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**EFI-certified Rouge River Farms honored as AFOP Employer
Excellence Award recipient**

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[Equitable Food Initiative](#) celebrated Rouge River Farms for earning an Employer Excellence Award from the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs. This recognition, along with its fully EFI-certified supply chain, reflects Rouge River Farms' commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive and empowering workplace for farmworkers, many of whom are part of underserved communities.

The farm fosters an inclusive and supportive environment where workers are valued for their skills and dedication. With a strong commitment to training, internal promotion and professional growth, Rouge River Farms provides a winning culture for those seeking a rewarding career in agriculture.



Carmen Alicia Madrid Nunez

“I like that there’s a lot of flexibility, a lot of empathy, and I also like the different cultures that are [here](#),” said Carmen Alicia Madrid Nunez, a packhouse worker who has been with Rouge River Farms for more than seven years.

The AFOP Excellence Award is given to one or two employers per year who have shown excellence in their hiring and recruiting, pay and benefits, job security and career advancement practices and that are affirmed by one of AFOP’s member agencies.

Elizabeth Hogan with Telamon TRC nominated Rouge River Farms for the award, praising the company’s open and supportive culture where workers are valued for their skills and dedication. “As the community outreach and recruitment specialist for the National Farmworker Jobs Program, I have had the privilege of connecting with many outstanding agricultural employers, and Rouge River Farms stands [out](#) as a place where migrant and seasonal farmworkers can truly thrive.”

While aligning with all award principles, Rouge River Farms was commended for excelling in maintaining an open and supportive culture, as well as committing to help workers learn English and access vital resources such as leadership training, worker protections and financial literacy education.

Hogan added, “Rouge River Farms thrives on a culture of family, respect and opportunity, where every worker is valued and empowered to grow, not just as an employee but as a person contributing to a vibrant community.”

As an EFI-certified farm, Rouge River Farms has implemented gold-standard practices for social responsibility, ensuring safety, respect and continuous opportunities for all workers. The company’s efforts include collaborating with local organizations like Telamon TRC to provide access to adult education programs, including language skills and financial literacy and offering advancement opportunities that empower employees to excel both professionally and personally.

Rob Reesor, president of Rouge River Farms, expressed his gratitude for the recognition. “We are humbled and honored by this award. At Rouge River Farms, we strive to create opportunities for people to grow their skills and responsibilities. We’re thankful for the incredible individuals we work with, both locally and those who join us seasonally from Latin America. This award is a testament to their hard work and the managers who drive our values forward.”

This award solidifies Rouge River Farms’ reputation as an industry leader in ethical and sustainable farm practices. By prioritizing worker well-being, Rouge River Farms exemplifies EFI’s mission to drive worker-centered farm practices across the fresh produce industry.

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