

The Farmworker Experience during COVID19: Barriers and Strategies to Testing

NC Farmworkers' Project
2021 Virtual Forum for Migrant
and Community Health



ABOUT ME

- Born in Oregon and raised in North Carolina
- SAF: Levante Leadership Institute high school program in 2012
- SAF: Into the Fields summer program 2017
- Received Bachelors in Biology and Medical Anthropology from UNC
- Currently coordinates a COVID-19 testing and vaccine initiative in Southeastern NC, under NCFWP



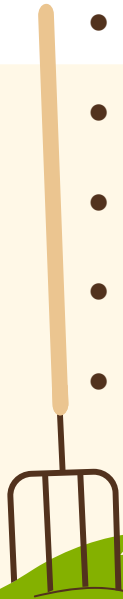
ABOUT NCFWP

- **Mission:** To promote the organization of farmworkers so that they can find solutions to their problems collectively, to encourage the political participation of farmworkers, and to improve their living and working conditions
- Originally founded as a worker organizing group, we have shifted towards more health and wellbeing in the farmworker population, using a popular education approach to our community work
- Serves around 3,000 farmworkers and farmworker families year round
- Empowerment



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the work being done on the ground
- Learn about preventative and educational strategies during Covid19 pandemic
- Understand barriers faced in COVID-19 testing and solutions to these challenges
- Accessing resources available to Farmworkers during and after testing
- Learn about collaborative work with partner organizations



ICEBREAKER

- Word Cloud
- pollev.com/joseibarra779
- Instructions:
 - 1) Go to pollev.com
 - 2) Type in `joseibarra779` for username
 - 3) Enter response



WORD CLOUD

- Compare and contrast!
- Farmworker Responses

Respond at PollEv.com/joseibarra779

What word comes to mind when you think of your experiences during Covid-19?



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FARMWORKERS IN NC

- 150,000 total workers and their dependents each growing season
- 14,000—17,000 H2A workers annually
- Tobacco, Christmas trees, sweet potatoes, bell peppers, and other fruits and vegetables
- Many farmworkers also work in greenhouses and nurseries



OUTREACH ON THE GROUND

- Anterior nares swabs
- COVID19 antigen testing
- COVID19 PPE kits for arriving and departing farmworkers
- Educational presentations on covid19, testing, and vaccines
- Connecting rural farmworker camps to local health depts



COVID-19 DATA

- 30 + camps and nurseries tested.
- 450 total workers tested
- 87 positive results
- About 20% positive rate vs NC average of 4-7%
- Cluster: a COVID-19 cluster is defined as two or more confirmed or probable cases among workers within a 14-day period
- Total 8 clusters identified within camps/nurseries



The background features a light yellow gradient with several white, stylized cloud shapes of varying sizes scattered across the top and sides. The main title is centered in a bold, green, sans-serif font.

BARRIERS TO HEALTH SERVICES

- Transportation
- Farmworker working hours
- Fear and trust
- Financial
- Language
- Cultural
- Under-resourced areas

The background features a stylized landscape with white, rounded hills and clouds against a light yellow background. The title 'BARRIERS TO COVID-19 TESTING' is centered at the top in a bold, green, sans-serif font. Below the title is a list of six bullet points, each preceded by a small black dot. The bottom of the image shows a green foreground with a dark brown shadow cast by the hills.

BARRIERS TO COVID-19 TESTING

- Everything and more!
- Growers don't want to lose work force
- Fear of being sent back home
- Losing work/pay
- Stigma
- Fear of the unknown



CONCERNS ON THE GROUND

- Testing

1) "Es verdad si salimos positivos nos regresan a la casa?"

2) "Yo escuche que un trabajador de otro campo lo quemaron en el hospital"

3) "la prueba nos da el virus"

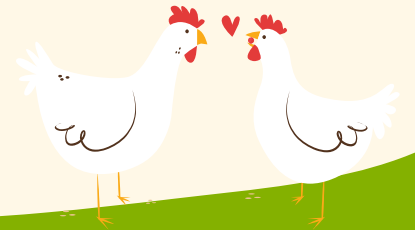
CONCERNS ON THE GROUND CONT.

- Vaccine

1) “yo escuche que la vacuna se hizo con células fetales, y porque nosotros estamos contra el aborto entonces no nos vamos vacunar”

2) “en las noticias, las personas que tenían alergias murieron cuando recibieron la vacuna, mi esposo y todos mis hijos tienen alergias, así que no quiero que la ellos se vacunen

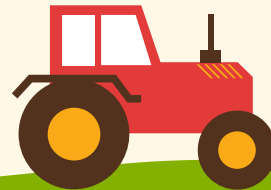
3) “la vacuna no tiene efectos malos ahorita pero después de tres años, la persona se muere”





SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES TO COVID-19 TESTING

- On-site presentations
- Financial supports
- Food banks
- Pulse oximeter and contactless thermometers
- Cleaning supplies and PPE provisions to camps
- Alternative housing for isolation precautions



SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES TO COVID-19 TESTING

- Communication and collaboration
 - 1) Growers and Workers guide to COVID19 testing
 - 2) Advocacy
 - 3) EMPOWERMENT



The background features a light yellow sky with three white clouds of varying sizes in the upper left. At the bottom, there are stylized green hills. The title 'KEY PARTNERSHIPS' is centered in a bold, green, sans-serif font.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Rural Health Program Covid19 Response Coordinators. (CHW and farmworker PPE, guidance, and a great support system!)
- Episcopal Farmworker Ministry (Farmworker Emergency funds, and food donations)
- Local health departments (Johnston and Sampson)
- Southeastern Health (Emergency funds, and food resources)
- Benson Area Medical Center (testing materials, PPE, and vaccine initiative!)

REFERENCES

- <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/testing>
- <http://www.farmworkerlanc.org/about-nc-farmworkers/demographics/>
- <https://www.ncfhp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/FMC-Farmworker-Health-Factsheet.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/community-mitigation/prioritizing-non-healthcare-assessments.html>

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