



Dorothea Lange documented the lives of Mexican migrant workers who lived and worked in California's Imperial Valley during the 1930s.



That is the place where Cesar Chavez' father moved his family, from Arizona, after the Great Depression caused them to lose their land and the family's store.

In June of 1935—when Dorothea Lange took the picture of a migrant's home depicted at the top of this page—she was working for the federal government's Resettlement Administration (later the Farm Security Administration). The photo was one of many she took during her time as a federal employee.

The Library of Congress, where Lange's original negative is maintained, tells us [more about the image](#):

Home of Mexican field worker showing water supply. Brawley, Imperial Valley, California.

Given the low pay which migratory farm workers earned, at the time, they could not really afford a better type of shelter than that depicted in this image.

Click on the picture for a substantially better view.

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Media Stream



Imperial Valley, California

The Imperial Valley, of southeastern California, is irrigated by the Colorado River. It is one of the state's most highly productive agricultural areas.

The Salton Sea—California's largest lake—is nearby, but it has a high-salt content (and is growing increasingly more salty every year). Large amounts of [salt deposits](#) are common along the eastern shore of the Sea.

This image depicts the productive fields of the Imperial Valley as they appeared in 2008.

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