



Washington State  
Tree Fruit Association

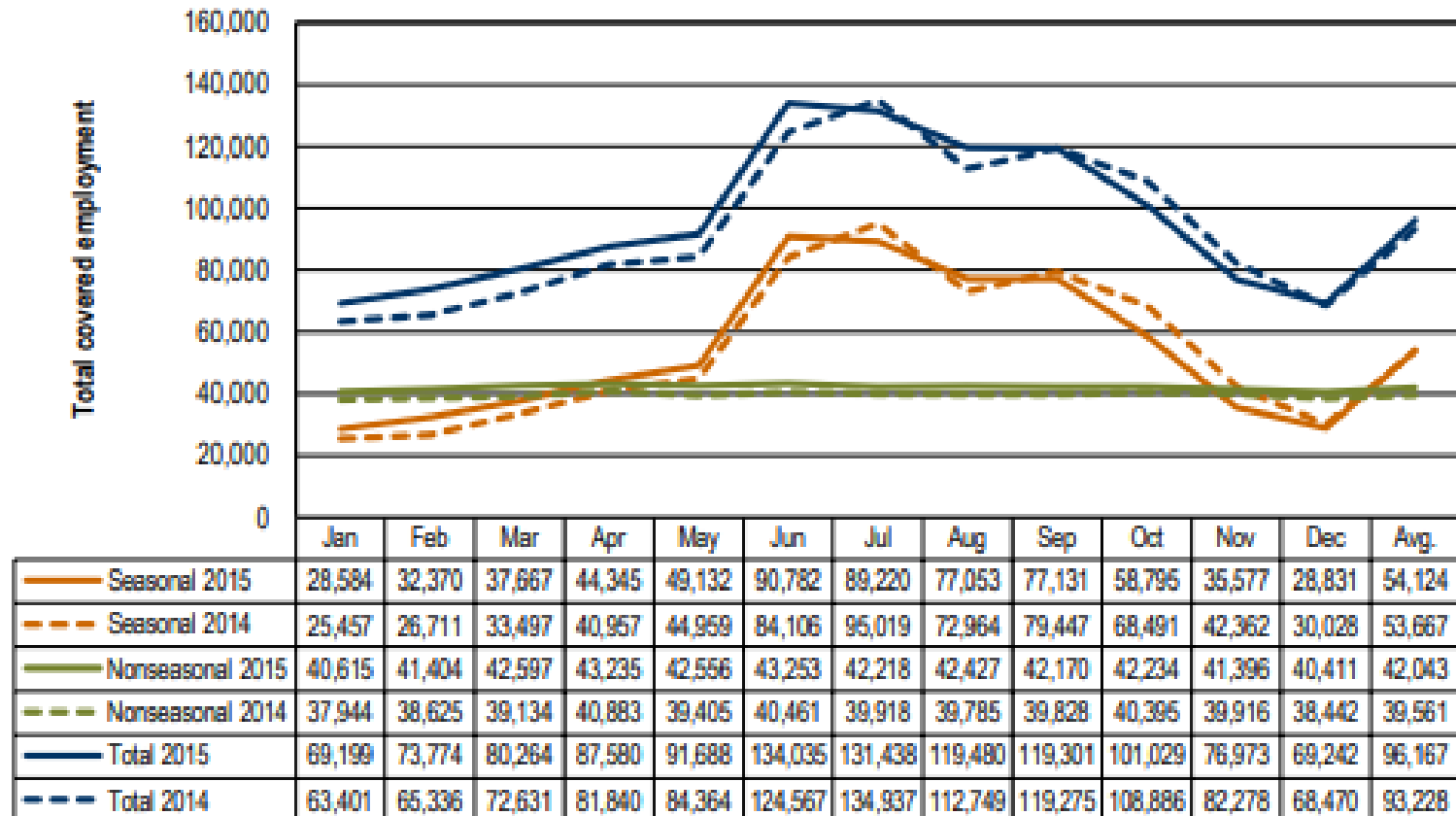
# The Changing Agricultural Labor Force

*Re-Wire Policy Conference, December 13, 2018*

# Agriculture Remains Seasonal

**Figure 3. Monthly seasonal, nonseasonal and total covered employment in agriculture\***  
Washington state, 2014-2015

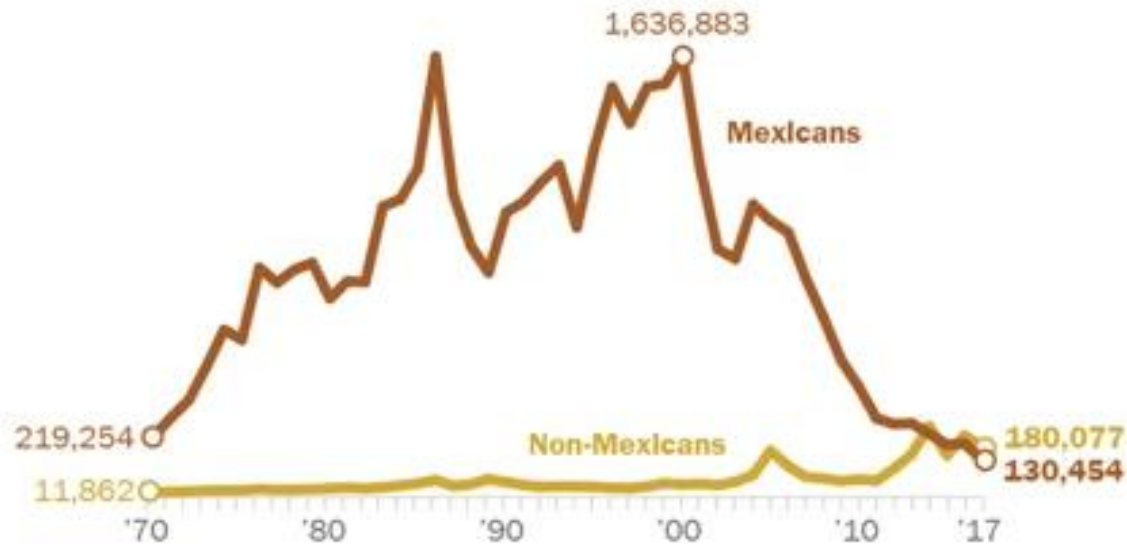
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA, UI Wage File; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, QCEW



# Fewer Crossing the Border

## More U.S. border apprehensions of non-Mexicans than Mexicans in 2017

*Border Patrol apprehensions, 1970-2017*



