves an aversion to “one-size-fits-all” regulation by the state in favor of consumer-driven regulation of labor standards. Our analysis suggests that a moral economy framing can obscure systemic inequities in precarious farm employment and dampen the impetus for structural change through collective food movement organizing.

Resumen: Las redes alimentarias alternativas enfrentan tanto desafíos como oportunidades para repensar el papel del empleo precario en la transformación del sistema alimentario. Aquí exploramos las redes alimentarias alternativas en Colombia Británica, Canadá, y cómo se han involucrado en regímenes laborales flexibles y precarios para los trabajadores agrícolas, incluyendo tanto trabajadores migrantes como internos agrícolas impagos o pagados por debajo del salario mínimo. Nuestros hallazgos, basados en entrevistas a profundidad, observación participativa y análisis documental, indican que los actores en las redes alternativas a menudo normalizan un régimen laboral precario utilizando un enmarcado narrativo de economía moral. Este enmarcado describe el empleo agrícola precario ya sea como un desafío necesario en la transición hacia la sustentabilidad, o bien como algo que sólo involucra algunos agricultores que serían “manzanas podridas” en un sistema por lo demás justo. Además, este enmarcado involucra una aversión a cualquier regulación que ha que tabla raza en su aplicación por parte del Estado, ya sea a favor de reglas promovidas por el consumidor o para reglamentar los estándares laborales. Nuestro análisis sugiere que el enmarcado de la economía moral puede oscurecer las desigualdades sistémicas en el empleo agrícola precario y disminuir el impetu por el cambio estructural a través de la organización de un movimiento alimentario colectivo.
Keywords: alternative food networks, farm labor, migrant workers, moral economy, precarious employment

Introduction
Industrial agriculture has been critiqued for its dependence on poorly paid farm-workers hired under conditions of high risk and weak social protections, in what are increasingly known as flexible and precarious labor regimes (Anderson 2010; Bain 2010). In order to meet farmers’ demands for low-cost seasonal labor, Canada, the United States and some western European nations have utilized strategic immigration and labor policies that facilitate the hiring of racialized migrants, Indigenous peoples and members of other equity-seeking groups (Gertel and Sippel 2014; Laliberte and Satzewich 1999; Preibisch 2007). State support for precarious employment generally comes in the form of a legal and policy environment that relaxes wage requirements along with occupational health and safety conditions, while simultaneously making it difficult for farmworkers to circulate freely on the labor market or demand better conditions. These exceptions to labor standards are justified on the premise that because low-cost food serves the national best interest, agriculture warrants special state and civil society support (Skogstad 1998).

For their part, farmers increasingly face burgeoning input costs, globalized competition, and pressure from food processors and retailers to reduce prices. Amidst this “cost-price squeeze”, some farmers aim to curtail labor costs by hiring intensely productive workers with specialized but devalued manual skills (McLaughlin and Hennebry 2013). Even in farming systems where mechanization has largely replaced human labor, farmworkers are often required for activities like harvesting and packing sensitive fruits and vegetables. A dependence on hired farmworkers is also prevalent on many small-scale, family-run, and ecologically oriented farms, which commonly use labor-intensive techniques as substitutes for agrochemical inputs and mechanization (Gray 2014).

Labor-intensive farms feature prominently in the agrarian visions of alternative food networks. Alternative food networks (AFNs) involve groups of people who aim to reverse the social and ecological harms generated by the dominant food system and foster alternatives. Their efforts are often centered on localization, direct marketing, and small-scale ecological methods of food production (Goodman et al. 2012). A moral economy that connects farmers, consumers and nature through caring relationships, which are frequently symbolized through the exchange of fair-trade or direct-marketed local foods, constitutes a principal AFN strategy for social transformation (Allen et al. 2003; Goodman 2004). In order to make good on food movements’ stated social justice goals, food studies scholars have called for critical attention to the conditions of farmworkers (Sbicca 2015). However, sustainable food initiatives often gloss over oppressive aspects of farm labor by promoting a romanticized agrarian ideology. Critical food studies scholars have problematized neo-populist AFN depictions of family farms as “the repository of community moral values” (Goodman et al. 2012:141). The idealized family farm typically portrays a white farmer drawing on some support from family labor
(Alkon 2013; Cairns et al. 2015). Consequently, proponents of local and organic food generally associate hired farmworkers with industrial and “unnatural” forms of agriculture, which they envisage as being in sharp opposition to AFNs (Alkon 2013). Farmworkers complicate the traditional agrarian narrative based on private property relations and historically white-centric racial relations because they do not own the land and are often racialized as non-white (Minkoff-Zern 2014).

Thus far, what is known about precarious farmworker employment stems mainly from research on “conventional” modes of agriculture (Barndt 2008; Binford 2013; but see Gray 2014; Holmes 2013). While proponents of popular “locavore” initiatives claim that small and organic farms directed toward localized markets promote better labor conditions, scholars have called into question the empirical basis for this assertion (Cross et al. 2008; Harrison and Getz 2015). Further, on many organic and urban farms, other farm laborers commonly work for no wages and with minimal social protections in job-like arrangements characterized as “internships” or “apprenticeships”. What, then, is the role of precarious employment in farming contexts where people are endeavoring to create more sustainable agrarian alternatives?

While AFNs envision transforming the food system through ecologically oriented, human-intensive modes of agriculture, it is unclear how they reconcile this aim with the prevailing norms of low-wage, undervalued and poorly protected hired labor. We thus sought to understand how AFNs have addressed precarious employment in modes of agriculture they perceive as “alternative” and desirable, and also in those depicted as conventional, industrial and objectionable.

To do this, we explore how members of AFNs in British Columbia have engaged with and, in some cases, normalized, precarious farm work. We contribute to the body of critical agrarian theorizing with an assessment of forms of farmworker precariousness that are persisting in both dominant agriculture and human-intensive AFNs. We compare how AFNs have engaged with precarious labor affecting farmworkers hired through Canada’s Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) and un(der)paid interns. This includes interns and migrants working on farms with a range of production modes, from very small-scale urban farms to a greenhouse operation employing approximately 400 farmworkers (160 of whom were hired through the SAWP). Our comparative analysis interlaces the perspectives of farmworkers, employers of farmworkers, sustainable food advocates, and migrant worker activists. We use the site of British Columbia, Canada, as a window onto challenges that AFNs in the global North face in realizing their potential for countering forms of oppression and exploitation in the food system, as well as opportunities for these networks to help facilitate dignified agrarian livelihoods.

