

*****For Immediate Release*****

VT Migrant Farmworker Solidarity Project
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**After Death of Migrant Worker from Mexico VT Farmworker Solidarity Project
Calls upon Castlerock Amusements to take full financial responsibility to
return remains and initiate payments to family immediatley.**

Burlington, VT 7/21/11 - The VT Migrant Farmworker Solidarity Project (VTMFSP) laments the tragic death of Leonardo Espinabarro Telles on Tuesday July 19th while setting up equipment at the Lamoille Field Days in Johnson. Leonardo, from Veracruz Mexico, bled to death after getting caught on a diesel generator fan.

Upon hearing about the death of fellow migrant worker Leonardo Espinabarro Telles, VT migrant dairy worker Bernie Hernandez of the VTMFSP reflected, "Leonardo had the illusion to come to the land of opportunity and prosperity. But nobody told him that the price he would pay would be his own existence. Now he is free but leaves behind the heavy sadness of a generation."

The VTMFSP extends our support and condolences to Leonardo's family and friends and invites Vermonters to contribute directly to Leonardo's family by donating in buckets placed throughout the fair grounds. Additionally, the VTMFSP calls upon Castlerock Amusements of Pittsfield Massachusetts, insurance companies involved and the H2A Visa contracting agency from Texas to take full and immediate responsibility to pay for the full costs of preparing and returning Leonardo's body back to Mexico and providing a proper and dignified burial. Furthermore, under VT workers compensation law, as was made clear after the death of farm worker José Obeth Santiz Cruz in 2009, Leonardo's family is entitled to a "Death Benefit Claim". The VTMFSP calls upon Castlerock Amusements and other financially responsible parties to swiftly and proactively comply with this law and immediately initiate payments to Leonardo's family.

Natalia Fajardo, of the VTMFSP remarked, "The death of Leonardo Espinabarro Telles is cause to reflect not only on the role that immigrant and migrant labor play in Vermont but also the reality that migrant workers work in the most unregulated and dangerous jobs in our economy."

VTMFSP is pleased to hear from the Lamoille County Field Day's President Deanna Judkins that the Field Days and local businesses will be contributing to the fund in order to support Leonardo's family in Mexico through this difficult time. Those who cannot attend the field days can donate by contacting: Deanna Judkins at 802-793-2818 or email djudkins@pshift.com.

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The Vermont Migrant Farmworker Solidarity Project organizes with migrant farm workers and engages Vermont communities to build more socially and economically just, and responsive farming communities and food systems.

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