

In my study, I found that migrants maintain some strong attachments with their families back home, and hence to them, food security is viewed within the context of ‘the family’ (them and family members) not individuals. They work on the farm to support families back home – and the conditions of employment are not much of a factor as long as they get their wages. Throughout my fieldwork in the Blouberg-Molemole area, “wages are not enough” was a common phrase among Zimbabwean farmworkers that I interacted with. On the 3rd of February 2016, The South African Minister of Labour, Ms. Mildred Oliphant gazetted R128.26 (an increase from 2015/16 daily rate of R120.32) as the daily minimum rate for a farmworker who works 9 hours effective 1st March 2016.³¹ Among all the Zimbabwean farmworkers that I interacted with during the fieldwork, none had knowledge of the minimum wage that they are entitled to. But the majority indicated that they were able to remit some money and food to families back home, a point which seem to corroborate with Crush and Tawodzera (2016)’s work that revealed that Zimbabwean migrants experience high levels of food insecurity in South Africa due to the pressures associated with working on farms. While food might be available in farms, the realities of the farms (or even in the mini on-farm spaza shops) who left families back home, would prioritise remitting the money and lean foodstuffs. In other words, they prioritise long term needs, and immediate food security needs.



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I asked 33 farmworkers to answer questions about food security. I adopted these questions from the FAO Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFLAS) Indicator guide. They are used to measure uncertainty or anxiety over food, perceived food sufficiency, perceived food quantity, perceived food quality, reported reductions of food intake, reported consequences of reduced food intake and feelings of shame for resorting to socially unacceptable means to obtain food resources (Coates, Swindale, & Bilinsky, 2007, p. 1). Data gathered through this tool was not meant to be statistically representative, rather, it allowed me to understand the farmworkers that I interacted with during my fieldwork’s views about food security vis-à-vis internationally recognized food security standards. By simply grouping and adding the responses, I came up with the table below.

³¹ <http://www.labour.gov.za/DOL/media-desk/media-statements/2016/the-minister-of-labour-ms-mildred-oliphant-announces-minimum-wage-increases-for-the-farming-and-the-forestry-sectors>

