



The UMASH Connection

Farms and People

A newsletter of the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

umash.umn.edu

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ONE HEALTH IN
AGRICULTURAL
SAFETY AND HEALTH



UMASH embraces a One Health philosophy that recognizes connections between human, animal, and environmental health when addressing occupational health and safety issues in agriculture.

THE CHANGING AGRICULTURE WORKFORCE

Scott Heiberger, National Farm Medicine Center



Chris Weisenbeck remembers the day in 1998 when two Mexican men came to his Buffalo County dairy farm in search of work. The Weisenbecks wanted to expand Homestead Farms, and they knew the old model of relying on family members and neighbor kids for labor would not suffice. Still, Weisenbeck was skeptical. Who were these guys? Could he trust them to do the job? Would they fit his family's culture? "But," said

Weisenbeck, "they needed a job and I needed help, and I knew we couldn't keep going the way we were."

The two job-seekers represented the vanguard of a changing US farm labor workforce, which today is 40 percent immigrant. Weisenbeck has since hired several of the men's family members to work at Homestead Farms, in Durand, and he has visited villages in Mexico where many of his workers come from. "They have the same values as us - honest, hard-working and family-oriented," Weisenbeck said. But change is not without growing pains. Barriers of culture, language and legal status pose challenges to the safety and health of the new workers, and can impact their acceptance into rural communities.

"The Changing Agriculture Workforce: Challenges and Opportunities for the Worker, the Employer and the Community," was the topic of the annual **Finding Common Ground Forum**, January 16, 2014, at Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chanhassen, Minn. The Forum was hosted by the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health (UMASH) Center, along with the University of Minnesota Center for Integrative Leadership and Center for Animal Health and Food Safety. "The well-being of the workforce is not only important to workers, it is essential for producers and the communities in which both producers and workers live," said Will Hueston, DVM, PhD, executive director, Global Initiative for Food System Leadership.

Change is not without growing pains. Barriers of culture, language and legal status pose challenges to the safety and health of the new workers, and can impact their acceptance into rural communities.

To begin chipping away at solutions, a panel representing farmers, Hispanic farm workers, medical professionals and Extension educators framed the issues. The 60 attendees, representing different disciplines, sectors and interests, spent the rest of the day in facilitated small group conversations. The small group format provided the participants the opportunity to strengthen their appreciation and respect for differing perspectives. A few of the big ideas to emerge are available at umash.umn.edu/commonground.

"It takes diverse groups to solve complicated problems," said Bruce Alexander, PhD, director of UMASH. "That is what this forum is about."



HEALTHY FAIRS WORKSHOPS

April 14 - Bemidji, MN
April 17 - Marshall, MN

[LEARN MORE](#)

Research • Education • Prevention

UMASH PILOT PROJECTS

Now Accepting Applications

DEADLINE - APRIL 17

Read the RFP

FROM THE DIRECTOR

In this issue of the UMASH Connection we highlight some challenges and opportunities that arise as the agricultural workforce in the region changes. As we have noted before, the workforce needs for animal agriculture production continues to evolve as the industry becomes more efficient at producing a stable, healthy, and safe food supply. This changing workforce includes an increasing number of workers who are new to the country. As the industry becomes more reliant on this workforce, there is an evolving need for innovative approaches to enhance worker health and wellbeing and the integration of the workers and their families into the surrounding communities. These are complex issues that require input from many sectors, including occupational safety and health professionals, the health care industry, community leaders, schools, and faith-based organizations. Most importantly, it requires input from and communication with the producers and the workers.

In the first half of 2014 UMASH is pleased to co-sponsor two events to create dialogue around this issue. In January we held a **Finding Common Ground Forum** to initiate some discussion and identify key areas where UMASH and other entities can be more engaged. A summary of this forum can be found in this issue of UMASH Connection. We are also looking forward to proposals to our Pilot Projects Research Program that incorporate some of the ideas generated at the Finding Common Ground.

On May 1 we are pleased to co-sponsor the annual **National Occupational Research Symposium (NORA)** with the Midwest Center for Occupational Health and Safety. The keynote presentation for this symposium will be by Dr. Marc Schenker, the Director of the Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety at the University of California Davis, and Xóchitl Castañeda, the Director of the Health Initiative of the Americas of the University of California Berkeley. Their address, **Occupational Health of Immigrant Workers: Reducing the Disparities**, will touch on many of the challenges facing producers and workers in the Upper Midwest. We hope you can join us at the NORA Symposium and become part of this evolving conversation.

Bruce Alexander

Director, Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

NORA SYMPOSIUM

Occupational Health of Immigrant Workers: Reducing the Disparities

SAVE THE DATE - MAY 1, 2014



Marc Schenker, MD, MPH
Co-Director of MAHRC
Professor and Director of UC
Davis Center for Occupational
and Environmental Health



Xóchitl Castañeda
Co-Director of MAHRC
Director of the Health Initiative of
the Americas (HIA). UC Berkeley
School of Public Health

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Midwest Center for Occupational
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Upper Midwest Agriculture Safety
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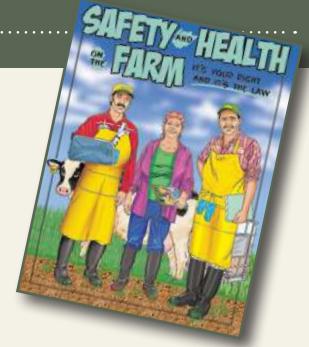
RESOURCES FOR AGRICULTURE WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Safety and Health on the Farm - It's Your Right and It's the Law

A bilingual, full-color comic book about workers' compensation and workers' rights for immigrant dairy workers. It tells the story of a Mexican dairy worker injured on the job and the steps he and his employer take to ensure he receives benefits and the farm improves safety.

