

## H-2A Temporary Agricultural Visa Program Recent Select Program Administrative Improvements

### Summary

In response to the first full year of program experience under the H-2A Final Rule published in February 2010, the Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) has implemented the following improvements to assist employers and others better understand the H-2A program's obligations in time for the 2012 growing season:

- ❖ An H-2A Employer's Handbook to assist growers with the process of initiating and submitting H-2A applications. This handbook spells out program responsibilities and processes and clarifies certain regulatory requirements. The handbook will be ready for distribution by the end of December 2011.
- ❖ Publishing earlier than in previous years the Adverse Effect Wage Rates (AEWRs) (the week of December 19, 2011) to ensure employers are aware of, and can better plan for, their wage obligations well in advance of initiating the filing process.
- ❖ A dedicated e-mail intake for questions from employers regarding their applications and the program generally. [TLC.chicago@dol.gov](mailto:TLC.chicago@dol.gov)
- ❖ An electronic mail communication system, piloted during 2011 and to be employed nationwide in early 2012, to ensure more timely resolution of application errors and deficiencies.
- ❖ A revamped, navigable web page for easier access to critical H-2A filing information, filing tips, forms and contact information; please see <http://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/h-2a.cfm>.
- ❖ Posting of four rounds of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) posted on OFLC's web site, designed to clarify specific aspects of the H-2A program where we have received questions.
- ❖ Posting of "filing tips" which note the most common errors made by employers in filing H-2A applications, with specific advice for avoiding these common mistakes in the future.
- ❖ Posting of FY 2011 Fact Sheet which describes the H-2A program and its use during the past year.
- ❖ Three webinars aimed at filers and specific to regional filing practices and concerns and capturing and answering questions around the filing and adjudications process.