

Building Bridges: Health Center Strategies for Maintaining Relationships with Growers, Contractors, and Employers



Maintaining strong relationships between health centers and employers is crucial for the well-being of Migratory and Seasonal Agricultural Workers (MSAWs). To build upon, [Get Your Foot in the Door: Health Center Strategies for Initiating Relationships with Grower, Contractors, and Employers](#), this resource introduces three main strategies for health centers to sustain the relationships they cultivate with agricultural industry stakeholders (growers, contractors, and employers). This resource also includes additional tips and resources to aid health centers in maintaining engagement with these partners.

Strategy 1: Engage in open and transparent communication

Determine a tailored communication approach to maintain open lines of communication with all agricultural industry stakeholders. Engage in routine meetings, phone conversations, or email updates.

Recommended Actions:

- Document the best communication methods (i.e., phone call, email, in-person, etc.), time of day, and frequency, of communication efforts and preferences using a communication preference matrix. Consider creating a communication preference matrix [using this article](#).
- Send a holiday card, other greetings, or health center branded swag throughout the year to keep your health center top of mind and promote your services.
- Stay consistent with your communication approach so that agricultural industry stakeholders know when to expect to hear from you.
- Have something to offer or to request when reaching out (i.e., Can we provide the required safety training for your agricultural workers? Do your workers need updated vaccines?)
- Establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from agricultural industry stakeholders and MSAWs about the health care services provided. Use this feedback to make continuous improvements and show your long-term commitment to partnering and serving their workforce.

Strategy 2: Share relevant health data and trends

When open lines of communication are established, this creates the opportunity to share information and resources. Evaluate community needs on an ongoing basis and share relevant health data and trends to help increase understanding of the health needs of their workforce.

Sources to gather additional data and/or share information from:

- Needs assessments can be done through a formal survey or poll with agricultural industry stakeholders and the MSAW population to gather data and feedback on health care needs and services. Sharing relevant health data and trends specific to an agricultural industry stakeholder's workforce will help emphasize the importance of partnering with a health center to support the health of the workforce, which impacts their success as a business.
- Uniform Data System (UDS) data trends: [The Health Resources and Services Administration's \(HRSA\) UDS data](#) provides information on patient characteristics and health outcomes that is useful for determining the health trends specific to your service area's patient population. This data can be used to evaluate community needs and customize training opportunities for the agricultural industry stakeholder.
 - For example, if the 2022 UDS showed an increase in hypertension in the general patient population in your service area (which would include the agricultural industry stakeholder's workers), you could offer on-site health screenings and heart health education to address this increase in their workforce.
- [Resources for Ag Employers](#): This National Center for Farmworker Health (NCFH) webpage provides resources, specifically created for Ag employers, on low-cost health care for MSAWs, infectious disease prevention, heat-related illness prevention and risk management, mental health, workforce trainings, and promising practices from featured employers who have implemented effective practices to protect workers from COVID-19.
 - Print resources from this webpage and share with agricultural industry stakeholders to increase their understanding of the health needs of their workforce. These resources can also be displayed in common spaces around the worksite to increase the workers' knowledge of a health concern.
- [Farmworker Language Map](#): This interactive map can be used to assess which languages are spoken in your area. Use this resource to identify the language needs of a stakeholder's workforce and offer language access support through interpreters or translated health information materials.
 - For example, if an agricultural industry stakeholder has workers who speak an indigenous language, you could use the Interpretation Resource Directory on the [Language Access Resource page](#) to connect the agricultural industry stakeholder to interpreters for a worker orientation to address language barriers.

Remember, "healthy workers = productive business."

Strategy 3: Organize collaborative health initiatives

After sharing information and practicing open communication, invite agricultural industry stakeholders to partner with you to maintain a healthy workforce. Identify ways to “build a bridge” together through collaborative activities and put your partnership into action.



Recommended Actions:

- Offer convenient times to host health events on-site, outside of working hours to not disrupt production. For example, offer on-site vaccinations, health screenings, health fair events, back-to-school events, or wellness programs for MSAWs to promote a healthy workforce.
- Invite agricultural industry stakeholders and their families to also attend these health events and receive services themselves.
- Invite agricultural industry stakeholders to attend regional partner meetings so they participate in community efforts and can collaborate with other partners focused on reaching MSAWs.
- Help with health insurance enrollment and educate MSAWs about their options. This can help reduce the financial burden of healthcare expenses.
- Work to develop joint emergency preparedness plans that include response protocols for natural disasters, pandemics, or other emergencies that may affect the agricultural industry stakeholders and their workforce. Emergency preparedness tools are available in NCFH’s Health Center Toolbox under the [Emergency Preparedness drop down](#).
- Share NCFH’s [Call for Health Program](#) information as a resource for agricultural industry stakeholders to recommend to workers for them to call with any medical, insurance, or health care referral questions.
 - o Free key tags and posters can be ordered through Call for Health’s phone number and/or via WhatsApp to distribute to MSAWs.

Use the [Relationship Action Plan template](#) to get started implementing these strategies to maintain strong relationships with agricultural industry stakeholders.

For further questions and information, [contact NCFH.](#)

Relationship Action Plan Template

Building and maintaining strong relationships between health centers and agricultural industry stakeholders requires ongoing effort, cultivation of trust, and a mutual commitment to the well-being of the MSAW community. Use the template below to get started implementing these strategies to foster collaboration and support for the benefit of all partners involved.

Date	Agricultural Industry Stakeholder	Communication Preferences	Communication Effort	Data/Info Shared	Collaborative Event	Notes/Special Considerations