

Questions

- a. Good morning Mr Juarez. Thank you for letting me write about your experiences as a Mexican immigrant in our local newspaper.
- b. how long have you been in New York now?
- c. so, you decided to emigrate?
- d. What was life for you when you first arrived?
- e. A life belt? A very vivid description! What exactly did the Development Project did for you?
- f. Was it very hard work for you?
- g. It's certainly amazing market here with its 600 varieties of produce. What do you sell?
- h. Who buys your produce?

Responses

1. I came here 7 years ago from Mexico. I grew up in place in southern Mexico called Zapotitlan Lagunas. Ah, those were happy times in my native country, but hard times, too. I left school to help my father and my brothers on our farm, but however hard we worked, we never had enough money.
2. Buenos dias, senior. Encantado. If your article gives hope to immigrants like me, I am happy to talk to you.
3. You're welcome, senior. Adios.
4. It was hard for me. My English was not good. I wasn't used to a big city and I missed my family. I was lonely. But I was lucky. Very lucky. I was told about a community project in New York which helped immigrant farmers like me. It was called the New Farmer Development Project and to me it was as though I was drowning and someone threw me... what do they call those rubber rings to save a drowning man?
5. It was a difficult decision. But yes, our family decided that because I was the eldest son, I should emigrate to New York. The plan was that I would work hard and then the family would come and join me later.
6. Si, si. Oh yes, it was hard work. It is still hard work, but now I have some of my family to help me. I work 60 hours a week in the kitchen of 'Antonio'. It's an Italian restaurant of Staten Island. But my heart isn't in the kitchens! My heart is on my farm with my plants. Every hour God gives me I am digging, planting, watering, weeding, sowing, harvesting.. Each week we come here to St. George Greenmarket to sell our produce.
7. Indeed, yes! Just this. A piece of land of my own. And a tractor!
8. The people there gave me the gift of a new life. The project owns Decker Farm on Staten Island and they gave me a plot

- i. So, it's genuine Mexican produce. What a great story of determination, hard work and success! New immigrants will be encouraged by your story. Have you any hopes for the future?
- j. Well, I feel sure that those ambitions will soon be fulfilled. Thank you very much for talking to me, Mr Juarez.

of land there, 5000 square metres. I was back where I love to be- with my hands in God's earth.

9. After two years on Staten Island. I bought an old van and each week we load it up with alache, epazote, pipicha, tomatillos, lettuce, beans and much more, and come over on the ferry to New York City to the market here.
10. Mexicans! Mexicans love their traditional dish and remedies. I come here and in an hour all my produce has gone! They all know me now and my chilies are the hottest in the market. I joke and say, 'Taste one! If it's not hot enough for you, don't buy!' They always buy! That's because my seeds are the real thing – they come from Mexico.