Alternative Food Networks, Agrarian Exceptionalism, and Moral Economy
Advocates of alternative food systems imagine food as a node of common ground that can bring people together and generate social change. Within the spectrum of efforts to address crises in the food system, advocacy-based initiatives—rather than radical activist struggles—are characteristic of AFNs (Goodman et al. 2012). We
consider AFNs as encompassing individuals, members of civil society organizations, industry actors such as farmers, scholars, and governmental or extra-governmental bodies like municipal food policy councils focused on cultivating a more sustainable food system. AFNs generally exemplify: a concern for social, economic and ecological aspects of sustainable food systems; shorter distances between producers and eaters; smaller-scale farms that draw upon organic or ecological farming methods; and the presence of food provisioning venues focused on foods considered sustainable, such as local farm-to-school partnerships (Jarosz 2008).

In seeking to understand how AFNs have engaged with the struggles of those who are most marginalized by the food system, authors have described how the social location of disproportionately white, affluent urbanites who often dominate AFNs has served as a barrier to prioritizing the concerns of racialized eaters and food workers (Bradley and Herrera 2015; Gibb and Wittman 2013). In the case of farm-workers, specifically, scholars have pointed to ways in which AFNs often uncritically embrace the influential ideology of agrarianism (Getz et al. 2008; Gray 2014). Agrarian narratives depict farmers as inhererently honest, politically stable, morally upright and independent (Buttel and Flinn 1975) and thus deserving of an “agricultural exceptionalism”; that is, agriculture should receive exemptions from labor, environmental and other regulations, along with high-cost state interventions like US and EU crop subsidies.

Appeals to agricultural exceptionalism have also been used to argue that farm interns should be exempt from minimum wage requirements (Kalyuzhny 2011). Un(der)paid farm interns exchange their labor for goods other than wages or salaries (e.g. room and board, discounted or second-quality farm produce, education, and the occasional stipend). Unlike migrant farmworkers, un(der)paid farm interns tend to be already immersed in alternative food efforts. For instance, they may participate in local groups promoting food system policy change. Interns on sustainability-oriented farms typically have not grown up on a farm and are frequently post-secondary students or recent graduates (Hamilton 2011; MacAuley 2014). Often, they share many of the same interests and social privileges as other proponents of local, organic, and sustainable food systems (Pilgeram 2011).

In recent years, the moral economy has been a powerful animating force for AFNs and food movements attempting to re-embed food systems in collective norms of reciprocity and trust (Carlisle 2015; Edelman 2005; Galt 2013). A moral economy involves the production and exchange of goods and services on the basis of non-capitalist cultural norms of human goodness, fairness and economic justice. A moral economy focused on subsistence rather than capital accumulation has also been used to explain patterns of self-exploitation among farmers both historically and in contemporary AFN contexts (Chayanov 1966; Galt 2013; Pilgeram 2011). In contemporary labor studies, Bolton et al. (2012:121) analyze work that is “contingent” (seasonal, casualized and project based), arguing that a “moral economy lens views employment as a relationship rooted in a web of social dependencies”. Specifically, they argue that contingent work is marked by the erosion of “thick”, reciprocity-based social relations that can lead to “ethical surpluses” and human thriving, and that an overemphasis on thin, instrumental employment relations threatens both the moral economy and the market. However, such ethical surpluses
do not address basic material or political realities such as interns’ extended medical fees in the event of workplace illness or injury, or migrants’ exclusion from participating in critical decisions that affect their lives in Canada.

In our study, some participants’ framing of a moral economy of farm labor proposes voluntary human goodwill as a way to mitigate workers’ and employers’ exposure to market-based pressures such as exploitative working conditions. AFNs promote local food economies based on reciprocal relations and social embeddedness (Galt 2013). The moral economy frame we observed describes social protection as being ensured by the voluntary moral fiber of individual employers and consumers, along with the responsibility of workers for undertaking individualized risks. Some researchers have compellingly pointed to the importance of a moral economy for strengthening food sovereignty and/or sustainable agricultural transition (e.g. Carlisle 2015; Edelman 2005). However, a moral economy may also obscure gaps that are not individual or anomalous, but are rather systemic in the fabric of farmworker social protection and political inclusion. The norms legitimized by a moral economy framework must be critically appraised in terms of how well they support non-oppressive social richness and material well-being for all food producers, particularly those who are structurally marginalized. As such, we assess the extent to which normalizing farmworker precariousness presents a barrier to AFN visions of socially sustainable, human-intensive food systems. Structural constraints to economic viability in most forms of contemporary agriculture lead to justifications of precarious employment. Our research suggests that the moral economy has become a potent framing to justify precariousness not only in “industrial” modes of agriculture, which are often vilified, but also in widely celebrated alternative contexts that seek to exemplify social justice.

Precariousness in Farm Employment

Precariousness in contemporary employment relationships refers broadly to a high degree of insecurity, unpredictability and risk for workers (Anderson 2010). It generally involves low levels of regulatory protection, low income, low access to social benefits, little control over the labor process, and a lack of assurance regarding the continuity of employment (Rodgers 1989). Precarious employment is shaped by a person’s social location, which includes interactions between that person’s immigration status and political power. Inequalities and patterns of alienation arising from precarious employment tend to unfold with particularly harmful impacts for groups of people who are marginalized by age, gender, citizenship, race and/or class (Preibisch and Otero 2014; Vosko 2010). The flexibilization of labor standards and regulations also enables employers to respond rapidly to changing market conditions and remain competitive in the face of neoliberal globalization (Wilson and Ebert 2013).

