

Emotional Health of Agricultural Workers in Minnesota

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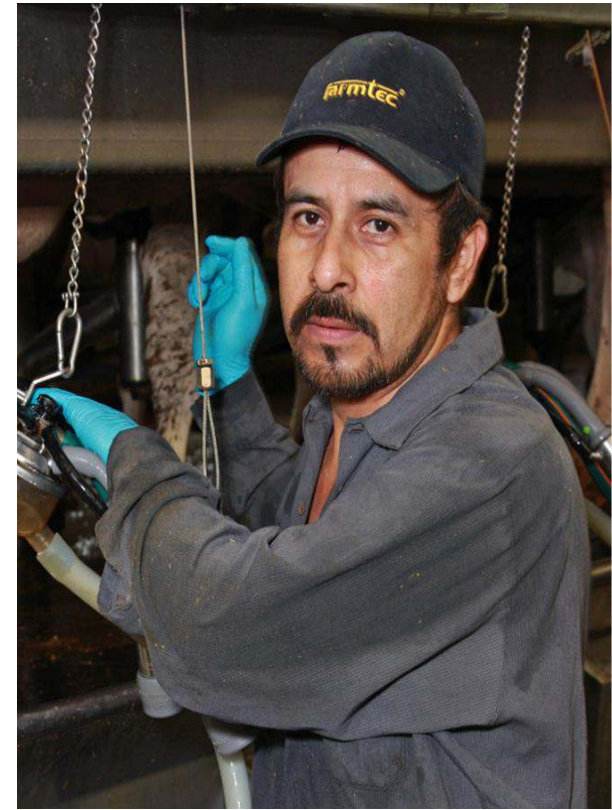
**In the U.S. about 80% of agricultural workers
are Hispanic/Latin@
Of those 73% were foreign born**

(National Agricultural Workers Survey 2013-2014. U.S. Department
of Labor, 2016)



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Agricultural Worker families in Minnesota come mostly from Mexico and Central America (Guatemala, Honduras)



In Minnesota, most of the workforce on dairy and pig farms are Hispanic/Latino individuals
The majority of them do not have proper documentation to work in the U.S.



Mental & Emotional Health of agricultural workers & their families

Factors that influence the emotional health of agricultural workers & their families:

- **Immigration experience in the U.S.:** Federal and local policies that prevent family reunification and full participation in society and communities/citizenship.
- **Work-related stress:** Language barriers, cultural differences, high-injury risk, low & stagnant wages, fear of losing their jobs, discrimination & workers' rights abuses.
- **Systemic racism and white supremacy:** from explicit to implicit in the workplace and surrounding communities, this creates a climate of fear and shame.
- **Family-related stress:** Marginalized, not being able to participate fully in their children's school activities, not enough resources, poor housing, unable to respond to family emergencies in home countries because of legal status, etc.

Emotional Health of Agricultural Workers:

- Anxiety and depression is common among immigrant workers.
- Underreporting of work injuries because of fear of losing their jobs.
- Relaxation is usually not in the minds of agricultural workers and their families.

Affordability/ Availability/ Accessibility/ Acceptability:

Affordability: Undocumented Latino workers are generally not insured. Given demands of work and family life, accessing mental healthcare would seem a luxury. Most agriworkers don't know about Workers' Compensation and confuse it with health insurance. In addition, some companies monitor workers compensation claims to avoid work-related diagnoses.

Availability: A few healthcare providers offer a sliding scale fee. Serious diseases are not covered.

Accessibility: It is rare to have access to a bilingual psychologist who understands the culture & stress factors affecting workers.

Acceptability: Agricultural workers understand that it is a luxury to get sick, and much less mentally ill.

Recommendations: At a minimum, some stress relief programs and activities (yoga, a massage), counseling by Hispanic/Latino/a providers with experience in rural communities and agricultural work could help alleviate some of the stress. Also, promote programs with farm owners to understand the reality of foreign workers in the U.S. and to decrease the perpetuation of white supremacy and racism. In the long-term, immigration reform policy would be important.