

National Farmworker Health Program

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



NCFH

National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Goals

Farmworkers are critical to meeting our most basic human need for food, but often struggle to meet their own basic needs - farmworkers generally earn very low wages, rarely have employment benefits, and live in conditions of poverty. The essential work of farmworkers has become more prominent during the COVID-19 pandemic, but conditions have not improved for America's farmworkers. Farmworkers face repeated COVID-19 exposure at work and in crowded housing without the support of paid time off or ability to work from home.

The National Center for Farmworker Health (NCFH) has led a national effort to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 in farmworker communities throughout the country in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and with more than 40 national, state, and local farmworker-serving organizations. A diverse group of stakeholders forming the [National Agricultural Worker Advisory Council](#) guides the project and includes representatives of community-based organizations, health care providers, researchers, farmworkers, agricultural employers, and public sector agencies.

This program aims to: (a) more efficiently tailor and disseminate public health information; (b) improve adoption of prevention and mitigation guidance and best practices; and (c) effectively respond to emergencies affecting the diverse populations within the farmworker community. To achieve the goals of the project, NCFH and its partners provide direct services, trainings and resources, and health education, and support data-driven dissemination of information through health education campaigns.



Our Approach

 <p>Collaborative The project relies on collaboration among farmworkers, agricultural employers, community-based organizations, national organizations, public health entities, and more.</p>	 <p>Sustainable Activities are designed to strengthen networks and build capacity among organizations to ensure farmworkers continue to be supported long-term.</p>
 <p>Community Guided From beginning to end, our approach is informed by the National Agricultural Worker Advisory Council and our materials are reviewed by farmworkers.</p>	 <p>Data informed Goals and activities were shaped by needs assessments and available data, and are continually evaluated during implementation.</p>

National Agricultural Worker Advisory Council

NCFH convened the [National Agricultural Worker Advisory Council \(NAWAC\)](#), comprised of 18 organizations and stakeholders who serve farmworker communities. The council works to efficiently tailor and disseminate public health information, improve adoption of prevention and mitigation guidance and best practices, and effectively respond to emergencies affecting the diverse populations within the farmworker community. In an end of year evaluation, the advisory council members had very positive opinions on the success of the council meetings and objectives: 100% felt that they were kept informed about program progress and activities, 91% felt that their voice was always heard and incorporated into the program, and 91% felt that the council had increased communications among farmworker-serving organizations.

“I’m proud of having been given an opportunity to flag important issues to address. I’ve very much enjoyed the conversations; they have included diverse perspectives and insights and I’ve always learned from them and often been inspired by them.” -NAWAC member

Evaluation Approach

The evaluation approach incorporates formative and summative evaluations utilizing mixed methods, including:

Qualitative: Interviews, case studies, focus groups, listening sessions, observations, document review, and feedback sessions.

Quantitative: Surveys and key metrics from program activities, including number of farmworkers vaccinated, number of materials distributed, social media analytics, and satisfaction and knowledge gained scores from trainings.

Our Activities

Reaching Farmworkers

Outreach & Education Teams

NCFH funded 24 farmworker-serving organizations across the country to support their outreach and education efforts in local farmworker communities.

Demonstration Projects

NCFH funded 19 Demonstration Projects around the U.S. with nearly \$1.3 million to increase vaccine access for farmworkers and their families.

Call for Health/Una Voz para la Salud

The [Call for Health](#) (Una Voz para la Salud) program directly supports farmworkers by helping them find health care services in any part of the U.S.

H-2A Guest Worker Outreach

NCFH staff focused resource development and direct outreach to H-2A guest workers to support COVID-19 education and vaccination clinics.

Health Education Campaigns

Radio Public Service Announcements

In collaboration with Radio Bilingue and the Hispanic Communications Network, NCFH released 16 public service announcements about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Social Media Toolkit

The social media toolkit contains resources and information tailored for farmworker communities to amplify organizations' social media campaigns about COVID-19.

Digital & Print Educational Materials

NCFH produced [educational resources](#) that address COVID-19 prevention & control, and the COVID-19 vaccines.

Farmworker Health Education Committee

NCFH assembled a farmworker review committee to review and provide feedback on all materials produced by NCFH for this program. Farmworkers are paid a monthly stipend and communicate via WhatsApp.