While researchers note that some forms of labor market flexibility can promote personal autonomy (Morgan et al. 2013), perhaps a key distinction between undesirable and desirable forms of flexibility is a worker’s ability to meaningfully shape the occupational terms that affect them, including remuneration, working conditions, employment stability and opportunities for personal development. In the case of farmworkers, flexibility often comes at the cost of worker health and safety.
Agricultural work poses a wide range of hazards, including exposure to agrochemicals, dust, bacteria and sulfur, motor vehicle and machinery accidents, animal-related trauma, musculoskeletal injury from repetitive motion, and extreme temperature variation (Murphy and Lee 2009). Amidst dominant food system trends toward agricultural intensification and global integration, along with alternative farming modes that emphasize more localized, sustainable production, a key challenge faces industry and the state: ensuring a farm workforce that is prepared to accept certain wages and working conditions, while simultaneously balancing international concerns over human and labor rights. Temporary farm labor migration schemes have become an increasingly favored option for governments in the global North facing pressure to ensure farmers’ access to a low-cost farm workforce, with new countries introducing such schemes and increasing popularity among countries that have long facilitated temporary labor migration. Nation-states face pressure to weaken labor regulations and cheapen hired farm labor; lower farm labor costs make it possible to keep food prices low. Because the general minimum wage is theoretically based on the cost of food and workers’ social reproduction, governments can justify suppressing the minimum wage for all workers and thereby subsidize capital accumulation writ large (Barnetson 2012).

The political economy of precarious farm labor is bolstered by a deep-seated but contradictory moral economy. Legislation that enables problematic farm labor arrangements in North America like Canada’s Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) has been partially justified through moral arguments in favor of preserving “family” farms, based on the ideology of agrarian exceptionalism. Symbolically, family farms are seen as upholding a set of cherished rural social relations, and yet these social relations have long depended on deep class divides. For instance, 19th century farmers in New York’s Hudson Valley “fueled their own agrarian dreams” by hiring low-wage apprentices (Gray 2014:30), a precursor to un(der) paid internships in our study. Apprentices justified their self-exploitation on the basis of “training”; Gray points out similarly constrained dreams of better futures among Mexican farmworkers in the Hudson Valley today. On a material level, family farms are portrayed as an antidote to agribusiness concentration of farmland and other resources (Kelsey 1994). Programs like the SAWP, however, are often available to so-called family farmers and agribusiness alike, which can nullify any role they might have in mitigating the concentration of corporate ownership and associated societal impacts. Moreover, farmworkers’ experiences contrast with stereotypes of farmers—whether or not they are “family” farmers—as inherently virtuous.

Precariousness has typified farm employment regimes throughout North American history. What is new, however, is the seeping of precariousness into efforts explicitly premised on creating socially just alternatives to dominant modes of agriculture.

**Methods**

Drawing on the specific context of AFNs in British Columbia, Canada, we consider the experiences of migrant and intern farmworkers in tandem to assess how AFNs
engage with forms of labor precariousness affecting “their own” members (i.e. interns), as well as people they perceive as network “outsiders” (i.e. migrants). Two questions guided our research and analysis: How have alternative food networks in BC engaged with precariousness affecting migrant farmworkers and un(der)paid farm and interns? What challenges and opportunities do alternative food networks face in rethinking the role of precarious employment in food system transformation toward sustainability and social justice?

Fieldwork took place between the late summer of 2013 and winter of 2014 in several agricultural regions of BC. The bulk of the data collection involved 25 semi-structured, in-depth interviews with people involved in diverse aspects of farm work and food movement advocacy, including those based in rural, urban and suburban settings. Study participants included un(der)paid interns (n=5), people employed as SAWP migrant farmworkers (n=4), employers/hosts of interns (n=7), employers of migrants (n=3), people involved in alternative food networks (n=4), and people involved in advocacy for migrant farmworkers (n=2); many participants described their experiences in more than one of these roles. Our approach also included participant observation at key AFN sites and events such as food-related festivals, farmers’ markets, and public presentations on food justice issues. This enabled the drawing of linkages and comparisons between sites and the perspectives of interview participants. Data were analyzed through line-by-line coding of interview transcripts, fieldnotes and documents.

As an illustration of the range of farms that might be characterized as part of AFNs, the farms associated with the interns and intern employers whom we interviewed exemplified each of Jarosz’s (2008) four AFN traits. All three of the employers of migrants whom we interviewed described their farms’ agroecological practices in detail. Two of the farmers articulated the importance of the local, sustainable food movement for how they operated their business, even if some of their products were shipped abroad and they occasionally used non-organic methods. For instance, one of these latter two farms belonged to several sustainability-oriented direct marketing initiatives, including the local farmers’ market board. The third farm encompassed 220 acres of greenhouse production in Canada and the United States, and pursued relationships with “foodies” such as BC chefs, along with community charities, as a marketing strategy to encourage consumers to associate its products with healthy lifestyles and healthy eating. We draw attention to these details to illustrate the continuities, hybridization and divergences from “alternative” modes of food production. Whereas the first two of the aforementioned farms owned by employers of migrants conformed more readily with AFN characteristics, the third drew on some AFN elements (e.g. agroecological practices), but its size and greater focus on international exports made it less typical of an “alternative” production system.

We also analyzed several email listservs of non-profit food societies, popular media articles, audio broadcasts, job postings and employment contracts that discussed migrant farmworkers and un(der)paid interns in relation to food system sustainability efforts. Shedding light on these processes underpinned our overall goal of highlighting ways to rethink the conditions that lead to farmworker precariousness, and to advance dignified, economically supportable rural livelihoods.
Precarious Farm Labor in Canada

The SAWP is the predominant agricultural stream of Canada’s larger Temporary Foreign Worker Program. Farm employers successfully lobbied for the establishment of the SAWP pilot in 1966, claiming that amidst increasing global competition, they were no longer able to fulfill their labor needs reliably through Canada’s domestic labor pool (McLaughlin and Hennebry 2013). Through bilateral agreements between Canada and migrant sending countries, the SAWP enables employers to hire workers from Mexico and Caribbean countries for up to eight months each year. The SAWP does not provide a formal route to permanent residency. Labor standards in Canada fall under provincial jurisdiction, and in most Canadian provinces, farmworkers—whether migrant or not—are excluded from statutory rights that apply to non-farming industries, such as overtime pay, working hours, and rest periods (Tucker 2006).