PDF downloads available in English and Spanish at:

www.migrantclinician.org/toolsource/resource/comic-safety-and-health-farm-its-your-right-and-its-law.html



Puentes/Bridges

Helping farming communities in SW Wisconsin and SE Minnesota bridge the cultural and language gaps between Mexican workers, the farmers with whom they work, and the communities in which they live.

www.puentesbridges.com



Consulado de Carrera de México en Saint Paul

Serving residents in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and northern counties in Wisconsin to protect the rights of Mexican Nationals living in the district and is responsible to provide documents to Mexicans and nationals of different countries, according to Mexican Law, and to promote ties with the Mexican communities.

consulmex.sre.gob.mx/saintpaul



Migrant Health Service

Serving the health needs of migrant and seasonal farm workers and their families since 1973. Operates eight nurse managed clinics and two advocacy program centers in Minnesota and North Dakota.

www.migranthealthservice.org



Migrant Clinicians Network

A force for health justice for the mobile poor. Serves health professionals who provide care for migrants. Migrant specific resources for primary care providers can be found at:

www.migrantclinician.org/tools-and-resources/resources_intro.html



Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES)

Provider of high quality, language appropriate and culturally competent behavioral health and human services through a family-centric coordinated care delivery model to advance the well-being, health and economic prosperity of Latino individuals and families.

www.clues.org



University of Minnesota Extension

Supporting Agricultural Workers from Mexico: Balancing Work and Family Demands

This education program was developed to support agriculture-sector employers who hire workers from Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries, and may also be of interest to Spanish speaking workers.
www.extension.umn.edu/family/tough-times/farm-families/workers-from-mexico/



Personal Finance: Culture and Resources

Includes a variety of personal finance resources, including: the Extension Latino Financial Literacy Program, banking, budgeting, credit and debt, insurance, taxes, consumer protection, housing and other topics. Most resources can be available in Spanish as well.
www.extension.umn.edu/family/personal-finance/

Additional Resources for Latino Families and Their Employers

Education, literacy, translation and interpretation, human rights, immigration, cultural training and other related information.
www.extension.umn.edu/family/tough-times/other-recommended-resources/latino-resources/

IN THE FIELD

Needlestick Injury Prevention

OSHA 2014 Dairy Local Emphasis Program in Wisconsin now references the UMASH fact sheets "Needlestick Prevention for Producers and Farmers" and "Needlestick Prevention on the Farm" as guidance documents for needlestick injury prevention.

Healthy Fairs Workshops: One Health at the Fair

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) held two half-day workshops with the Minnesota Board of Animal Health to educate people associated with county fairs about the risk of illness and how to mitigate these risks. [Read more at umash.umn.edu/news/umashnews.html](http://umash.umn.edu/news/umashnews.html)

Healthy Fairs Workshops will be held April 14 in Bemidji, MN and April 17 in Marshall, MN.

[Learn more at umash.umn.edu/healthyfairs](http://umash.umn.edu/healthyfairs)



Spring Planning

Believe it or not, Spring officially arrives this week, and it brings thoughts of outdoor activities. Here are a couple resources to help keep the farm safe this spring - for workers, families, and visitors!

Creating Safe Play Areas on the Farm

The first comprehensive guide for designing and building an outdoor safe play area on a farm. Also includes an interactive web tool to help farm parents design and build a designated play area.

www.marshfieldclinic.org/safeplay

Integrating Safety into Agritourism

Resources and information for keeping visitors on farms and ranches safe. This website features interactive 'walkthroughs', operator checklists, and over 140 resources available free!

www.safeagritourism.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

MN 4H Foundation Celebration of Agriculture
March 20
St. Paul, MN

National Ag Day
March 25

Healthy Fairs Workshop
April 14
Bemidji, MN

Healthy Fairs Workshop
April 17
Marshall, MN

Safe Play Areas on Farms
National Playground Safety Week
April 21-25

NORA Symposium
May 1
Minneapolis, MN

2014 Summer Public Health Institute
May 27 - June 13
University of Minnesota

Learn more and view full event list at:
umash.umn.edu/events.html

OPPORTUNITIES

ASHCA 2014 Safety Grants Program

The ASHCA Safety Grants Program provides financial support for safety and health interventions to protect agricultural workers. **Application deadline: March 26.**
Learn more at www.ashca.org/safety-grants-program/

UMASH Pilot Projects Call for Proposals

UMASH is requesting applications for small grants ranging from \$5,000 to a maximum of \$20,000 to address health and safety issues related to agricultural workers and their families. **Application deadline: April 17.**

Learn more at umash.umn.edu/projects/pilot_projects_rfp.html



UMASH is a collaboration of the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine, the National Farm Medicine Center of the Marshfield Clinic with the Migrant Clinicians Network, and the Minnesota Department of Health. This collaboration brings together unique and complimentary expertise to address existing and emerging occupational health and safety issues in agriculture.

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