Trainings & Resources

Training & Technical Assistance

NCFH provided 25 COVID-19 related trainings to over 1,500 participants, and over 150 consultations & technical assistance sessions to over 1,000 individuals to support COVID-19 efforts in farmworker communities.

Promising Practices

NCFH created a series of [promising and innovative practices](#) to prevent, mitigate, and control COVID-19 in farmworker communities.

Collaborations with Agricultural Employers

NCFH collaborated with the National Council of Agricultural Employers and other industry groups and employers to facilitate COVID-19 vaccine clinics at worksites or housing sites, and provide virtual or in-person vaccine education.

Data & Assessments

Farm Labor Population Estimates & Reports

NCFH provides public health authorities with farm labor data, including estimates of the number of crop production and animal production workers in any county in the U.S. NCFH produced two statewide reports and a state data dashboard over the last year to support farmworker vaccination efforts.

Farmworker COVID-19 Community Assessments

NCFH partnered with JBS International and community-based organizations across the country to survey farmworkers and conduct key informant interviews to better understand farmworkers' experiences during the pandemic. Assessments will continue into 2022.

National Farm Labor Data Dashboard

NCFH worked with University of Texas, LBJ School of Public Affairs to begin building an interactive web-based dashboard compiling nationally available data on farm labor, H-2A guestworkers, farm locations, and health center locations to support public health planning and delivery of services at the national, state, and local level.

875,000
farmworkers and family members reached



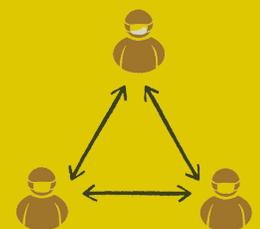
353,000
PPE care packages distributed to farmworkers

78,000
vaccine doses administered, with at least 63K farmworkers and family members vaccinated



122
unique partners and farmworker-serving organizations supported

25 trainings
to over 1,500 attendees



AT A GLANCE

122 unique partners and farmworker-serving organizations supported

- 90 farmworker-serving organizations supported through funding, training, or technical assistance
- 24 Outreach & Education Projects
- 19 Demonstration Projects
- 18 members on National Agricultural Worker Advisory Council
- 5 members on Farmworker Health Education Committee
- 8 agricultural employer partners
- 2 national radio partners

25 trainings to over 1,500 attendees

- 89% were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the training they received
- 65% of training participants reported a high or extremely high level of knowledge gained

875,000 outreach & education interactions with farmworkers

Over 875,000 farmworkers and their family members were reached through Outreach & Education Projects, Demonstration Projects, and NCFH direct service with in-person education, flyers and digital materials regarding COVID-19 vaccines, testing, referrals, social support, and more.

78,000 vaccine doses administered

Nearly 78,000 vaccine doses were administered with at least 63,000 farmworkers and family members vaccinated. Through these vaccinations, we estimate that approximately 87 hospitalizations[1] were prevented through this program. The cost of a hospitalization due to COVID-19 with complications or comorbidity could exceed \$20,000[2]. Vaccinating farmworkers through this collaborative program equates to about \$1.74 million saved by the health care system.

160+ health education products curated & developed

NCFH created 37 resources, including videos, flyers, and PSAs, and over 160 resources were reviewed and disseminated through the Health Education Hub, with nearly 3,400 views and 100 downloads.

[1] Hospitalizations were calculated assuming a 9.24% prevalence of COVID-19 among farmworkers (Lusk & Chandra, 2021), an infection-hospitalization ratio of 2.1% (Menachemi et al., 2021), and a vaccine effectiveness against hospitalization of 71% (Self et al., 2021). We used the vaccine effectiveness of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine because the J&J vaccine was a population choice among farmworkers.

Lusk JL, Chandra R. Farmer and farm worker illnesses and deaths from COVID-19 and impacts on agricultural output. *PLoS One*. 2021 Apr 28;16(4):e0250621. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0250621. PMID: 33909685; PMCID: PMC8081247.

Menachemi N, Dixon BE, Wools-Kaloustian KK, Yiannoutsos CT, Halverson PK. How Many SARS-CoV-2-Infected People Require Hospitalization? Using Random Sample Testing to Better Inform Preparedness Efforts. *J Public Health Manag Pract*. 2021 May-Jun 01;27(3):246-250. doi: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000001331. PMID: 33729203.