Unlike the 1942–1964 US Bracero program, which has been widely maligned for worker mistreatment (Mitchell 2011), Canada’s SAWP has been heralded by government officials, some academics and foreign observers like the World Bank as a model of best practices for other countries (Binford 2013; Mares and MacLellan 2006). Proponents argue that the SAWP is a win–win arrangement: farmworkers gain the opportunity to earn a living at higher wages than in their sending countries, employers gain a low-cost and reliable workforce, sending countries are relieved of employment pressures, and receiving countries prevent undocumented migration.

Many scholars and activists, however, have raised concerns about the SAWP. In particular, migrant farmworkers’ ability to legally live and work in Canada hinges on remaining employed with the individual who hired them, who can consult with a worker’s sending country agent to issue their deportation. Their precarious legal status intensifies the precariousness of employment in an industry that is already hazardous (Preibisch and Otero 2014). The power that employers wield through their end-of-contract evaluation of each worker acts as a disincentive for farmworkers to report incidences of exploitation or injury, to rightfully refuse dangerous work, or to decline offers to work overtime or on weekends. While migrants may report overall satisfaction with the program and the ability to support their families through much higher Canadian wages (Verduzco and Lozano 2003), Binford (2013) points out how the context of global inequality creates a frame of reference for workers to evaluate the SAWP against poverty in their sending countries.

British Columbia: Migrant Farmworkers and Un(der)paid Interns

Western Canada is a hub for initiatives focused on local agriculture and ecologically regenerative food systems, including multiple AFNs (Wittman et al. 2012). Amidst food localization efforts in British Columbia, racialized farmworkers in highly precarious employment conditions grow many of the province’s local crops, particularly in the fruit, vegetable and nursery production sub-sectors (Otero and Preibisch 2010). In 2013, roughly half of the 12,000 agriculture and horticulture workers were racialized recent immigrants, and the other half migrants (BC Ministry of Jobs 2014; ESDC 2014).
After the SAWP was introduced to BC in 2004 with 47 Mexican migrant farmworkers (Preibisch and Otero 2014), the program expanded massively in this province; in 2013, BC employers hired approximately 5100 SAWP migrants out of 6300 farm workers hired in the province through all agriculture-related streams of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (ESDC 2014). Most BC SAWP workers are young, married, male, and from Mexico, although some are also from Caribbean countries (Preibisch and Otero 2014). Part of migrant farmworkers’ wages are automatically deducted to pay into state social benefits schemes such as the Canada Pension Plan, but they often face legal and practical constraints to accessing these benefits (Preibisch and Otero 2014).

An unknown but much smaller proportion of BC farmworkers are un(der)paid farm interns. Although BC labor law specifies that formal interns must be paid at least the minimum wage unless they are completing an internship as part of an accredited educational program, un(der)paid internship arrangements in BC are often informal and “under-the-table”. As such, there is presently no standardized system for enumerating the extent of agricultural interns as part of the labor force, or for ensuring the fairness of the exchange or stipend. Similarly, there is no accountability mechanism for ensuring that informal intern accommodations meet provincial standards or any criteria established internally by the sustainable farming community. While no rigorous statistics exist on the extent of un(der)paid farming internships in BC, a directory that connects aspiring apprentices with farmers called Stewards of Irreplaceable Land (SOIL) reported 61 BC farm apprenticeship hosts in 2013 (SOIL, personal communication, 2014). Many internships are also arranged informally between farmers and interns without any intermediary organizations. Some un(der)paid interns have low integration into social protections granted to those doing comparable farm work. For instance, they may lack access to special EI benefits that are intended to protect people from the risk of poverty.

All interns interviewed were either Canadian citizens or on a student visa. We considered un(der)paid interns as those working at least part-time for a whole farming season, which excluded tourists on shorter-term farm homestays. While their motivations for undertaking internships vary, interns often highlight the importance of learning agricultural skills. Un(der)paid internships have become an increasingly important part of labor and farmer-training strategies in AFN contexts. For that reason—rather than for comparability on the basis of their quantitative prevalence in the labor market—they provided a window for comparison with SAWP labor regimes. Compared with migrants, farm interns are less constrained as far as entering freely into an internship, asserting their workplace interests on an individual basis and leaving a position. Nonetheless, as demonstrated in this study, un(der)paid farming internships exemplify how an employment relationship can be deeply embedded in a community of ethically driven sustainable food initiatives while simultaneously exhibiting what Wilson and Ebert (2013:267) describe as “a peculiarly asymmetrical distribution of power and information between employers, employment agencies and workers”. Table 1 provides a comparison between migrants and interns on the basis of six key indicators of precariousness, using existing definitions of precarious employment (Morgan et al. 2013; Vosko 2010).
Table 1: Comparing SAWP migrant farmworkers and un(der)paid farm interns in BC based on precariousness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Employment stability and mobility</th>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Un(der)paid interns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• SAWP contracts last up to 8 months, renewable</td>
<td>Internships generally last one growing season, with possible renewal in subsequent seasons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No formal recognition of job seniority besides employer “naming” process and end-of-season employer evaluation</td>
<td>• Prior skills may determine whether selected. Internship may constitute un(der)paid training for future formal job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Those who wish to transfer farms often cannot</td>
<td>• Can transfer to another farm if desired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Job termination means loss of ability to legally live/work in Canada and may affect future SAWP employment</td>
<td>• Internship termination does not affect immigration status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Employer-provided housing on-farm or off-site. Employers can legally constrain migrants’ mobility and visitors</td>
<td>• Rural internships generally housed on-farm; may depend on employers for transportation. Urban internships involve own accommodations/transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May depend on employers for in-country transportation</td>
<td>• Can select preferred workplace/employer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cannot select preferred workplace/employer</td>
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<tr>
<th>2. Remuneration</th>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Un(der)paid interns</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• At least minimum wage (amount varies by commodity)</td>
<td>• Unpaid or less than minimum wage. May receive stipend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wages deducted for social benefits; BC employers can partially deduct housing costs but cannot deduct costs incurred for airfare</td>
<td>• May receive room and board, discounted or second-quality farm produce, and educational training and field trips</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Control over the labor process</th>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Un(der)paid interns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Formal terms of job set out in standard legal contract established between sending/receiving countries</td>
<td>• Terms of internship may be set out in non-legally binding memorandum of understanding or “job description”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May be legally repatriated for “non-compliance, refusal to work, or any other sufficient reason”</td>
<td>• Ranges from low to high degree of input/autonomy over factors such as start times, holidays, tasks, etc.</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Access to political participation and representation</th>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Un(der)paid interns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Cannot vote in Canada</td>
<td>• Interns &gt;18 years with Canadian citizenship can vote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consulates represent SAWP workers, but migrants often experience Consulate as hostile and unhelpful to workers</td>
<td>• Unclear whether eligible for union membership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consulates discourage workers from associating with advocacy groups or unions. In BC, Mexican Consulate illegally blacklisted perceived union sympathizers</td>
<td>• May belong to local food policy organizations and non-profit legal/policy advocacy organizations like the Canadian Intern Association</td>
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<tr>
<th>5. Integration into social benefits</th>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Un(der)paid interns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Must be covered by public or private health insurance, but barriers to access</td>
<td>• Can usually access provincial public health coverage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Eligible for certain federal social</td>
<td>• May be ineligible for provincial occupational health and safety</td>
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(Continues)
We found that members of AFNs in BC—including employers, farmworkers, and community-based practitioners—tended to frame both un(der)paid internships and migrant farmworker employment as unproblematic, as an unavoidable challenge amidst efforts to create sustainable food systems, or as merely involving a few “bad apple” farm employers. A prominent narrative within this frame emphasizes employment as a reciprocal relationship that allows farmers to contribute to society through food production, provides interns with education as potential future farmers, and offers jobs for migrants coming from conditions of poverty and unemployment. For instance, one employer of migrants emphasized the benefits to his Mexican workforce of earning wages in Canadian currency. He also pointed to the business arguments for treating employees well, such as growing hot peppers for SAWP workers: “People appreciate that a lot, and, and you see they work harder and they’re more honest. It’s a good give and take, back and forth.” We observed some participants using this frame to juxtapose farmers’ sacrifices against workers’ low wages, characterizing exploitative or inconsistent employment arrangements as anomalous issues of an individual employer’s poor moral character. We found that this framing was relatively consistent across farm types ranging from alternative to more conventional. These findings point to the ways that precariousness is shaping farm employment not only for groups that are excluded from many aspects of society on the basis of non-citizenship (i.e. migrants) but also for those who tend to bear greater privilege and who might be considered AFN “insiders” (i.e. interns).

