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Farm Worker Advocates Call for Tougher Laws

Reports of farm workers poisoned by pesticides are declining, but labor advocates say tougher state laws and more enforcement are needed to protect the people picking and packing crops.

An average of 475 farm workers were reported poisoned each year from 1997 to 2000, according to

state figures cited in a report by Californians for Pesticide Reform.

That is down from an average of 665 a year from 1991 to 1996, the report says.

Glenn Brank of the state Department of Pesticide Regulation agreed that tougher rules would help.

"But we are encouraged by what appears to be a strong indicator of improvement," he said.

From Times Wire Reports