



COMMUNICATING for AMERICA

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**CA MEMBER HOST FARMS AND BUSINESSES SOUNDLY AGREE
THE J-1 TRAINING AND INTERN PROGRAM
IS A BENEFIT TO AMERICAN PRODUCERS**

FERGUS FALLS, MN – Ninety-eight percent of Communicating for America (CA) member host farms and businesses responding to a recent survey believe that the J-1 training and intern program is a beneficial option for American producers. These CA members, who are the host farms and businesses in the CA Education Program, unanimously agreed that the J-1 trainees and interns compared “favorably” to the other workers that have been employed by their operations.

“J-1 trainees come ready and willing to learn by hands on work,” one member responded. “J-1’s are young hard working and fun to be around. They usually have a good attitude and do not expect others to provide for them. They are here to learn, so that gives them the positive attitude,” another member added.

The J-1 visa program is a 12 to 18 month trainee and intern program in which participants are required to have a minimum of one-year experience in their field as well as a minimum level of proficiency in English. The CA Foundation has held authority from the US State Department to issue applications for J-1 training visas in agriculture since 1985, and more recently in business as well. The CA Education Program (CAEP) administers these programs. CAEP works with partners in 50 different countries to find qualified participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to their host businesses. CAEP programs include agriculture, horticulture, enology (wine making), equine, turf management, and business management.

According to survey respondents, CA members find the benefits of utilizing the J-1 program to be two-fold. Not only do participants infuse new ideas and concepts into American agriculture, the trainees and interns help American producers who are struggling to meet their labor needs through domestic workers or the current guest worker program. One member commented, “Not only are farms in the US able to share ideas with the interns, but in turn the interns are able to share ideas and specifics from their home country with their hosts. It is a true exchange program.” Another noted, “They learn from us but at the same time we learn from them. Methods that we may have not thought of before that are used in their country. It is a wonderful chance to exchange.”

“For 25 years we have found that the J-1 trainee and intern visa program has been mutually rewarding, helping our trainees in their professional development while offering our host companies the opportunity to work with young people from all over the world who want to benefit from hands-on experience,” said Wayne Nelson, CA President. “The J-1 trainee and intern visa facilitates an exchange of ideas and practices that is beneficial to the trainee and to the American producer.”

Communicating for America is a 38-year-old non-partisan and non-profit national association made up of farmers and small businesses all across rural America. For more information on CA, visit their web site at www.communicatingforamerica.org.

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