**Normalizing Precarious Farm Employment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Un(der)paid interns</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>benefits, but barriers to access</td>
<td>insurance if unpaid or paid a very small stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ineligible for special EI benefits (e.g. parental benefits)</td>
<td>• Ineligible for EI if not formally registered as an employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ineligible for government-funded newcomer support services</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Social location</td>
<td>• Often young Canadian citizens or international students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Employers hire on the basis of gender and country of origin (i.e. “race”). Sending countries may recruit on basis of marital status, child dependents, age, and limited education</td>
<td>• May be university educated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack secure citizenship; may encounter language barriers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: (Continued)

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**Rock Stars and Bad Apples: Systemic Inconsistencies Across Farm Employment**

“You almost want to reach out and touch a farmer at the farmers’ market. They’re like rock stars.” This half-joking remark from a presenter at a Vancouver food justice event describes how some members of AFNs have constructed as self-evident the
idea that farmers are to be celebrated, and particularly those farmers engaged in small-scale, local and organic food production. An account of farmers’ basic moral uprightness, along with the importance of valuing farmers, pervaded many of the rationales we observed for maintaining the status quo in both un(der)paid internships and the migrant farmworker program. While some participants felt that un(der)paid internships were less than ethically ideal and posed risks in terms of occupational hazards and liability, they expressed that organic and small-scale farmers could generally be counted on to arrange fair exchanges and not to exploit interns as mere low-cost laborers. One employer of migrants echoed a similarly positive view of farmers: “Obviously I’m probably biased, but farmers are definitely one of the more genuine, hardworking, sincere people I know.” He later said that although he had heard of perhaps two cases in which SAWP employers provided crowded living conditions, such instances were “so rare”. This contrasts with research in which 37% of surveyed migrant workers in BC disagreed with the statement: “the state of my housing does not present any risk to my health” (Preibisch and Otero 2014:189).

Migrants tended to share the perspective that there was little consistency across employers. For instance, some highly regarded employers would monetarily reward long-time employees and agree to attempt to secure permanent residency for them. By contrast, a 28-year-old SAWP participant from Guerrero, Mexico described living in an employer-provided house with holes in the floor through which rats and water would enter. With a background in agriculture and construction in Mexico, he had first started working in Canada at the age of 22 and was glad for the opportunity to earn money in Canada. While he emphasized that his current boss on a mixed berry farm was a “good guy”, he expressed frustration at his employer’s failure to provide a washing machine (as specified in the contract; providing weekly access to a laundromat is the alternative). Another man had traveled to Canada from Yucatan, Mexico, for nine farming seasons and at the time worked at a farm producing mixed vegetables, fruits, and chickens for meat. Having encountered a range of employers with whom he had positive and less positive relationships, he commented: “There are some who are concerned for the person and some who aren’t; there are some who evade the law that is stipulated.” He explained:

Well the fact is that [bosses] all have different mentalities. As long as you are useful for the boss and do your work well, he’s going to choose you [to return the following season]. If the bosses realize you aren’t useful, they won’t choose you. It’s like a machine; if you’re not useful, then you’ll be replaced by someone else.

This participant’s account points to inconsistencies across employers that occur not only because of employers’ variable “mentality”, but also because the SAWP structure allows for the possibility that employers could follow harsh economic rationales of hyper-exploitation and treat workers as disposable.