Self WH, Tenforde MW, Rhoads JP, et al. Comparative Effectiveness of Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech, and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) Vaccines in Preventing COVID-19 Hospitalizations Among Adults Without Immunocompromising Conditions – United States, March–August 2021. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2021;70:1337–1343. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7038e1external icon>

[2] According to an estimate by the Peterson Center on Healthcare and the Kaiser Family Foundation, “the inpatient admissions for COVID-19 treatment could top \$20,000” based on the average total cost of treatment for pneumonia inpatient admissions with major complications or comorbidities (Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker).

REACHING FARMWORKERS

This project met farmworkers and their families directly where they were – on the farm, at the carpool spot, in their neighborhood – with direct services through many projects. Twenty-four Outreach & Education teams met monthly with each other and NCFH to inform their efforts to conduct outreach and provide health education to farmworker communities. Nineteen Demonstration Projects were funded to increase vaccine access through clinics on-site at farms, workplaces, and in the community. The Call for Health call line answered farmworkers' questions and referred them to services to access health care. These direct services responded to the immediate needs of farmworkers and their families, which were heightened during the pandemic.

24 Outreach & Education Projects

NCFH funded 24 farmworker-serving organizations across the country with over \$1 million to support their outreach and education efforts in local farmworker communities. NCFH started with a pilot project with six organizations in November 2020 before expanding to 24 teams in May 2021. NCFH convened outreach teams once a month to deliver trainings, facilitate peer-to-peer learning, and disseminate health education resources. During monthly meetings and in one-on-one consultations, organizations shared their needs, best practices, and challenges during the pandemic. Inviting Community Health Workers to join monthly outreach meetings led to richer engagement and community insight.

Funded projects conducted outreach to an estimated **428,000 farmworkers & family members** (including over 21,200 H-2A workers), distributed **550,000 PPE items** to farmworkers, supported the **vaccination of 15,000** farmworkers and their family members, provided over **102,500 health center and social service referrals**, and distributed over **154,000 COVID-19 related flyers**.

Map of Projects



Como de experiencias, tenemos muchísimas y la verdad, estamos haciendo una labor muy gratificante y lo hacemos por vocación, más en esta situación la pandemia ha afectado a todos, entonces no tiene distinción, con lo poco o mucho que podamos ayudar a la comunidad estamos aquí para servir //
As from experiences, we have many and the truth is that we are doing very rewarding work and we do it out of vocation, but in this situation, the pandemic has affected everyone, so it has no distinction, with little or much we can help the community, we are here to serve.”
-Outreach Worker of Demonstration Project



19 Demonstration Projects

NCFH funded 19 Demonstration Projects around the U.S. with nearly \$1.3 million to increase vaccine access for farmworkers and their families. Demonstration Projects carried out a diverse range of activities to increase vaccine access including coordinating on-farm vaccine clinics, conducting outreach to farmworkers and their families, and disseminating health education materials. Most projects were with community-based organizations, and two projects were with agricultural employers.

Funded projects conducted **outreach to over 446,000 farmworkers & family members**, distributed over **20,800 PPE care packages** to farmworkers, and supported the administration of **62,300 vaccine doses, with at least 47,500 farmworkers and family members vaccinated**. In addition, funded projects supported over 680 farmworkers in quarantine or isolation.

Demonstration Projects reported that this contract allowed their organizations to expand their services and partnerships, and be more competitive for grant funding; ultimately creating more operational sustainability. Demonstration Projects were able to expand their community partners, building trust between clinic providers and farmworkers, and develop more collaboration with health clinics. These collaborative efforts will support future work with COVID-19, influenza, and other infectious disease prevention (including COVID-19 vaccinations for children and booster shots). This project raised awareness of other health disparities in farmworker communities and provided opportunities for community-based organizations to secure funding to continue this work.

