

Common Read Discussion Questions
Prepared for the ISEM101 Integrated Seminars

Primary Questions (please peruse each question in there order, as time permits):

1. For this series of questions, divide the students of your seminar section into six groups, each representing one of the following: 1. **migrant workers**, 2. **family-run large-scale tomato producers**, 3. **organic farmers**, 4. **migrant worker activists**, and 5. **horticultural researchers**, and 6. acting as “**judge and jury**.”

Each group would discuss the challenges they would uniquely encounter and how they would go about addressing them, e.g., as a migrant worker, what are the challenges you might face in the tomato field of south Florida and what plans or strategies could be devised to address those challenges? Have the groups meet for 15 minutes, and then reconvene to share thoughts and discuss implications. The “judge and jury” group will review what particular criteria each of the five other groups should consider and evaluate which groups “best” presented their cases.

- A. What are among the most important issues and **challenges** that your group would encounter and,
 - B. what **plans** or **strategies** would your group pursue, that bring together **multiple** approaches, perspectives, and/or academic disciplines, to address and resolve the challenges faced:
 - 1) as a **migrant worker** in the tomato fields of south Florida?
 - a. **lé'pwey** - Cooper, Evan, Alyssa, Elyce
 - 2) as a **family-run, large-scale tomato producer**, such as Joseph Procacci, and member of the **Florida Tomato Growers Exchange/Florida Tomato Committee**, such as Reggie Brown?
 - a. **tutxinmepu** - Benjamin, Robert, Haven Sky, Kelly
 - 3) as an **organic tomato farmer**, such as Tim Stark? -- **waláwa** - Kyle, Gabriel, Mckenzie
 - a. **q'emiln** - Katherin, Luke, Phillip, Megan

- 4) as an **activist** in the **Coalition of Immokalee Workers**, such as Laura Germino or Geraldo Reyes?
 - a. **chatq'ele'** - Brian, Rachl, Calvin, Alexis
 - 5) as a **horticultural research scientist** seeking to develop the next generation of tomato, such as Roger Chetelat or Monica Ozores-Hampton, John Scott or Harry Klee?
 - a. **waláwa** - Kyle, Gabriel, Mckenzie
 - 6) Judge and Jury
 - a. **s'maqw'l** - Jackson, Katie, Trevor, Brittanee
2. Based upon the previous discussion in question #1, identify the groups (e.g., migrant workers, large producers, organic farmers, migrant activists, horticultural scientists), who in achieving their own best interests might come into **conflict** with another group(s). Discuss possible ways or strategies to address and **resolve** those conflicts.
 3. Having learned more about tomatoes and migrant workers from reading *Tomatoland*, stand back and now ask how you, as a first-year student in this seminar, are **personally influenced** or affected by the next **tomato** you eat that was purchased from a supermarket? How are you **personally influenced** or affected by an understanding of the conditions of **migrant workers**?
 4. The “**judge and jury**” now issue their **rulings**! Which groups made the most compelling cases?

Secondary Questions (if time permits):

5. Are there lessons offered in *Tomatoland* that can be **generalized** and **extended** to other contemporary food production endeavors and/or endeavors closer to home? Discuss the relevance of these lessons and their implications for you.

Are there lessons from *Tomatoland* that have implications and address:

the use of **chemicals** for soil fertilization and pest control, and the positive and negative consequences of doing so for human health?

the conditions associated with **migrant workers** thinning sugar beets, topping onions, harvesting hops and green beans, and picking potatoes, apples, asparagus and cherries in Idaho or Washington?

the issues associate with **family farming** or **organic farming** in Idaho or Washington?

the issues associated with **large-scale agribusiness** in Idaho or Washington.

the issues associated with **horticultural science** and creating tasty, nutritious and economically profitable food products.

6. In spite of all the challenges associated with growing winter tomatoes in S. Florida (including distance to markets, soil fertility, and pests), why are they grown in the region and what alternatives might be suggested? Are some of these issues (and results) also relevant for other regions that produce food (especially produce).
7. The book describes significant safety concerns, abusive payment practices, and living conditions faced by migrant workers. How widespread do you think this situation is, and what can be done to help resolve these problems? Is the issue of migrant labor abuse unique to tomato producers, or does this issue permeate other economic sectors in the US