**Contributing to the Greater Good: Educating Future Farmers and Providing Jobs for Migrants**

That farmers are contributing to the greater public good by educating future sustainable farmers, or at least more informed eaters, is one of the key ways we
observed BC members of AFNs describing un(der)paid agricultural internships. One farmer, who had shifted from using stipends to paying his interns minimum wage, expressed concern that many intern hosts were citing morally laden defenses to justify possibly exploitative labor arrangements. For him, an internship risked being exploitative if there was a stark contrast between how much time an intern contributed to the productivity of a farm and that intern’s financial compensation, particularly if the intern’s labor was essential to the scale of a business. He observed:

I think that there is sort of a maxim being repeated among a lot of small-scale farmers, “that I can’t afford to pay minimum wage to my employees, and that I shouldn’t have to afford it because I’m in some sort of special situation, I’m doing something for the good of the planet and therefore [we shouldn’t have to pay minimum wage] ...”. We just don’t buy into that line of reasoning.

Proponents of both SAWP and intern farm work arrangements pointed to the large number of intern applicants, along with their enthusiasm and gratitude for the experience, as indicative that the arrangements were ethically sound. Several of the interns we interviewed, for example, highlighted their own autonomy and enthusiasm for entering into an opportunity they felt was fair, educational, and personally meaningful. Some reported that the housing-working-learning structure of the internship made it considerably more affordable than a formal farm-training program. Employers of migrant farmworkers also tended to characterize their labor arrangements as a fair “give-and-take” dynamic involving mutual gratitude and economic gain; more broadly, they contrasted the opportunity for migrants to work in Canada with poor workplace conditions and low wages in Mexico.

“*We can’t afford to pay more*”: The High Cost of Farm Labor vs Farmers’ Own Sacrifices

A prominent narrative theme we observed was the juxtaposition of farmers’ own ethically driven economic and physical sacrifices against the acceptability of not paying their interns or not paying higher wages for migrants. Advocates of small-scale, local and organic food often consider that farmers producing these goods should be given special ethical consideration because of their low incomes. For example, while one organic farmer and local food security leader expressed concern with the dependence of many small-scale organic farmers on un(der)paid interns, she qualified, “I wouldn’t criticize farmers, though. They’re often not making much money.”

Similarly, at an organic farming conference panel discussion on internships, an intern host and organic farmer commented: “I think anyone needs to be paid a fair wage, but we’re trying to impose this very standard business model onto a system that is a lifestyle ... It’s much more challenging than a lot of other businesses out there.” In our interviews, one farming couple that had been hosting interns and WWOOFers (the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms network coordinates farm volunteer homestays) for nearly two decades asserted: “Officially we are below the poverty line. We would be the kind of people you would see in line-ups at food banks, except we grow our own food. Look at our house!” This account lent
weight to their later response when we asked whether they could feasibly hire
paid farmworkers: “There is no way we could afford to hire people.” Another
farmer who had employed migrant farmworkers for nearly a decade commented
candidly on most BC farmers’ dependence on a “cheap source of wages”. In light
of the SAWP’s growth in BC, he felt that removing the program would “cripple
agriculture”. Locals would be unwilling to work at prevailing farm wages, and
consumers would reject the increased food prices ensuing from higher farm-
worker wages.

Still, the popularity of un(der)paid internships and WWOOFing among locals and
tourists who tend to be young and relatively affluent throws into question the ap-
parent existence of an absolute farm labor shortage. Unlike migrants, interns have
the freedom to select farm employment arrangements that carry prestige and more
appealing working conditions. In addition, while the denial of citizenship to mi-
grant farmworkers is explicitly premised on their apparent lack of skills, migrant
and racialized immigrant farmworkers may in fact have critical farming expertise
that prospective interns lack. While a case could be made for paying interns less
than (im)migrant farmworkers with greater skill and experience, all farmworkers
begin with zero experience on Canadian farms, and BC does not permit a training
wage below the minimum wage for less experienced workers. One young, white
intern on a small organic farm noted that his employer sidestepped the common-
place local practice of hiring immigrant Thai or Punjabi farmworkers in order to
avoid perpetuating what the farmer saw as blatant employer–employee hierar-
chies. Comparing his own skills to immigrant farmworkers, the intern asserted:
“They can do it [farm work] so fast. They can run circles around me, even though
they might be, like, 65 years old.” However, the stamina and work ethic commonly
attributed to (im)migrant farmworkers are not natural racial “traits”, but rather arise
out of experience and the structural conditions of their employment.

The Moral Economies of Precarious Farm Work in
British Columbia
Based on the foregoing accounts, we suggest that the concept of a moral economy helps
to make sense of the most common framing we observed. Through this framing, AFN
participants justify precarious farm labor arrangements as largely unproblematic.

Ambiguous Reciprocities
Given that both SAWP employment and internships were variously framed in our
interviews as a “privilege” for workers, they can be interpreted as a form of a moral
economy in which workers are expected to reciprocate the “privilege” with their la-
bor. For migrants, the supposed privilege in question was usually framed as the op-
portunity to work in a country with higher wages and better employment
opportunities than they might expect in their sending countries. For interns, the
privilege was the opportunity to gain experiential knowledge and training in sus-
tainable agriculture, and perhaps a sense of membership and identification with
the alternative food community.

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The implicit, unspoken nature of such exchanges, however, means that boundaries may be ambiguous in terms of how much, and what kind of labor is adequate to reciprocate the opportunity. The case of an intern who was initially given unclear information about the weekly commitment, and subsequently asked to sign a “contract” or job description committing to working 200 hours per month for $300/month at an urban farm, demonstrates how employers may maintain much greater power to define the precise terms of the exchange. In this instance, the farm managers were apparently unwilling to renegotiate the terms of the internship once the job description was presented to interns. When the terms of a labor exchange relationship are vague and situated within unspoken assumptions, there may be potential for parties who typically have greater power in an employment relationship (i.e. employers) to define what counts as fair. Employers’ portrayal of the SAWP as an opportunity for migrants symbolically positions employers and the Canadian state as generous benefactors. This frame aligns with farm industry groups’ moralized portrayal of the SAWP as a form of foreign aid (Bauder 2008), underscoring how migrants’ remittances support families and communities in impoverished communities. Accordingly, it appears the moral economy is invoked in both AFNs and more industrialized agricultural contexts.

