

## Recent immigrant workers in Iowa's meatpacking industry

Archie Green Fellows Project, 2015-2016

Zabdiel Morales Algandar interview, 2016-05-04 : interview conducted by John W. McKerley

Interview ID: afc2015026\_02840

Date: May 4, 2016

Duration: 01:12:19

00:00:00	Introductions
00:00:45	Birth in Mazatlan, Mexico
00:01:40	Mother's work experience; father still in Mexico
00:02:40	Moving from Mazatlan to San Luis Rio Colorado (SLRC) on US/Mexico border
00:03:50	Ancestors, including people of Asian and French background
00:06:00	Life in SLRC
00:07:00	Employment opportunities in SLRC; his family's cross-border migration
00:08:00	Fieldwork as compared with mother's previous employment in Mexico
00:08:40	Migration's challenges to family life
00:09:40	Family's move to California to secure more stable fieldwork
00:11:00	Impact of migration on childhood
00:12:00	Lack of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) support in California schools
00:12:50	Moves back to Arizona in sixth grade; more language support in Arizona than in California
00:14:10	Childhood goal of not working in the fields like his mother and brother
00:15:00	Working conditions in the fields
00:19:20	Brother leaves for meatpacking work in Beardstown, Illinois; family follows

- 00:19:40 Meatpacking work compared with fieldwork
- 00:20:00 Barriers to mass migration to Midwest
- 00:23:00 Transitioning to small-town life in Illinois
- 00:24:30 Relations between different groups of Mexicans/Hispanics in town
- 00:26:30 Relations between Hispanics and whites; police harassment
- 00:28:27 Role of Cargill (later JBS) plant in the Beardstown community
- 00:29:00 Rumors about work in plant before he started
- 00:30:00 Mexican immigrant workers (fear among undocumented, workers and family life)
- 00:34:30 Going to high school in Beardstown; ESL classes
- 00:35:40 Racial tensions at school
- 00:36:20 Starting work in the plant
- 00:20:50 Attending community college; value of education
- 00:37:55 Meaning of meatpacking work
- 00:39:30 Learning about union
- 00:41:00 Working as loin packer
- 00:43:30 Solidarity among loin packing workers
- 00:44:15 Difficulties of packing work
- 00:44:45 Women workers
- 00:45:26 Dominance of Hispanic workers in plant
- 00:45:55 Avoidance of knife work
- 00:46:45 Work in "pack off"
- 00:47:45 Comparison between knife work and other work

00:50:50 Deepening ties to union; seniority and union activism

00:52:30 Becoming a steward in pack off

00:54:30 Immigrant rights activism; 2006 Great American Boycott

01:00:00 Demographics of plant

01:01:00 Arrival of Africans in plant

01:01:40 Union role in Great American Boycott

01:02:50 Outspokenness regarding boycott

01:04:00 Assisting other workers with documentation process

01:04:40 Obtaining citizenship

01:05:30 Becoming organizer with UFCW

01:07:00 Union as vehicle for better life

01:08:00 Tensions between Local 431 leaders and Beardstown sub-local over access to education

01:09:25 Hope for future; learning to be an organizer