Types of Social Support Provided

- Housing
- Rental/utility relief
- Food
- Legal services
- Workforce services
- Mental health services
- Childcare services
- Wage theft assistance
- Domestic violence assistance
- Diaper & clothing distribution
- Over the counter medications for COVID-19 symptoms or vaccine side effects
- Scheduling of vaccine appointments for farmworkers
- Transportation to vaccine appointments

Total reach of direct services

875k

outreach & education interactions

78k

vaccine doses administered

353k

PPE care packages distributed

55.6k

COVID-19 tests administered

128k

health care and social services provided or referred

Demonstration Project Stories

Following the conclusion of the demonstration projects, NCFH had the opportunity to interview each organization to hear highlights, challenges, and lessons learned. Each of the 19 participating organizations spoke about their successes, ranging from new partnerships to outreach strategies to continuing support services to resilient and dedicated staff, volunteers, and communities. The following are a glimpse of those stories. To read a more in-depth account of the Demonstration Projects, [click here](#).



Over 90% of employees vaccinated with support from employer and new partnerships

"We learned to partner with outside agencies, and leverage those partnerships to help bring something to the table to our employees to help them with either getting vaccinated, getting tested... making sure that they had the right support services for them to get what they needed."

- Agricultural Employer



Student outreach workers educate peers and parents in Mississippi farming community

A community organization in a rural Mississippi farming community trained high school students to provide COVID-19 health education and conduct outreach in their community. Youth could "look [their] parent in the eye and say I want you to [get vaccinated] because I love you... we could never do that individually with those parents."



Meeting farmworkers "where they are at" opens communication channels in Southern Florida

Outreach was more than printing flyers or posting to social media, rather outreach workers were "meeting them at their doors and answering those questions for them, and making it part of the conversations that we have every single day."

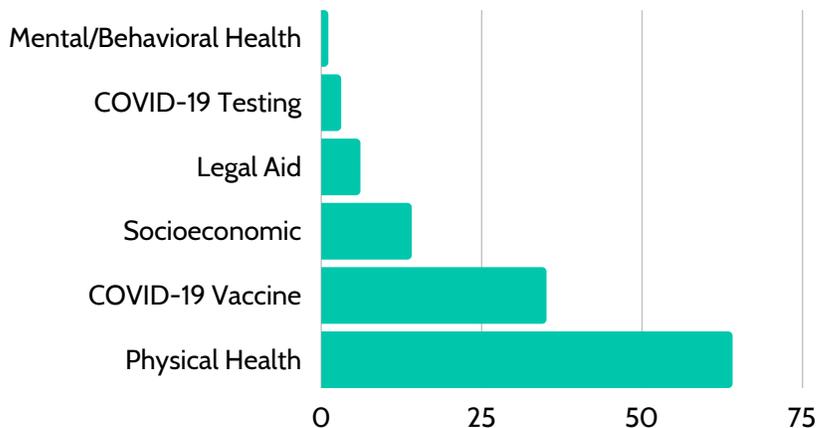
Call for Health (Una Voz Para La Salud)

The bilingual free call line supports farmworkers by helping them find health care services in any part of the U.S.. Call For Health (CFH) The program receives calls or text messages from farmworkers, identifies their health needs, and works with the client to set up a free or low-cost health care appointment. The program also provides ancillary support services for the farmworker as needed, including identifying transportation options, interpretation services, and referrals to other agencies in their area if the worker has non-health related needs. While physical health was the most reported referral type by the number of calls, the most common referral type by number of participants was for the COVID-19 vaccine (88 participants). Since re-launching in February 2021, CFH averaged a **28% increase in calls per month, assisting a total of 192 callers.**



Una Voz Para La Salud
Call for Health

Physical Health was the most reported referral type for CFH in FY2020



"I took the COVID-19 vaccine because I want to stay healthy so I can continue to work... me and my friends are farmworkers in Texas. The three of us agreed - we wanted to get the vaccine. But we did not know how or where to go. I called Call for Health and they quickly helped us schedule an appointment that fit our work schedule. Call for Health also connected us with an organization that was able to provide transportation!" - Call for Health Client

CFH Revamp

This year CFH added a WhatsApp number. Many farmworkers do not have a U.S. cell phone number and use WhatsApp to communicate with friends and family. CFH also launched a Facebook and Instagram page to share educational information.