Note: 1976 covers 15 months due to change in fiscal year period, which had been July 1-June 30 and changed to Oct. 1-Sept. 30.

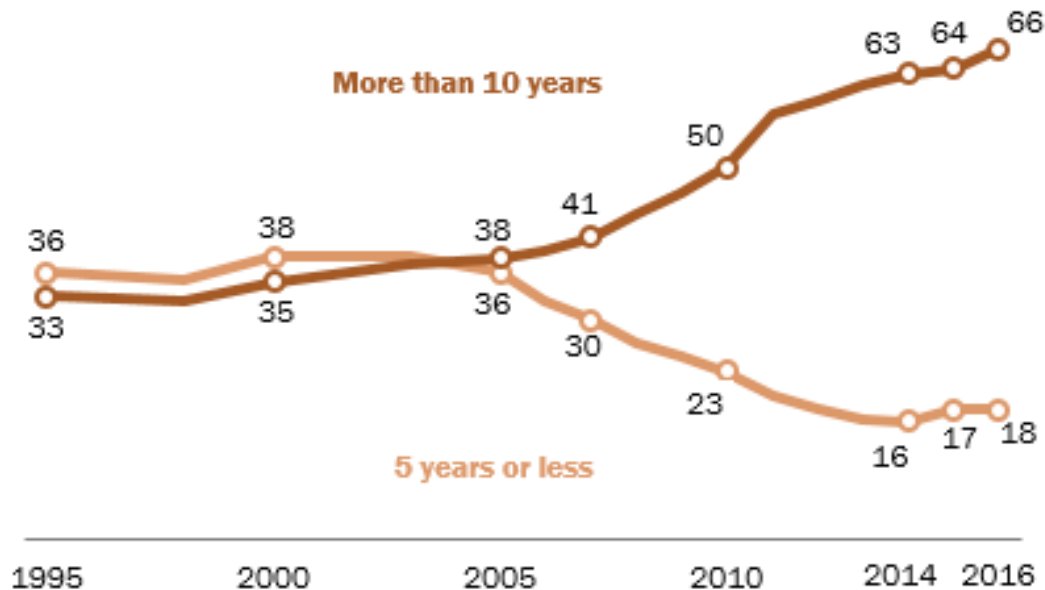
Source: U.S. Border Patrol Apprehensions From Mexico and Other Than Mexico table, FY 2000-2017; Immigration and Naturalization Service statistical yearbooks, FY 1970-1999.

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# Immigrant ≠ Migrant

## Short-term residents decline and long-term residents rise as share of U.S. unauthorized immigrants

*% of adult unauthorized immigrants, by duration of U.S. residence*



Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data.

