

Late Night/Early Morning Outreach to Connect with the Farmworker Community Along the Yuma, Arizona U.S.-Mexico Border

Outreach Promising Practice

Campeños Sin Fronteras (CSF), Inc. is a community-based organization that conducts outreach to farmworkers between the hours of 10 pm-6 am. This late-night/early-morning outreach approach recognizes that connecting to farmworkers is most effective when designed around their availability and schedules. This outreach practice has successfully engaged and informed farmworkers about health and social services and is now a standard CSF outreach practice to serve farmworkers in their Arizona/Mexico border community.

Organization:

- Campeños Sin Fronteras (CSF)
- Location: Yuma County, AZ



About:

Established in 1999, Campeños Sin Fronteras (CSF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the binational farmworker community for more than 23 years between Yuma County, Arizona, and Mexico. CSF is dedicated to providing free educational services to migrant workers and their families as part of an effort to prevent illness while reducing health and social disparities in the community. They offer fifteen health education programs in English and Spanish, including Women's Health and Wellness, Diabetes Education, Management and Control, Behavioral Health, Environmental Health, and Youth and Family Programs. Their programming serves approximately 40,000 individuals in the community each year. CSF outreach teams have worked with over 35 agricultural companies during the pandemic to provide their workforce with personal protective equipment (PPE) and educational resources regarding COVID-19 vaccines and other prevention strategies.

Unmet Need Addressed

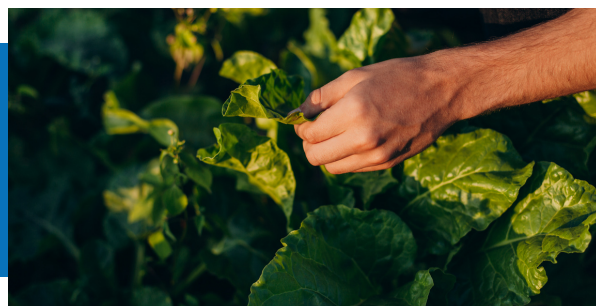
Yuma County, Arizona, sits along the United States border with Mexico. In this region of the United States, thousands of farm workers from Mexico cross the border into the United States to work every day, often crossing between midnight and 1 am before the workday begins. Farmworkers often work seven days a week, with their workdays starting around dawn and lasting almost all day. Because of their work schedule, most farmworkers cannot access services offered during the standard 8 am–5 pm working hours. Learn more in [this article](#) about Arizona’s migrant worker population.

Since its inception, CSF found that meeting with and offering services to farmworkers after work was not an effective practice. Farmworkers are typically tired and prefer to rest after a long day rather than attend meetings or events. For this reason, CSF began hosting events and educational programming in the early morning, before the start of the work day.

Description of the Practice

The Outreach Promotores de Salud/Community Health Workers (CHWs) team at CSF is staffed by former farmworker men and women who know first-hand the schedules and conditions of farmworkers. Because of this personal knowledge, the outreach Promotores/CHWs are sensitive to the needs of the farmworker community. The Outreach Promotores/CHWs coordinate weekly late night/early morning outreach to effectively reach, educate and offer health services to farmworkers during Arizona’s peak agricultural season (October - March). In accordance with the “meet them where they are” concept, CSF outreach events are held throughout the community, in locations such as parks, local grocery stores, farmworkers’ pick-up sites, US/MEX border port of entry, well-traveled neighborhoods, and most transited sites by the farmworkers in the community.

CSF hires and trains farmworker men and women to become Promotores/CHWs committed to serving their community. Early or late schedules do not present a problem for the outreach Promotores/CHWs, as they have expressed their enthusiasm and desire for the opportunity to help and provide resources to former coworkers and peers. Many Promotores have been working with CSF since 1999 and have become Outreach Program Coordinators and Trainers for the new group of Promotores/CHWs. They supervise and coordinate working schedules for new employees.



