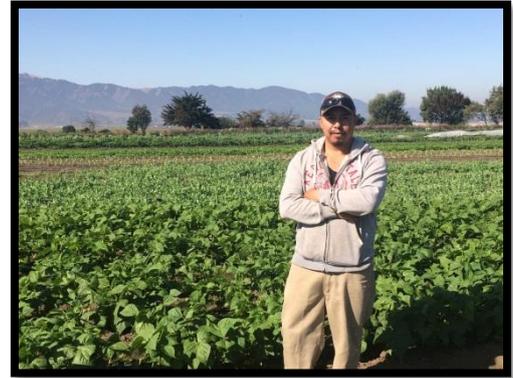


## Bonifacio Garcia – Graduate 2015

“God willing, one day in the future I will grow enough to be able to offer others work with me. And I will treat them with the dignity they deserve.”



Bonifacio Garcia started his work as a young man on large *haciendas* and ranches in Guanajuato, Mexico mostly to ensure that his family had enough to eat. After several years, he made the decision along with his brothers to come to the United States in 2000. But he was swept up into commercial agriculture where he was just another worker. The frustrating part for Bonifacio was that he felt like he was “not a person with real ideas, legitimate concerns, passions and or a future.” He reflects that, “The pressure I felt there was sad and uncomfortable. They never treated me like a person. It was humiliating.”

By word of mouth, Bonifacio heard about Alba Organics and in 2015 he graduated from their PEPA program. “I like working here. I want to teach my children about eating better and that it is possible to be in an environment without work pressure.” Alba taught him all about labor laws, organic practices and how to make organic farming work. Bonifacio is happy to know about the structure of the system he lives in.

Being his own boss has meant the world to Bonifacio and having the possibility to build up a farm where he can create his own work culture is even more important. “I want to be a boss that listens. I know how to treat people how they should be treated.” Bonifacio wants to be the kind of boss that hears what his employees have to say. “I want the people I hire to have confidence. I want them to know that if they have a question they can ask me and I will listen, treat them with respect.”

Although he hasn’t been back to Mexico since 2004, Bonifacio is looking forward to seeing his parents and other siblings again soon. The climate in Gunajuato is similar to the Central Coast and he wants to share his knowledge with his family there. “Life is beautiful. Our experiences are beautiful. It is so important day after day to keep learning.” As Bonifacio continues working on his first plot and dreams of the time when he can employ other deserving workers, he will continue to learn, day after day.

