

## **Agricultural Employers and the Wage Theft Prevention Act**

On April 9, 2011, the Wage Theft Prevention Act (WTPA) took effect in New York State. This Act requires that employers provide written notice of wage rate(s) to new employees at the time of hire. The wage notice must include:

- The rate(s) of pay, including overtime rate (if applicable)
- A description of how the employee is paid (by the hour, shift, day, week, etc.)
- The regular payday each week
- The official name of the employer and any other names used for business (DBAs)
- The address and phone number of the employer's main office or location
- Any allowances taken as part of the minimum wage (i.e., meal and/or lodging deductions)

To assist agricultural employers in complying with this provision of the WTPA, the NYS Department of Labor provides the Pay Notice and Acknowledgement for Farm Workers ([Form LS 309](#)). This notice, when properly completed, satisfies the pay notice provisions of Section 195 of the NYS Labor Law and the written work agreement provisions of Part 190, the Farm Minimum Wage Order. It is also available in Spanish ([Form LS 309S](#)) and many other languages. If you have H-2A foreign guest workers on your farm, but also have domestic workers not doing the H-2A job duties, you should continue to use the LS 309 or LS 309S (Spanish) at least for the domestic workers not doing H-2A job duties.

As the State Workforce Agency (SWA), the Department of Labor is responsible for providing, in Spanish, the essential terms and conditions of each H-2A job order (ETA 790) to the SWAs in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Puerto Rico. These states help supply workers to agricultural employers in New York. The essential terms and conditions are compiled on a form called the AL 516S. Because the AL 516S may be helpful to employers who are providing notice to their workers as part of the WTPA, the Agriculture Labor Program also makes the AL 516S available to H-2A farmers in New York. With this completed form, employers can provide the Spanish translations of the pay rate, job description, and other terms of employment on the notice of their choosing (AL 790.1 or LS 309) to their employees, upon hire.

Regardless of the form used, the notice must be signed by the employee and the employer or employer's representative ("Preparer") on the day the wage rate notice is provided to the employee. Both the employee and the employer must each receive a copy of the form with all signatures present. Please note that completing the pay notice may mean you are only partially in compliance with the WTPA, as there are other provisions, including a six-year payroll and time record retention provision.

For questions regarding any of these forms or Labor Law compliance, please contact the Agriculture Labor Specialist serving your county. You may also contact the Foreign Labor Certification Unit at [H2A@labor.ny.gov](mailto:H2A@labor.ny.gov). Find contact information for the Agriculture Labor Specialists and other information on the services for agricultural employers by visiting the Agriculture Labor Program's website at <http://www.labor.ny.gov/immigrants/agriculture-labor-program.shtm>.

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