See [Methodology](#) for details.

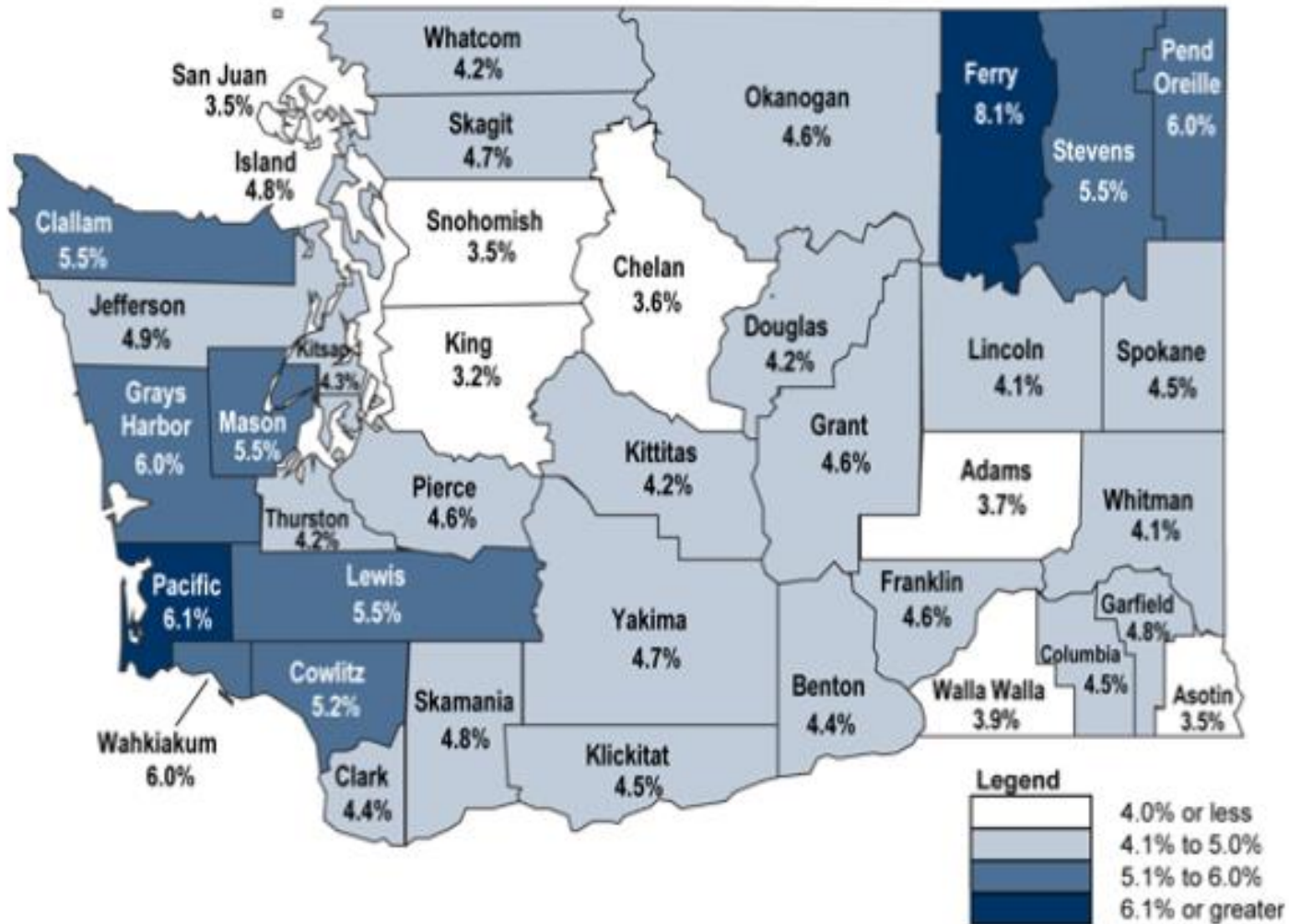
"U.S. Unauthorized Immigrant Total Dips to Lowest Level in a Decade"

