

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Missouri

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, June 9, 2022

Company, owners admit bringing more than 100 unauthorized migrant workers to Missouri

ST. LOUIS – A father and son from Florida and their labor contracting company have pleaded guilty to federal charges and admitted bringing more than 100 unauthorized migrant workers to Missouri in 2018.

Jorge Marin-Gomez, 37, and his father, Jorge Marin-Perez, 67, each pleaded guilty Thursday in U.S. District Court to a misdemeanor charge of unlawful employment of aliens. The Marin J. Corporation pleaded guilty April 28 to a felony wire fraud charge.

Marin-Gomez owned the Marin J. Corporation and was in charge of applying for visas for workers from Mexico. Marin-Perez was involved in the oversight and final decision making of the application process.

Marin J. Corp., with the direct knowledge and approval of Marin-Perez and Marin-Gomez, applied for H2A visas stating that the workers would be employed in Florida harvesting watermelons and blueberries, but relocated many of the workers to a farm in Kennett, in southeast Missouri, in violation of the terms outlined on the visa applications. The workers harvested watermelons and cotton there.

Marin-Perez and Marin-Gomez knew that the location of the work was pertinent to approval of the applications, the plea agreements say. They admitted engaging in a “pattern and practice” of using immigrant workers in unauthorized locations from Nov. 17, 2017 through Oct. 20, 2018 and of illegally hiring approximately 104 workers.

The corporation is scheduled to be sentenced August 2 and the individuals September 7.

In a settlement agreement with the Labor Department [signed in February](#), the company agreed to pay \$165,805 in back wages to 85 workers once housed in a former county jail in Missouri. The company also agreed to pay a penalty of \$75,000 for failing to provide meals, pay the required wage rate and for charging workers to obtain employment.

“Marin J. Corporation and its owners misused the H-2A visa program in order to enrich themselves at the expense of foreign workers and other American employers,” said Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Region of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. “We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners and the U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division to vigorously pursue those who commit fraud involving foreign labor certification programs.”

“These agricultural workers, who were likely looking to simply better their lives through hard work and an honest wage, were instead met with deceit from their employers,” said HSI Acting Special Agent in Charge R. Sean Fitzgerald. “I commend the agents and officers whose hard work brought these guilty pleas to fruition.”

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector general and the Department of Homeland Security. Assistant U.S. Attorney Dianna Collins is prosecuting the case.

Topic(s):

Labor & Employment
Immigration

Component(s):

USAO - Missouri, Eastern