Types of referrals provided:

- COVID-19 testing
- COVID-19 vaccinations
- Physical health
- Mental/behavioral health
- Socioeconomic
- Legal Aid

Types of support provided:

- Schedule vaccine appointment
- Schedule COVID-19 test
- Coordinate transportation
- Interpretation services
- Financial assistance
- Educational materials

H-2A Guest Worker Outreach

Because of the severity of the impact of COVID-19 on H-2A guest workers, NCFH has focused resource development and direct outreach to H-2A guest workers. Staff work directly with H-2A guest workers to develop educational tools around COVID-19 prevention and vaccinations. Additionally, NCFH has worked closely with partners to conduct outreach to large H-2A worksites and housing sites and assist employers with on-farm and community vaccine clinics. NCFH conducted direct outreach, helped to coordinate vaccine clinics, and/or supported vaccine clinics for H-2A workers in 6 different areas in Texas (the Rio Grande Valley, Dalhart, Brazoria County, Plainview, and Bryan) – reaching a total of 345 H-2A workers, and assisting in the vaccination of at least 280 H-2A workers.

H-2A Outreach Plan

NCFH launched a targeted effort aimed at building capacity around an often-underserved segment of the farmworker population – H-2A guest workers. [The H-2A Outreach Plan](#) provides details on the background and current implementation of the H-2A visa program, the unique needs of guest workers, and recommendations to work with key stakeholders to reach these workers with COVID-19 services.



NCFH worked with a Mexican Theatre group, "Latino Theatre Initiatives," to create a short film, "[Los Que Me Importan](#)" designed for H-2A guest workers who temporarily live in rural and isolated housing when working in the United States. The video highlights worker's rights to access the COVID-19 vaccine. The video explores COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy, misinformation, and frequently asked questions for those in the agricultural industry. For example, the screenshot above highlights farmworkers' concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine side effects disrupting their ability to work.

Reaching Farmworkers - Conclusions

This project reached and impacted farmworkers in many ways. Our goal to reach 250,000 farmworkers, was exceeded by supporting over 875,000 outreach and education interactions with farmworkers and their family members. The goal to support vaccination of 15,000 farmworkers, was exceeded by over 300%, with at least 45,700 farmworkers & family members vaccinated.



HEALTH EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS

To reach the varied audiences of farmworkers and organizations that serve farmworkers, NCFH distributed content through diverse communication methods, including radio platforms and social media networks. NCFH also created a publicly available hub of health education materials vetted specifically for farmworker communities.

Radio Campaigns

In collaboration with Radio Bilingue and the Hispanic Communications Network, NCFH aired 16 public service announcements about the COVID-19 vaccine. These messages broadcasted daily during summer 2021 in Spanish, Mixteco, and Triqui in the U.S. and northern Mexico, with a focus on prominent agricultural areas. The radio PSAs generated an estimated 7,423,200 gross impressions across 46 participating radio stations.

Through radio content development, the Hispanic Communications Network (HCN) reported that relatable characters, music, and stories resonated with Latino/as. The target messaging was delivered as a family discussing campaign topics. HCN reports, “the storytelling approach was very well received among the target Latino communities.” Further, an NCFH-led evaluation of the Radio campaign reinforced that farmworkers trust information from relatable characters (such as a soccer announcer and a family conversation), and health providers. Familiar Cumbia-style songs also resonated with farmworkers.

Social Media Campaigns

Planning for the social media campaign began in Summer 2021, and across all platforms, NCFH pages reached a total of 3,229 social media users. Reach was much broader as other types of content views (i.e. publication of a video in a group) do not provide user metrics. Many farmworkers in the U.S. and Mexico rely on Facebook for information, therefore NCFH identified and joined 9 farmworker Facebook groups for weekly content posting.

NCFH published two Social Media resources: a COVID-19 Messaging Social Media Toolkit and COVID-19 Messaging Media Repository. The social media toolkit contains resources and information tailored for farmworker communities to amplify an organization’s social media campaign against COVID-19. It includes sample social media posts and compliments the media repository, which includes photos (taken in the field from NCFH staff or partner organizations), recordings, videos, and customizable branding content to aid in content creation.

NCFH plans to continue to produce “bite-size” information materials such as songs about COVID-19, health education graphics, and radio PSAs. In addition to more traditional dissemination channels, these quick materials can be sent through WhatsApp messages to farmworkers in our network and partner organizations to send to their clients.



Farmworker Media Repository
 In June 2021, NCFH traveled to the Rio Grande Valley to record onsite photography, video, interviews, and imagery to expand the NCFH social media toolkit and [community shared media repository](#). The new media aims to provide new and culturally relevant content.

