

Hawaiian Coffee Farms Fined for Labor Violations

HONOLULU (AP) — The U.S. Department of Labor is fining seven Big Island coffee farms and farm labor contractors \$42,000 for violating labor laws.

The department said Thursday it imposed the penalties after finding many workers who hand-harvested or processed coffee cherries weren't paid legally required wages.

The violations included paying workers below the minimum wage and failing to pay workers for all hours worked.

A farm labor contractor found to have violated child labor laws is paying the biggest fine — \$16,000.

Five companies also must pay back wages totaling \$63,000 to 150 employees.

The department says the Kona Coffee Council has agreed to promote labor law compliance among its membership and has established a code of conduct.

The council represents 170 farmers, processors and others in the industry.

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<http://www.foodmanufacturing.com/news/2013/02/hawaiian-coffee-farms-fined-labor-violations>