At outreach events, a wide range of services and resources are made available to farmworkers, including:

- Blood sugar and blood pressure tests
- Vision screenings and services
- COVID-19 vaccines and testing
- Housing rehabilitation for individuals 50 years and older
- Immigration services
- Workers' rights information
- Programs for youth and families

Key Strategies

Planning and Preparing for Late Night/Early Morning Outreach

Planning for the year's events starts in August, well before the start of the season in October. Once the season begins in October, outreach events are hosted weekly until March. Planning outreach events involves close collaboration with multiple partners, including the Yuma County Farmworker Services Coalition (YCFSC), which includes: Representatives from the Yuma County Health Department, the City of San Luis, various CBOs, and agricultural employers, to provide a full range of education and services that were identified by the Promotores/CHWs as priority needs. CSF's outreach Promotores/CHWs ensure all collaborators know the outreach schedule and what to expect at events.

All participating organizations are told to arrive 30 minutes before the start of the event to set up. Any giveaway items must be prepared in advance and may include face masks, hand sanitizer, informational pamphlets, or other materials. To overcome literacy challenges, CSF utilizes in-person communication outside the ongoing event to help ensure everyone is informed about the available resources. All services are offered in both English and Spanish.

Organizing An Annual Community Health Fair: "El Dia del Campesino"

Since 1995, "El Dia del Campesino" or "The Day of the Farmworker," has been an annual Health and Information Fair implemented on the first Saturday of December. This free community event welcomes and recognizes farmworker families' contributions to border communities. The event is coordinated in collaboration with the Yuma County Farmworkers Service Coalition (YCFSC), facilitated by CSF.



Similar to the regular outreach conducted by CSF, “El Dia del Campesino” is hosted during the late evening and early morning, before the farmworkers’ work day begins, and when temperatures are cooler. CSF staff and other community, state, and national organizations join efforts to educate, promote, and provide health education, health screenings, flu shots, social service resources, food, and entertainment to approximately 5,000 farmworkers.

CSF collaborates with the City of San Luis, Arizona, to host “El Dia del Campesino” on Main Street, a highly transited street by farmworkers entering through the US/Mexico Port of Entry in the early morning or living in San Luis, AZ. The street is closed for this annual event, with shop owners on the street notified in advance. Shop owners have previously opened their doors for the event and provided free coffee to the farmworkers in attendance.

Planning for “El Dia del Campesino” begins each year in January at the post-event evaluation meeting held by organizers. Starting in July, planning and organizing for the yearly event begins by outlining specific details and responsibilities for all partners and allows CSF five to six months to organize and form committees for the upcoming event. Therefore, the project planning starts in July and ends in early December. Between 40 to 60 organizations participate and help plan the annual event, including church groups, youth, and student volunteer groups. Approximately 200 volunteers are present during the late-night “El Dia del Campesino” event and spend time thanking and giving back to the farmworker community.

This annual event has been going strong in the community for over 27 years and is an essential tradition for the region’s farmworker community. The annual event allows farmworkers to safely connect with organizations that may otherwise not offer services in the early mornings, and it provides community organizations an opportunity to get to know the farmworkers in their area.



Information booths and giveaways at the “Dia del Campesinos” event

Results

The late evening/early morning outreach and “El Dia del Campesino” have proven successful for CSF, as shown by their long history in the community and the roughly 3,000 - 5,000 attendees present at their larger outreach events. CSF’s outreach approach to farmworkers has resulted in reliable collaboration between many partners throughout the community. For partner organizations, late-night/early-morning events hosted by CSF have become opportunities to connect effectively to farmworkers and provide resources. It has been a trusted source of information and resources for farmworkers in the area. Many farmworkers approach the Promotores and or volunteers to thank them for organizing the event. Others report that the health services they receive at the Dia Del Campesino are the only source of health care they receive in the year.

After many years of collaboration among partners, CSF has been able to effectively distribute materials promoting the events and encouraging attendance. This has resulted in more members of the farmworker community being reached and served by CSF and partner organizations alike.

At the end of “El Dia del Campesinos,” CSF conducts an evaluation and planning meeting with committee members who provide input and feedback to improve the next year’s event. This evaluation allows CSF to improve programming each year. CSF staff time is needed to collect and interpret evaluation data and to facilitate planning meetings.