Health Education Products

NCFH created and curated educational resources related to COVID-19 into a [Health Education Hub](#). Materials are created based on educational gaps identified in collaboration with our partners and undergo an extensive and collaborative review process with CDC staff, partner organizations, and farmworkers to ensure that they are culturally sensitive & relevant, and linguistically appropriate. Curated materials from partner organizations are assessed with specific criteria to identify literacy-sensitive health education materials for farmworkers.

Types of resources in the Health Education Hub include flyers, videos, infographics, PSA audio files, and social media resources. Thirty-seven resources were created by NCFH, and 240 resources were reviewed and 68% of products (164) were accepted as relevant for farmworkers and disseminated through the Health Education Hub. The materials in the Hub were viewed 3,394 times and downloaded 972 times. The most popular resources included:

- [La Vacuna Contra El COVID-19: Lo Que Debe Saber](#)
- [La Vacuna Contra El COVID-19: ¿Cuáles Son Los Efectos Secundarios?](#)
- [The COVID-19 Vaccine: What You Should Know](#)

Language Accessibility
 Health education materials are available in 8 different languages including Spanish, Haitian Creole, and indigenous languages such as Triqui, Zapoteco, and Mixteco to accommodate the diverse languages spoken by farmworkers.

Farmworker Health Education Committee

All health education and communication products are created in partnership with and reviewed by farmworkers on the farmworker health education committee. Feedback is gathered in a variety of methods, including through Whatsapp – a free messaging and video calling app commonly used by farmworkers for international communication. Members can provide their feedback via video calls, voice recordings, or text messages. The Farmworker Health Education Committee reviewed and provided feedback of all materials for farmworkers, including 16 PSAs for radio, 6 flyers, 1 fotonovela, 2 songs, and 12 videos.

Committee members include Spanish-speaking farmworkers who are based in the U.S., Honduras, and Mexico. These members are either currently working on U.S. farms or have worked on U.S. farms in the past. Members of this committee receive a monthly stipend in exchange for providing rapid and pointed feedback on images, videos, scripts, and print materials developed for agricultural workers. Members include men and women of various ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and educational levels, and includes two members who identify as Indigenous and two H-2A guest workers.

Health Education Campaigns - Conclusions

To reach the varied audiences of farmworkers and organizations that serve farmworkers and their families, NCFH evaluated and distributed content through diverse methods of dissemination. Across radio, social media, and health education products, we estimate over 7.42 million impressions.

Diego Sánchez is one of NCFH's National Advisory Council members, as well as a coffee producer, engineer, and former H-2A guest worker. Diego created a rendition of a Nahuatl classic and turned it into 'Vacunate!', a song that urges folks to get vaccinated and promotes health.

[Listen to 'Vacunate!'](#)



TRAININGS & RESOURCES

NCFH provided both training and technical assistance (T/TA) to Community Based Organizations (CBOs), agricultural employers, and the public. Trainings and TAs kept stakeholders informed of the latest information, grew participants' skills and organizational capacity, and provided opportunity for peer-to-peer learning.

Training & Technical Assistance to CBOs

NCFH provided over 150 consultations and technical assistance encounters to more than 1,000 individuals addressing COVID-19, and conducted 25 trainings for more than 1,500 participants across the country. Training topics were based on needs assessments and surveys, and included topics such as:

- Self-Care For Community Health Workers
- COVID-19 Prevention Practices For Agricultural Employers
- Communicating With Latin American Indigenous Communities
- Using Social Media To Connect With Farmworkers

Following trainings, participants are asked to complete an evaluation survey which asks about their overall satisfaction with the training, their confidence to apply what they learned, and a self-assessment of knowledge gained from the training. The results below reflect 9 trainings^[4] that were hosted by NCFH staff.

- 89% were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the training they received
- 65% of training participants reported a high or extremely high level of knowledge gained during trainings

T/TA Assessment

MHP conducted informal T/TA assessments with four organizations in March 2021 focused on how the community health worker (CHW) programs addressed the needs of farmworkers during COVID-19. Organizational representatives from Florida (1), California (2), and North Carolina (1) participated in semi-structured interviews to inform the assessment. Findings were compiled into a summary discussing the challenges experienced by CHWs, activities conducted to address identified challenges, and training recommendations for COVID-19 education, transportation and technology. NCFH continues to meet 1:1 with outreach and education teams to build on this foundation to inform NCFH's training and technical assistance.

