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## NEWS RELEASE

# Canada should facilitate integration of migrant farm workers

## Study identifies major barriers to health care and social services

**Montreal** – Agricultural labour migrants need a better support system while in Canada, including access to benefits and better protection of their rights, according to a new study published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP).

“Given the growing prevalence of temporary migrant workers in communities across Canada and the reality that there is nothing temporary about these flows, it is certainly time to make improvements,” says author Jenna Hennebry.

In her study, *Permanently Temporary? Agricultural Migrant Workers and Their Integration in Canada*, Hennebry draws on more than a decade of empirical research and interviews in the field to examine the everyday realities of migrant farm workers in Ontario, the majority of whom return to the same communities for eight months each year.

Hennebry’s assessment is based on her own Foreign Worker Integration Scale, which measures integration according to indicators such as the protection of human rights, labour rights, access to health care and levels of community engagement and belonging. She concludes that overall these workers fare poorly on the integration scale.

In this pioneering report, Hennebry recommends a number of policy and program changes. She argues that open and sectoral work permits, those not tied to specific employers, would allow migrants to refuse undesirable work conditions and find other employment when necessary.

The author also finds that opportunities for social inclusion into communities are lacking, especially for those who live in employer-provided housing. She urges governments to ensure that agricultural migrant workers have easier access to social and medical services and basic language training.

Jenna Hennebry will present *Permanently Temporary? Agricultural Migrant Workers and Their Integration in Canada* at the [National Metropolis Conference](#), on March 1, 2012, in Toronto. The study can be downloaded free of charge from the Institute's Web site ([www.irpp.org](http://www.irpp.org)).

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For more details or to schedule an interview, please contact the IRPP.

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**Media contact:** Nicola Johnston

Tel: 514-787-0737

Cell: 514-235-8308

