Seguridad en las Lecherias project: The role of community health workers in sustaining safe practices in an occupational setting

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NFMC Background

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NFMC Background

Non-profit focused on rural and agricultural issues
Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center
National Children’s Center for Rural and Ag Health and Safety
Journal of Agromedicine

Services/projects include:

- Outreach activities e.g. skin cancer screening, private donors
- Guidelines for children’s ag tasks and safe play areas
- Journal of Agromedicine
- Microbiome study with UW-Madison, NIH
- Injury surveillance and prevention in US and Canada
- Pesticide exposure monitoring program in Ghana, USAID
- Farm safety consulting, Hispanic worker training, NIOSH
Seguridad en las Lecherías

• 5 yr health & safety intervention for immigrant dairy workers
• Use of CHW or promotores de salud model and culturally-appropriate popular education approaches

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Dairy workforce in Wisconsin: ~50% immigrant
87% male, 16 – 45 yrs old, 89% from Mexico
80% speak no English, limited formal education

Dairy industry is expanding!
Project Algorithm

Randomization
N=90 farms

Intervention
n=45

Control
n=45

Safety & Health Training

Promotor de Salud (CHW)

Safety & Health Training
Methods: The *promotor* model

- Widely used in US and other countries
- Local, trusted, peers, leaders
- Can implement health promotion interventions in culturally appropriate and acceptable manner
A different kind of *promotor*

- Research participants for one year
- Full-time employee
- A pair on each farm
- Occupational health and safety

- Male, 33 yrs old
- 44% live on farm
- 9 school years
- 50% do not speak English well
- Experienced, 10 yrs in dairy
Trainings at a glance

Standard training
- 5 hours, pre/post test
- on the farm, classroom-style
- over 550 workers trained from 36 farms
- 2,200 training hrs provided

Promotor training and support
- 2 hours orientation
- Monthly surveys
- In-person visits

Promotores are trained in both
Seguridad promotores in Wisconsin

As of March 2015:
18 farms
17 zip codes
32 promotores
Promotor selection

- Mutually agreed upon by NFMC and farmer
- Received NFMC training
- Dairy experience
- Worked on the farm for some time
- Respected by co-workers
- Bilingual
- Can read in Spanish
- No gender preference
Promotor duties

- Train fellow workers
- Help identify hazards
- Enforce health and safety messages
- Serve as a language/ culturally appropriate resource for the workforce
Challenges

• Communication
• Relationship with employer and workers
• Workload
• Time
• Environment
• Etc...
Acceptability and Outcomes

• Overall, farmers excited of having a *promotor*
• “Now we have a refrigerator for us.”
• “I trained my wife. She learned fast and she works very carefully!”
• “A new worker asked me to train her.”
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Questions?

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