[4] Not all trainings were able to administer the standard evaluation survey, particularly when NCFH was invited to present.

Trainings to Agricultural Employers

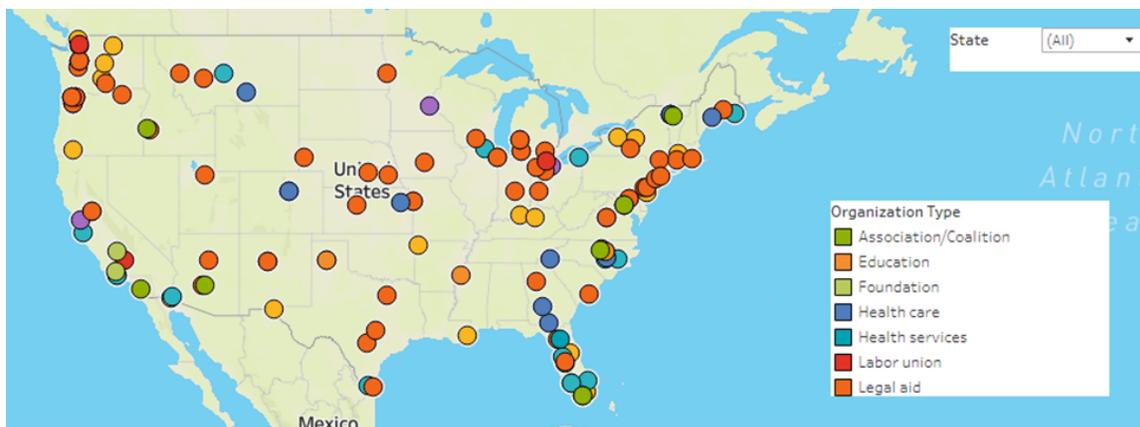
NCFH conducted three trainings for agricultural employers (to a total of 57 participants) to improve the knowledge and capacity of agricultural employers to mitigate public health threats, such as COVID-19 in workplace environments. NCFH participated in three agricultural employer listening sessions to inform the training topics, including: keeping farm labor safe during COVID-19; farm labor demographics and labor laws; and systemic injustice and power dynamics in the food system.

“All of the costs we have incurred from the different guidance and regulations and increased handwashing, all of the covered sick pay that we’ve paid out, etc... It just pays back tenfold. When you build that trust, you keep that trust with your farmworkers, and they’re more engaged because they know that we’re doing everything in our power to keep them safe and informed.” –Berry producer in California



Map of Farmworker Serving Organizations

NCFH researched and mapped [149 community-based organizations](#) across the U.S. whose primary mission is to serve farmworkers and their families. Organization types include coalitions, education, foundation, health care, health services, labor union, and legal aid. The map was viewed 575 times over the last year. NCFH will continue to update the map with the goal to strengthen a national network to serve farmworkers.



Promising Practices

NCFH, in partnership with Farmworker Justice and Health Outreach Partners, created a series of [promising and innovative practices](#) to prevent, mitigate, and control COVID-19 in farmworker communities. Promising Practices identify real-life examples of exemplary employer and community efforts to prevent COVID-19 infections among farmworkers and their families, and to support those suffering from the physical, social, and economic effects of COVID-19. To be included practices must be replicable in farms and communities across the country, have demonstrated positive effects for agricultural worker families, and follow public health guidance. Seven [promising practices](#) were completed in Year 1 and additional promising practices will be added in Year 2.

Boletín de Sol a Sol

The Boletín is a monthly publication that disseminates information and strengthens communication networks among farmworker serving organizations to keep subscribers up to date on farmworker-related COVID-19 news, CDC guidance, promising practices, projects, resources, and more. NCFH began distributing the Boletín in April and increased subscribers from the first newsletter by 79% to a total of 164 subscribers. Twenty-two newsletters were sent during this grant period with an average open rate of over 50%, about 100% higher than the nonprofit industry average of about 25% ([MailChimp](#)).

Trainings & Resources - Conclusions

NCFH trainings and resources increased communication nationally, regionally, and locally among farmworker serving organizations. Trainings and TAs kept stakeholders informed of the latest information, grew participants' skills and organizational capacity, and provided opportunity for peer-to-peer learning. NCFH prioritizes utilizing information gathered through our networks, including from those working directly on the ground, to inform trainings. NCFH exceeded our goal to conduct 10 trainings, with a total of 25 trainings & presentations with over 1,500 participants.



