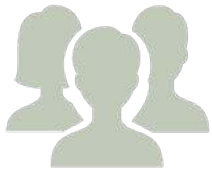




## Seguridad en las Lecherías: Immigrant Dairy Worker Health and Safety Project

### PROJECT PERSONNEL



- Amy K. Liebman, MPA, MA - Director
- Matthew C. Keifer, MD, MPH - Director
- Yurany Sanchez - Community Outreach Trainer
- Iris Reyes- Research Specialist



Photo Credit: EarlDotter.com

### MAJOR OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT:

- ✓ Over 850 workers were trained on nearly 70 farms with almost 3,500 total training hours.
- ✓ The program significantly improved worker safety knowledge in the areas of animal handling, machinery, chemicals, confined spaces, and worker rights and responsibilities.
- ✓ 88% of participating farms observed reduced hazards on their operation.
- ✓ 100% of farms observed the same or improved communication between employers and employees.
- ✓ 96% of farms believed the program's benefits outweighed the costs.



### PROJECT BACKGROUND

Immigrant workers are increasingly crucial to dairy farms across the United States. As of 2015, immigrant workers were an estimated 51% of all labor in dairy operations, and on larger operations, they provided 79% of the labor ([Adcock et al. 2015](#)). Between 2008 and 2012, an average of 39 people died per year while working with dairy cattle and milk production ([Slovak 2012](#)). Interactions with cattle caused most non-fatal injuries and resulted in more time off work than other agricultural injuries. Many immigrant workers do not speak English and may have limited formal education and literacy, presenting challenges to effective safety education. The Seguridad en las Lecherías project implemented a community health worker (CHW) model to train selected workers on health and safety to enable training to other co-workers and put knowledge and training for workplace safety into the hands of the workers themselves.

### The study accomplished the following objectives:

1. Translate and apply research to an occupational health and safety intervention for immigrant workers in dairy.
2. Engage dairy producers, farm managers, workers and clinicians, and health and safety professionals to raise awareness and increase understanding of strategies to improve the occupational health and safety of immigrant workers in the dairy industry.
3. Evaluate the intervention to determine the reduction in hazards, changes in knowledge, attitude, and practices among immigrant workers, and the acceptability of the **culturally appropriate popular education (CAPE) model**.

Culturally appropriate health and safety interventions were used to improve knowledge and reduce worksite hazards for immigrant workers in Wisconsin dairies. The foundation of this project involved conducting extensive literature reviews and focus groups with: **workers, extension agents, producers, clinicians, immigrant worker educators, insurers, and industry organizations.**



## MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE PROJECT:

Immigrant workers reported fear of sharing occupational hazards or injuries due to concerns about losing their job or being deported. Employers appreciated the CHW training, as it raised safety awareness and ensured safety was prioritized on the farm. 96% of farms believed the program positively impacted workplace safety, 73% felt it increased worker productivity, and 83% believed it improved worker satisfaction.

## IN CONCLUSION...

Using a curriculum developed and tested for the project, bilingual researchers trained Spanish-speaking employees on participating farms with up to five hours of content. Workers selected as CHWs received additional training to conduct monthly safety walkthroughs, train new farm employees, and reinforce safety messages to coworkers. In addition, the CHWs were equipped with flip charts and checklists to aid in training and safety walkthroughs.

This UMASH project was a partnership between the Migrant Clinicians Network and the National Farm Medicine Center, bringing together expertise in immigrant worker health and safety with occupation health researchers. The Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin, an industry group with over 1,600 hundred producer members, was another key partner, fostering project implementation and adoption.



## TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PROJECT:

Producers interested in learning more about the project and how to implement safety training for Spanish-speaking workers can visit the Seguridad en las lecherias project page found on the UMASH website. Here, producers can find videos about the project, training curriculum resources, and an interactive map of other resources for Spanish-speaking residents in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

- [Home page for Seguridad en las Lecherías](#)
- [The video about the training model](#)
- [Bilingual curriculum for dairy worker safety training](#)

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LEARN MORE AT:  
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