



NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Heading into 50th anniversary of the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act, ALRB conducts outreach at a worksite to ensure immigrant workers know their rights.

ALRB to visit site of “Yolo Six” workers who were paid \$2,166 in back wages secured in settlement of a complaint about working in extreme heat conditions.

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DIXON, Calif. – Today, the ALRB is visiting worksites of Cooley Enterprises, Inc. (Cooley), headquartered in Solano County, who paid \$2,166 in lost wages in December 2024 to six agricultural workers known as the “Yolo Six” to resolve an unfair labor practice. The workers alleged they were fired because they complained that it was too hot to continue working and walked off the field due to the extreme heat conditions. The ALRB will visit the employer’s worksites today to meet with agricultural workers about the settlement and their rights under the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA).

The ALRA, which was signed into law 50 years ago on June 5, 1975, by Governor Jerry Brown, seeks to achieve justice for all agricultural workers by promoting peace in the fields and stability in labor relations.

Cooley hired agricultural workers through farm labor contractor Ruiz Farm Labor to grow and harvest tomatoes for the 2024 season. Six of those workers complained to their supervisor about the high heat last June and walked off the job during high temperatures. All six workers were subsequently fired, and one worker filed an unfair labor practice charge with the ALRB alleging that the firings were in retaliation for exercising their rights to speak up and raise concerns about working conditions.

In addition to paying the six workers \$2,166 in lost wages, Cooley agreed to respect its employees’ rights, including those hired through farm labor contractors, and to not interfere with their rights to come together for mutual aid and protection. Cooley also agreed that ALRB Agents will go to worksites to read a Notice to all Cooley’s agricultural employees provided through Ruiz Farm Labor about the settlement and their rights under the ALRA. ALRB agents are noticing workers at Cooley’s worksites today. The notice will also be posted for 60 days and mailed to workers.

The ALRB has prosecuted unfair labor practices and obtained results for workers for similar claims in recent years involving alleged retaliation against workers who refused to work in adverse weather conditions. For example, in 2020 the Board ordered an employer to provide remedies to workers who were retaliated against for expressing safety concerns and refusing to work in the rain in muddy

conditions alongside a harvesting machine and tractor: <https://www.alrb.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/196/2020/12/2020-12-28-Ocean-Mist-Farms-2020-46-ALRB-No.-5.pdf>

The ALRA states that “it is the policy of the State of California to encourage and protect the right of agricultural employees to full freedom of association, self-organization, and designation of representatives of their own choosing, to negotiate the terms and conditions of their employment, and to be free from the interference, restraint, or coercion of employers of labor, or their agents, in the designation of such representatives of in self-organization or in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection.” The ALRB is headquartered in Sacramento and maintains field offices in Santa Rosa, Salinas, Oxnard, Visalia, Santa Maria and Indio. Those wishing to access ALRB services may call any ALRB office including the Santa Rosa office at (707) 527-3256, or a statewide toll-free phone number, (800) 449-3699. More information is available at www.alrb.ca.gov. You may contact the ALRB to have your questions answered and to determine if you have a claim, regardless of your immigration status. The ALRB does not inquire about people's immigration status.

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