RESEARCHING THE BRACERO PROGRAM

What is a Bracero? The Bracero program took place from 1942 through 1964 and allowed Mexican nationals to take temporary agricultural work in the United States. Over the 22 years of the program more than 4.5 million Mexican nationals were legally contracted for work in the United States (some individuals returned several times on different contracts). Mexican peasants, desperate for cash work, were willing to take jobs at wages scorned by many Americans. The Braceros had a significant effect on the business of farming and the culture of the United States. The Bracero program fed circular migration patterns of Mexicans into the U.S.

The following guide provides selected readings that discuss the program and the workers. There is an assumption that the user of this guide has general knowledge of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the U.S. Users of this guide will need to check their local library catalog for these items.

**Must Read**


**Other Readings**

While there are many items to read on the Bracero here is a limited few.

Books:


Visit your local library for these resources and more!
Articles:


Women Workers
The Bracero program was a male program. Although Mexican women were migrating to the U.S. for work during the same time period, their labor consisted in the cannery and factories rather than in the fields and were not subjected to labor contract between Mexico and the U.S. Here is a sampling.


Reference Materials: Reference materials will provide you with a quick description of a topic. In some cases you might find additional references as well.

Latino Encyclopedia
Encyclopedia Latina: History, Culture and Society in the United States
Oxford Encyclopedia of Latinos and Latinas in the United States
Handbook of Texas Online: http://www.tshaonline.org/index.html

Need More? Online databases are a good resource to locate additional articles. Visit your Public or University library. Keyword examples: “Bracero”; “Mexican Labor and World War II”, “Operation Wetback”, or “Guestworker.”

Academic Search Premier (EBSCOhost) America History and Life
JSTOR Chicano Database
Sociological Abstracts Wilson’s Reader’s Guide Retro (for magazine articles published in the 1942-1964 time period)

Web links: Visit www.braceroarchives.org for additional resources. Additional bibliographies along with interviews and pictures are available.

This guide was created by Kathryn Blackmer Reyes, MLIS, for the Smithsonian Bracero Project, August 2008.