Key Challenges and How to Address Them

Confirm Participation

CSF has not encountered many challenges with hosting late evening/early morning events due to the longstanding history of these outreach efforts and the organization’s strong relationship with farmworkers. However, being that this annual event does not have a budget or grant to support it, it depends on the coalescing of collaborators who can sponsor the event. Besides the annual fundraising, other considerations include: Staff need to effectively facilitate and manage well-planned coordination among partners, find building space to gather clothing and other donations distributed during the event, organize all media activities, and register and confirm participation in advance so that all organizations can be featured on outreach and promotional materials. Reaching out to local farmers/growers to request funding support and/or to ensure that they can allow enough time for their workers to participate in the event and receive the health screenings or vaccinations that will be offered is also an essential part of planning.



Safety Measures

Safety is also key when hosting late evening/early morning outreach. As for “El Dia Del Campesino,” CSF and the logistics organizing committee work very closely with the City of San Luis, Parks and Recreation, and the City of San Luis Police Department, who ensure that volunteers are posted at the entrance of the events to ensure order by overseeing activities outside the event area and looking out for any potential safety concerns. While for the late evening/early morning outreach, CSF Lead Promotores/CHWs are in charge of organizing and preparing the outreach Promotores/CHWs on safety tips to reduce safety incidents while being in the community. During the COVID-19 vaccine initiatives, CSF coordinated with the local fire department, and EMT services in case attendees experienced an adverse reaction to the vaccine. Coordinating with volunteers and medical and emergency services helps CSF address any safety concerns that may arise during the late evening/early morning outreach events.

Resources Needed and Expenses

Much of the resources needed to coordinate and plan the late evening/early morning events are related to promotion and collaborations consisting of:

- Shared funding/resources
- Distributing lists of the services offered at each event
- COVID-19 vaccination events promotion
- Promoting the late evening/early morning events on CSF's Radio Sin Fronteras and social media outlets, such as Facebook
- Briefing other organizations on the upcoming event(s)
- Volunteer recruitment
- Coordinating volunteers
- Soliciting donations within their organization and or community

The outreach Promotores/CHWs at CSF coordinate and plan with partner organizations major outreach events during the Arizona agricultural season. Most expenses are related to staff time spent planning, coordinating, and holding events, as all staff at CSF participate in the planning and collaboration of the late evening/early morning outreach. Staff involved in the success of these actions include CSF's Executive Director (who is the FWSC Chair), Outreach Promotores/CHWs, Program Managers, and administrators.



Partnerships

The Yuma County Farmworkers Services Coalition consists of the following organizations. Together, the Coalition members collectively assist with “El Dia del Campesino” and CSF’s outreach efforts:

- The City of San Luis
- Arizona Western College Assistance Migrant Program
- City of San Luis Police Department
- City of San Luis Fire Department
- Arizona Interagency Farmworker Coalition, which also participates in the planning of “El Dia del Campesino” under the Yuma County Farmworkers Service Coalition
- Consulado de México in Yuma
- Arizona Complete Health
- Yuma County Public Health Services District (Yuma County Health Department)
- ARIZONA@WORK
- National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)
- Migrant Education Program
- Sunset Community Health Center
- Community Legal Services
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services/DES
- Yuma Main Library
- CrossRoads Mission Catholic Community Services
- The City of San Luis Parks and Recreation
- University of Arizona
- Department of Economic Security



Learn More

- Visit the Campesinos Sin Fronteras [website](#).
- For questions and more information, contact: Emma Torres, CSF Executive Director etorres@campesinossinfronteras.org

Tools and Resources

- [Journal of the Medical Library Association - Creating information resources and trainings for farmworker-serving community health workers](#)
- [Health Outreach Partners: Outreach Reference Manual \(Chapter 1: Understanding Farmworkers\)](#)
- [East Carolina University - Education Materials for Farmworker Health: A Resource List](#)



Pro tip:

Providing large-scale late evening/early morning outreach requires a high level of planning months in advance. If your organization is looking to implement outreach involving many partners, it is important to start collaborating with partner organizations and disseminating information to farmworkers ahead of the first outreach event. Keep in mind that local government entities may also be able to assist with the coordination and logistics of hosting outreach events in well-traveled areas.

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