**Naturalizing Voluntary (and Less Voluntary) Self-exploitation**

Farmers themselves are all-too familiar with the possibility of poverty and precariousness. In fact, one of the key narratives we observed in the moral economy frame was an argument that because there was less disparity between farm employers’ incomes and those of their interns, un(der)paid farming internships were less problematic. But this does not account for the imbalance between interns’ and farmers’ investments in farm infrastructure, land ownership or leasing arrangements, marketing and business relationships, and other such assets. Furthermore, defending low-wage or no-wage labor perpetuates the apparent naturalness of inadequate incomes for farmers and farmworkers alike. Normalizing inadequate incomes for farm employers has ideological consequences for farmworkers because it fails to contest the way farmworkers’ sacrifices (and those of migrant farmworkers’ families and communities from which they are separated) act as a subsidy to the food system.

In our study, the self-exploitation that is naturalized as part of many un(der)paid farming internships may be appealing only to those who have enough economic privilege to make concessions in terms of social protections such as decent wages, the ability to advocate for one’s rights as a worker, and a robust occupational health and safety net. To the degree that un(der)paid farm internships are mainly accessible to people who can afford to make such concessions, efforts to legitimate un(der)paid internships serve to offload the public responsibility for inclusive social protections onto individual, exclusive social privilege. On the other end of the spectrum, were un(der)paid internships to be greatly scaled up, they would dampen wages and access to social benefits for farmworkers who are at a considerably greater risk of poverty, including both migrants and recent immigrant farmworkers.
As a way to contest the apparent naturalness of undervalued, under-recognized farm labor, AFN efforts to improve the social standing of farmers serve a critical function. Yet, some AFN members’ idealization of farmers as inherently moral and honest (especially small-scale, local and organic farmers) can stymie critical discussions about flexible and precarious farm work regimes. Elevating local farmers to the status of “rock stars” perpetuates the idea that problematic farmworker employment merely reflects inevitable and anomalous cases of individual “bad apple” farmers with insufficient moral fiber (see Hennebry 2010). Idealizing farmers or fixating on high-profile cases of migrant abuse, which tend to evoke public and media attention, both elide systemic issues at hand: precarious farmworker regimes involve weak accountability mechanisms and unreliable channels for farmworkers to assert their own interests.

**Narrowed Pathways: Individualized Risk and Ethical Consumption**

The moral arguments we observed regarding the status quo of un(der)paid intern or migrant farmworker arrangements appear to short-circuit engagement with the state. Rather than focusing on pathways for addressing farm labor concerns through traditional or farmworker-driven monitoring/enforcement mechanisms, the moral economy framing proposes state disengagement and individual consumer surveillance as the “natural” next steps.

**State Disengagement**

Many participants who were involved in AFNs as farmers or volunteers with food system sustainability organizations expressed a strong belief that the various layers of state structures at work in the BC food system—municipal, provincial, federal and transnational—have been dismissive or even hostile to their concerns while favoring agribusiness. Some cited the provincial government’s stance on farm internships as an instance of “one-size-fits-all” regulation that did not accommodate the sustainability-oriented innovations AFNs were attempting to make. For instance, one participant whose co-operative farm hires unpaid interns offered the following commentary about agricultural housing regulations as a barrier to the farm’s food security potential:

> The Agricultural Land Commission Act says that habitation on farmland must be justified by agricultural needs ... We’ve done a study that says we need 39 workers here. And that kind of implies 13 three-person households. Either that, or we bring in a bunch of [migrants] before we fully realize the food potential here.

As another case illustrating strains between AFNs and formal farm labor regulations in 2013, two interns sought and received retroactive back-wages from a BC organic farm where they had interned through an informal labor exchange arrangement based on their apparent stated interest in purchasing the farm. Many in the organic farming community voiced sympathy for the employers, even offering to fundraise for their legal costs. Referencing the legalistic approach the interns took, one small-scale farmer expressed:
It almost sounds like sabotage ... I can’t imagine doing that to someone—quasi-intending to buy a farm, and then coming back to seek back-wages. It breaks the sense of trust in the organic farming community; [the interns] exemplify the attitude that it’s okay to kind of try to work outside the system until you decide you don’t like something, then to revert to legal or state recourse.

This grower gave voice to the tensions between operating a farm business within an informal, trust-based moral economy and workers’ inalienable, state-based social protections. For instance, while BC interns have access to provincial public health coverage, some intern employers (or “hosts”) do not register their farms with the provincial body that offers insurance for other forms of on-the-job injuries or disease. One respondent who employed interns felt that this lack of attention among farm employers to the risks of farm work reflected commonplace “wishful thinking” (i.e. that no adverse events would occur necessitating insurance) and, less commonly, an “ideological opposition” to bureaucratic tax requirements.

Amidst AFN actors’ disinclination to address social protections for interns, some interns themselves expressed that formal protections were not necessary, that their work was low risk, and that they were ultimately responsible for undertaking any occupational risks. However, a woman who interned at an urban farm with her husband while they lacked stable housing described becoming more concerned in retrospect about a potential absence of worker’s compensation in the event of an injury:

We didn’t sign any waivers saying that we were holding our own liability ... It made me think, “Holy f***. What if I would have gotten really hurt or something?” I don’t think there was much coverage there for me ... I’m sure they would have just said it was my own fault, I’ve done something wrong. And we were on ladders, we were using power tools, we were working in the extreme cold and then the extreme heat. There was lots of room for dangerous things to happen.

For their part, some of the migrants we interviewed described having to “look out for yourself”, not out of voluntarism, but because of the absence of support from state entities such as SAWP Consulates. One employer of migrants felt that the growth of the SAWP in BC had not kept pace with resources available to enforce regulations and standards. He added: “I mean, I guess you just hope that people are, at the end of the day, honest enough and humane enough to do a good job of things. But, as I said, you’re always going to have a certain percentage that are not.”

**Ethical Labeling and Consumer Surveillance**

An activist with the Okanagan-based group Radical Action with Migrants in Agriculture (RAMA) noted that on more than one occasion sustainable food proponents had encouraged RAMA to develop an “ethical employer certification”. The proposed label would offer economic rewards to employers who voluntarily engage in migrant labor practices deemed ethical. Members of RAMA were, however, averse to singlehandedly spearheading such a label. Besides the tremendous amount of volunteer resources that would be required to develop a certification system, they were concerned that promoting the economic
interests of farm employers might undermine RAMA’s relationships with farmworkers, and that a label would not address structural and racial injustices they asserted are systemic in the SAWP.

