

Filipino American Farm Worker History Timeline

1890s

- January 17, 1881: Pablo Manlapit, Filipino labor leader, was born in Lipa City, Batangas, a province in southern Luzon, Philippines.

1900s

- December 25, 1904: Philip Vera Cruz is born in Saoag, Ilocos Sur, Philippines.
- 1907: Recruited by the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA), Filipinos begin migrating to Hawaii in large numbers to work on its sugar plantations.

1910s

- October 25, 1913: Larry Itliong is born in San Nicolas, Pangasinan Province, Philippines.
- August 31, 1919: The Filipino Labor Union (FLU) is formed in Honolulu, with Filipino leaders Pablo Manlapit elected as president and Pedro Esqueras as treasurer.

1920s

- January 1920: Japanese and Filipino plantation workers in Oahu, Hawaii, led by Filipino labor leader Pablo Manlapit, strike to raise their wages and get breaks during the work day.
- April - September 1924: In Hawaii, Filipino plantation laborers organize and participate in a massive strike against sugar growers. The strike violently culminated in the infamous "Hanapepe Massacre" during which police killed many Filipino workers and subsequently blacklisted thousands of others.
- 1926: Philip Vera Cruz enters the United States in Seattle, Washington.
- April 6, 1929: Larry Itliong enters the United States in Seattle, Washington.

1930s

- 1930: The Filipino population in the US mainland reaches 45,208. This represents a 9-fold increase since 1920 when the Filipino population numbered only 5,603. In 1930, most of the Filipinos on the US mainland, 60 percent or 27,000, worked in agriculture.
- January 1-23, 1930: Filipino, Mexican and white farm workers & white packing shed workers go on strike against Imperial Valley's lettuce growers. The strikers organized the Agricultural Workers' Industrial League (AWIL). Allied with the growers, government authorities break the strike by arresting over 100 workers.
- January 1930: Watsonville Riots begins, in which white farmers attacked Filipino farm workers in Watsonville, California.
- 1933: After the American Federation of Labor refuses to organize a union on their behalf, Filipino lettuce pickers, led by Filipino labor leaders Rufo Canete, D. L. Marcuelo, Tomas Lascetonia, Johnny Estigoy, Nick Losada, and Alfonso Castillo, form the Filipino Labor Union (FLU) in the Salinas Valley.
- August 1933: The Filipino Labor Union (FLU) in the Salinas Valley lead a one day strike to protest a twenty-cent-an hour wage. Growers easily put down the strike by bringing in replacement laborers.
- March 24, 1934: Passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act. The act effectively excludes Filipinos from immigrating to the United States by subjecting the Philippines to an annual immigration quota of 50.
- August 1934: The Filipino Labor Union (FLU) lead Filipino lettuce workers in the Salinas Valley in a strike, extracting concessions of wages of forty cents an hour and recognition as a legitimate farm workers' union from the lettuce growers.
- 1936: The American Federation of Labor charters Field Workers' Union Local No. 30326, a combined Mexican-Filipino agricultural union.
- March 1938: The Filipino Agricultural Laborers Association (FALA) is founded by Stockton Asparagus farm workers.
- April 22, 1939: The Filipino Agricultural Labor Association successfully extract concessions of wage increases and union recognition from asparagus growers after staging a strike that paralyzed the asparagus industry.

1940s

- 1940: The American Federation of Labor charters the Federal Agricultural Laborers Union, a Filipino union.
- 1946: The US immigration quota for the Philippines is adjusted from 50 to 100.

- 1946: In Hawaii, 28,000 Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Puerto Rican, Portuguese, and Hawaiian members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) go on strike, shutting down 33 of the 34 plantations in Hawaii. After 79 days, they win decisively, extracting concessions of higher wages and a 40 hour work week from planters
- 1948: Filipino labor leaders Larry Itliong, Rudy Delvo, Philip Vera Cruz, become involved in the asparagus strike in Stockton, California. The strike was led by Chris Mensalvas and Ernesto Mangaoang, members of the ILWU Local 37

1950s

- 1956: Larry Itliong establishes the Filipino Farm Labor Union in Stockton
- 1959: Filipino labor leaders Larry Itliong, Philip Vera Cruz, and Pete Velasco join with the AFL-CIO to create the Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee (AWOC)

1960s

- 1960: Larry Itliong joins the Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee in Stockton and begins working full-time to build a union for farm workers in Delano.
- Summer 1965: AWOC members, led by Larry Itliong and Ben Gines, successfully demand a wage increase from Coachella's table grape growers.
- September 8, 1965: Filipino AWOC members convene at Delano's Filipino Community Hall and vote to go on strike against Delano's table grape growers. This marks the first day of the Delano Grape Strikes.
- September 16, 1965: Members of the National Farm Workers' Association (NFWA) vote to join AWOC in their strike against Delano's table grape growers
- March 17, 1966: Members of AWOC and NFWA set out on a march from Delano to Sacramento
- July 27, 1966: The National Farm Workers' Association (NFWA), headed by Cesar Chavez, and the Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee (AWOC), headed by Larry Itliong, merges into a single union; the United Farm Workers' Organizing Committee (UFWOC).

1970s

- Early 1970: Larry Itliong appointed as international coordinator for the Grape Boycott
- 1970: UFWOC signs contract with and is recognized by the growers as a union
- 1971: The United Farm Workers' Organizing Committee officially changes its name to the United Farm Workers
- October 1971: Larry Itliong resigns as assistant director of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC)
- 1973: UFWOC Grape Strike
- February 8, 1977: Larry Itliong passes away at the age of 63
- August 26, 1977: Philip Vera Cruz announces his resignation at the 1977 United Farm Workers National Convention.

1980s-1990s

- June 1, 1981: ILWU 37 organizers Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes are murdered in Seattle, Washington. The murders are later linked to the Marcos regime
- June 10, 1994: Philip Vera Cruz passes away at the age of 89.

2000s - Present

- October 2013: National Park Service plans to create Cesar E. Chavez national historic park. This multi-facility park will also include the Filipino Community Hall.
- October 2013: Assembly Bill 123 is chaptered into California law. AB 124, authored by Assemblyman Rob Bonta, seeks the inclusion of Filipino American farm worker history into K-12 curriculum
- April 9, 2015: The California State Assembly unanimously passes a bill designating October 25th as "Larry Itliong Day."

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