



PILOT PROJECT 2014-2015

ISSUE: Agriculture is one of the most dangerous industries, particularly for youth and new workers. Ag educators have a unique opportunity to provide resources to increase agricultural safety and health awareness. However, many ag educators do not receive regular ag safety training.



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING FOR MINNESOTA AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS

APPROACH:

With this pilot project grant, South Central College developed an occupational safety and health (OSH) based curriculum to deliver to Minnesota agricultural educators that work with farm business management instruction, supervise high school students in agricultural workplaces, and/or coordinate college level agribusiness internships. This tailored OSH curriculum was delivered at a two hour training in January 2015 to 15 ag educators and a three and a half hour training in July 2015 to 10 ag educators.

During the pilot project, South Central College gathered feedback from participants with formal surveys and informal conversations. This project intended to create increased partnerships between trusted agricultural educators, career and technical education students, and agricultural businesses, including farm owners.

OUTCOME:

A significant outcome of this pilot project was capacity and network building of the PI. Roberts was able to leverage her involvement in this grant to become more involved in agricultural safety and health work happening locally and statewide. Shortly after the conclusion of this grant, Minnesota Farm Bureau donated their agricultural safety mobile learning trailer to South Central College. Roberts, in collaboration with Jim Zwaschka, was able to update the safety trailer. Zwaschka, a post-secondary agricultural educator and a fire/rescue professional, has stayed involved in UMASH activities since. Inspired by her work on this project, Roberts continued her research in ag safety and health in her doctoral program; this time focusing on mental well-being and agricultural stressors in post-secondary agricultural students and farm business management students. Later, that research led to another UMASH project, Cultivating Resiliency for Women in Agriculture.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

After the one-year pilot project, South Central College plans to build upon the results of the project by incorporating feedback and offering additional OSH training to agricultural educators, students, and farm owners, which will further strengthen interdisciplinary partnerships between these groups. In particular, we plan to target training to specific populations of ag educators, such as beginning instructors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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