



Ohio State HCS News

HORTICULTURE & CROP SCIENCE IN VIRTUAL PERSPECTIVE - THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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New Course Focuses on Workplace Relations with Hispanics



Claudio Pasian is offering a new course to educate students on the cultural, historical and legal aspects of workplace relations with Hispanic migrant workers.

With the labor force of agricultural-based industries dominated by Hispanic migrant workers, and owners having little knowledge of the language and culture, effective communication and relations between employer and employee can be challenging.

Ohio State University's Department of Horticulture & Crop Science is offering a new course this fall to educate students, who will likely be working with Hispanic migrant workers when they enter the workforce, on the cultural, historical and legal aspects of workplace relations in such industries as dairy, nursery and greenhouse, landscape, and vegetable production.

"In my experience in working with owners and managers of various agricultural industries, they have little knowledge of the language and culture of Hispanic migrant workers, and hence, they have problems in communicating or developing a fluid relationship with that workforce. The consequence is that many jobs are not done, or not done properly, and that diminishes efficiency and productivity," said [Claudio Pasian](#), an OSU Extension horticulturist, who is teaching the course. "I thought it would be a good idea to present information on Hispanics to students who will be working alongside migrant workers, either as a co-worker or as a supervisor."

"The Latino Workforce in Land-based Industries" (H&CS 294 - Call # 16283-2) will be offered autumn quarter on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 p.m. to 5:48 p.m. The

undergraduate course is designed to provide an overview of issues faced by migrant workers in agriculture -- who they are, where they come from, the challenges they face, and why they are coming to the United States to find work. It's the first such course offered by the [College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences](#).

"If students entering the industry have a good sense of such information, then they may feel more confident in working with Hispanic workers and start off on the right foot with a successful working relationship," said Pasian, an associate professor in Horticulture & Crop Science who also holds a partial research appointment with the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center.

Course objectives include demographic information, communication, geography, social aspects, history and culture, Hispanic customs, foods of Mexico, supervising a Latino workforce, an overview of modern agriculture in Mexico and Central America, migrant and seasonal farm workers in Ohio, work visas, and what employers should know about legal issues. The course will also include guest speakers from other Ohio State University departments, Ohio industries, and Mexican organizations.

For more information on the course, contact [Claudio Pasian](#) at (614) 292-9941 or pasian.1@osu.edu.

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