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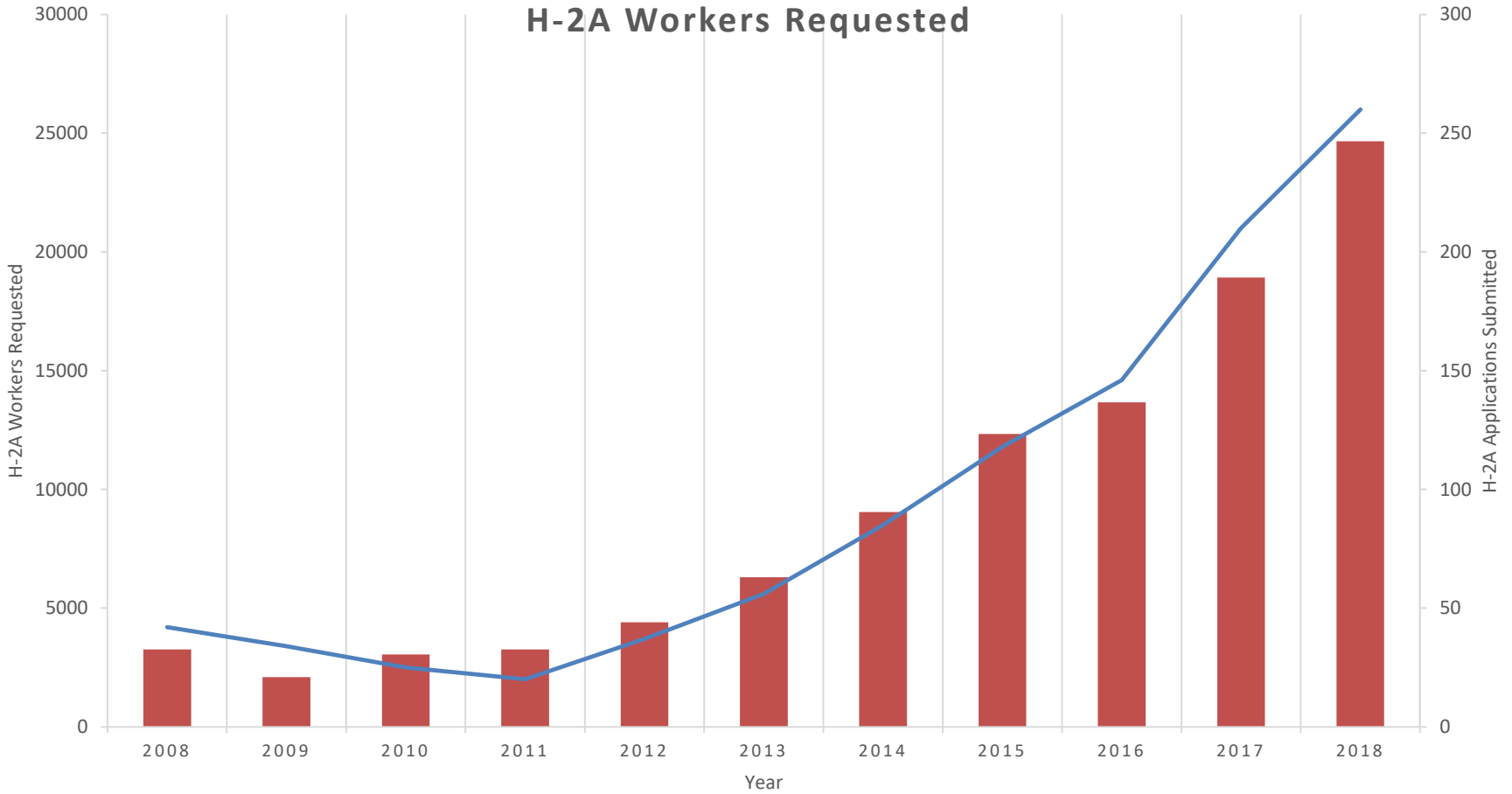
# Stronger Rural Employment

October 2018

County unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted



# H2-A Fills the Gap



# A High-Cost Option

- Application
  - Review and oversight by WA ESD, WA Health, US Labor, State, and Homeland Security
  - Domestic Recruitment requirement first
- Employer must provide:
  - Licensed housing
  - In and out-bound transport
  - In-country transportation
  - Wages above the prevailing rate for same work
    - \$14.12 minimum in WA in 2018
    - Expecting \$15.03 in WA in 2019

# Rapid Change Raises Concerns

- Impact on current domestic workforce?
  - Augment or replace?
  - Recruitment schedule
  - Wage effects and the 50% rule
- Impacts on local housing supplies?
  - NIMBY and Competition
- Working conditions and dispute resolution
  - Lack of Portability
  - Vulnerability?



# Ensuring Adequate Oversight

- Federal and State agency resources have not kept pace with program growth.
  - Program application fees paid to the US Government do not directly support the program.
- WA Employment Security Department is seeking authority to collect a fee from H2-A employers.
  - Only receives \$300,000 from USDOL
- Increase federal appropriation, or variable enforcement by state?



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