

The Life of César E. Chávez: A Time Line

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| March 31 1927 | César E. Chávez born in Yuma, Arizona |
| 1938 | Chávez family leaves Yuma to work in California as migrant farm workers |
| 1942 | Chávez is forced to leave school, after completing the eighth grade, in order to help support the family |
| 1946-48 | Chávez joins the Navy |
| 1948 | César E. Chávez marries Helen Fabela, moves to San Jose |
| 1952 | César E. Chávez meets Fred Ross and joins the Community Service Organization. |
| 1958 | César works in Oxnard for 18 months confronting the bracero issue |
| 1960 | Chávez becomes General Director of the CSO; Dolores Huerta his assistant. |
| 1961 | Chávez decides to resign from CSO |
| Sept. 30, 1962 | César E. Chávez establishes NFWA (or FWA) in Fresno |
| | Union has first convention 211 members |
| Sept. 16 1965 | Chávez's union votes to join Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), AFL-CIO led by Filipino workers in a grape strike. |
| October 1965 | Grape boycott begins |
| March 1965 | César E. Chávez begins a 340-mile Peregrinación (pilgrimage) from Delano to Sacramento. Chávez and small group of strikers walk from Delano and are joined by thousands of supporters by the time they reach the steps of the state Capitol in Sacramento. The march draws national attention to the suffering of farm workers. During the march and after a four-month boycott, Schenley Vineyards negotiates an agreement with NFWA--the first genuine union contract between a grower and farm workers' union in United States history. |
| April 1966 | DiGiorgio grape boycott begins |
| August, 1966 | NFWA merges with AWOC and forms UFWOC |
| March 10, 1968 | César begins a fast for non-violence which lasts 25 days. U.S. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy joins 8,000 farm workers and supporters at a mass where César breaks his fast, calling the weakened farm labor leader "one of the heroic figures of our time." |
| April 4, 1968 | Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated as he stood on the balcony of his hotel in Memphis, Tennessee. Dr. King was in Memphis supporting a strike by the city's sanitation workers. |
| June 5, 1968 | Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated in the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, California while on his way to thank César E. Chávez and the many farm worker volunteers who helped him win the California Democratic Primary. Chávez had already left the hotel but Dolores Huerta was standing next to Kennedy as he was shot. |
| May 18 1969 | March from Coachella to Calexico. |
| 1970 | UFW Headquarters moved to La Paz from Delano |
| July 15, 1970 | 26 growers in Delano sign contracts with UFW ending a five year struggle. |
| July 30 1970 | Lettuce strike begins, conflict with Teamsters begins as Teamsters sign sweetheart contracts with growers. |
| Dec. 10-24, 1970 | César is jailed in Salinas, California for refusing to obey a court order to stop the boycott against Bud Antle lettuce. Coretta Scott King, widow of |

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ethel Kennedy, widow of Robert Kennedy, visit César in jail.

1972 **The UFW is chartered as an independent affiliate by the AFL-CIO; it becomes the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO (UFW).**

May 11-June 4, 1972 **César fasts for 25 days in Phoenix over a just-passed Arizona law banning the right of farm workers to strike or boycott**

June 1973 Struggle with teamsters over grape contracts

July 30, 1973 Gallo boycott and strike

August 14, 1973 Nagi Daifullah killed, first martyr of UFW.

August 16, 1973 Juan de la Cruz shot to death

January 15, 1974 Chávez awarded the Martin Luther King Jr. Nonviolent Peace Prize by Coretta Scott King.

June 5, 1975 **César E. Chávez and the UFW get the Agricultural Labor Relations Act signed by California Governor Jerry Brown.** The Alatorre-Zenovich-Dunlap-Berman Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975 was designed to protect rights of farm workers to act together to help themselves, to engage in union organizational activity, and to select their own representatives to bargain with employers.

May 1976 Proposition 14 drive gets 719,000 signatures and passes forcing California to fund of the Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB).

March 10, 1977 Teamsters withdraw from farm labor organizing. Pact signed with UFW.

June 25, 1978 César and Helen Chávez put in jail in Yuma for violating Arizona injunction against picketing.

Feb. 10, 1979 Rufino Contreras killed in Imperial Valley; moratorium called for 25 days on strike

March 1979 Resignation of Jerry Cohen, Marshal Ganz and Jim Drake.

1984 Grape boycott launched

1986 **César E. Chávez kicks off the "Wrath of Grapes" campaign to draw public attention to the pesticide poisoning of grape workers and their children.**

July 16 - August, 20 1988 **At age 61, César E. Chávez conducts his last--and longest--public fast for 36 days in Delano to call attention to farm workers and their children stricken by pesticides**

Nov. 12, 1990 Mexican President Salinas de Gortari awards Chávez the Aguila Azteca, the highest Mexican civilian award.

April 23, 1993 **César E. Chávez dies peacefully in his sleep in San Luis, Arizona**

May 1993 Veteran UFW organizer Arturo Rodriguez succeeds César E. Chávez as union president.

August 8, 1994 **President Bill Clinton posthumously presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom, America's highest civilian honor to César E. Chávez.** His widow, Helen, receives the medal during a White House ceremony.

August 18, 2000 **César Chávez Day established when California Governor Gray Davis signs into law SB 984, authored by Senator Richard Polanco, D-Los Angeles.**