For some of the farmers we interviewed, direct marketing relationships served as a way to communicate with customers about their employment of either migrant farmworkers or interns. They noted that this open line of dialogue provided an important venue to justify the “true cost” of labor-related price premiums to consumers, or to respond to queries about their hiring of farmworkers through the SAWP. Indeed, several AFN participants and farm employers suggested that consumers themselves ought to be partly responsible for the surveillance of ethical labor practices, both through in-person, trust-based “know-your-grower” interactions and social media monitoring.

Such proposals for ethical employer labeling and consumer surveillance form part of an AFN moral economy of consumption (Goodman 2004; see also Brown and Getz 2008). To a large degree, affluent eaters in the global North define the consumption standards that underpin this economy and how surplus value from AFN food production is distributed. Our results resonate with Galt’s (2013:341) study of community-supported agriculture (CSA) in California. He argues that the moral economy “cuts both ways economically” for farmers: while the ability to commodify members’ sense of social embeddedness in a CSA enables farmers to capture economic rents, it increases farmers’ sense of obligation to CSA members to the extent that they engage in self-exploitation.

Whither the Food “Movement”?
In contrast to the proposals we heard favoring consumer surveillance, it is clear that individual consumers are ill equipped to assume the systematic monitoring or enforcement of social protections for farmworkers. Farm business owners also maintain a great deal of gatekeeping power in shaping information that is presented to the public through venues like social media and farmers’ market conversations. Moreover, a dependence on face-to-face interactions would present a barrier to scaling up trust-based monitoring relationships (Wittman et al. 2012). Still, precedents exist for monitoring and certified labeling driven by farmworkers themselves, as in the case of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers in Florida. In addition, as part of their institutional food procurement practices, some US-based colleges are adopting the Real Food Challenge, which includes specific criteria pertaining to food workers, including a living wage, the right to a grievance process, and safe and fair working conditions.

With regard to some employer participants’ aversion to “one-size-fits-all” farm labor regulation, our concern is that there may be a trend in which some AFN actors’ resistance toward state bureaucracy translates into a belief that formal systems of accountability are no longer necessary or desirable. A moral economy framing is thus used as an anti-political ideology to legitimize the neoliberal status quo of agricultural exceptionalism for farm labor in BC: leave it all to individuals and hope for the best. While the status quo undoubtedly provides opportunities such as education for interns and jobs for migrants, it simultaneously
limits the possibilities of hired farm work as a dignified, socially protected livelihood.

Moreover, this anti-politics acts as a barrier to the transformation of networks of food alterity in BC into a food movement; that is, a collective, cohesive, organized, and sustained movement (Snow et al. 2004) to enact or defend against food-related social change. Our study suggests the moral economy may be used to normalize precarious and flexible employment relationships, thereby stifling the impetus for people to collectively organize toward more equitable and emancipatory structural conditions in the food system.

**Conclusion**

AFNs and food movements in North America have articulated a vision of transforming the food system through human-intensive and ecologically based agriculture. Because precarious jobs are founded on denying basic protections allotted to other workers, such as wages and insurance coverage for work-related injury for interns, precarious hired farm employment hinders progress toward food system transformation. In this paper, we explored how AFNs in BC have engaged with precariousness affecting two groups of farmworkers: SAWP migrants and (der)paid interns. Future research in BC should consider the position of immigrant farmworkers within this moral economy, along with more in-depth life histories and quantitative demographic information for farm interns. Alternative food repertoires that narrate precarious farm employment through a moral economy frame serve, effectively, to obscure the need to address structural conditions that create flexible and precarious work regimes. Many AFN participants are conscious of and critical of these practices within their own networks, and they are actively working to transform the frame in order to address systemic farm labor injustices and support more egalitarian movement building. In our BC report on good farming jobs, we highlight policy solutions that AFNs and others can support (Weiler et al. 2014). An opportunity for all AFNs to address precarious employment in the food system would be to support migrant justice campaigns for full immigration status and associated rights on arrival, or at the very least a route to citizenship for migrant farmworkers.

Our study complements the emerging body of research suggesting that precariousness has become a feature of hired work not only in so-called “industrial” agriculture, but also amidst efforts to realize more socially just and ecologically sound alternatives. Further, our findings point toward the ways precariousness is now shaping farm employment both for those who are marginalized in society at large and excluded from alternative food efforts (i.e. migrants), as well as those whose social location typically accrues greater privilege and who constitute alternative food “insiders” (i.e. interns). Farmworkers are exempted from basic labor protections and citizenship rights on the basis that agriculture is an exceptional industry. These findings present an opportunity to rethink the role of precarious employment in agriculture. Acknowledging the continuities between alternative and “mainstream” food systems can be useful in challenging how precariousness becomes normalized in privileged, supposedly prefigurative spheres as well as the dominant agricultural contexts in which most farmworkers are employed.
Failing to meaningfully involve farmers and farmworkers themselves in developing systems of accountability for labor practices can generate new forms of racial and economic discrimination (Sowerwine et al. 2015). To this end, our references to “social protection” could be misread as advocating for a bureaucratic, paternalistic and capitalist government model of enforcing standards that are imagined to benefit members of a sovereign state. Furthermore, Walia (2010) points out that much of the Canadian welfare state’s capacity to distribute social benefits is founded on the extraction of Indigenous lands locally and abroad. We call, then, for the exploration of participatory, radical egalitarian forms of democratic governance that subordinate the state to collective, decolonizing organizations based in civil society. Under current legislation and given their precarious position, migrant workers are not well positioned to take the lead. By allying with existing pro-labor, migrant justice and anti-racist movements, members of AFNs who are concerned about social justice can support the creation of political spaces for all eaters, farmers and farmworkers to meaningfully shape the conditions of their food, lives and livelihoods.

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Endnote

1 These job figures are rough approximations based on the number of positions on positive Labor Market Impact Assessments (ESDC 2014).

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