DATA & ASSESSMENTS

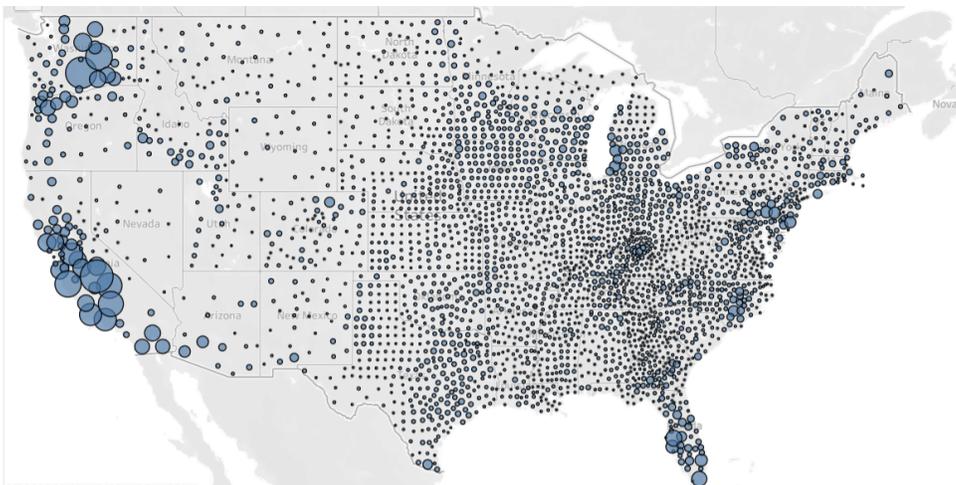
NCFH aims to bridge data and practice by working with community partners to initiate ethical farmworker surveys, translating data into practice, and making farm labor data more accessible to local and community organizations. In Year 1, NCFH began developing a farm labor data dashboard; provided farmworker population estimate reports as requested, including two in-depth state level reports and one state level interactive dashboard; and initiated farmworker community rapid assessments across the country. NCFH also provided technical support to CDC deployments and partnered with CDC to respond to community requests, assess needs, and provide informational resources.

NCFH Farm Labor Data Dashboard

NCFH worked with University of Texas to develop a national farm labor data dashboard to drive program planning and service delivery for public health authorities and community-based organizations. Through the national dashboard, users can understand geographic concentrations of farmworkers, the seasonality patterns of farmworker jobs within a community, H-2A guestworker arrivals and concentrations, and locations of community and health services. The dashboard can be used for public health planning at a local, state, and national level. The dashboard will be available to the public in 2022.

Farmworker Population Estimates

NCFH developed a [standardized methodology](#) in collaboration with JBS International to estimate the number of contract and directly hired workers in any county in the U.S. using the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture. NCFH launched a [web-based interactive map](#) of the national estimates for public access with over 3,660 views since its launch in summer 2021. Additionally, NCFH conducted more extensive research to provide in-depth reports and/or data dashboards to support vaccination efforts in four regions.



Agricultural Employer Listening Session

In partnership with the CDC, NCFH hosted one listening session with agricultural employers in December 2020. The session addressed topics including the impact of COVID-19 on employees and the productivity of the farm; challenges to ensuring workers arrive healthy and stay healthy; COVID-19 prevention or control strategies that have been implemented; challenges with the recommendations or mitigation strategies; plans to vaccinate workers; and training and education needs. The session resulted in a [report to summarize the key takeaways](#) expressed by agricultural employers. NCFH also participated in two listening sessions hosted by the National Council of Agricultural Employers.

Farmworker COVID-19 Community Assessments

NCFH partnered with CDC and JBS International to begin planning for Farmworker COVID-19 Community Assessments (FCCA) in farmworker communities during a public health emergency, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, to assess attitudes, knowledge and practices concerning COVID-19, COVID-19 disease prevalence and vaccination coverage. Local FCCAs include a farmworker survey, key informant interviews with organization representatives, and in-depth interviews with agricultural employers and farmworkers in communities across the country about farmworker experiences during COVID-19. These data will illuminate workers' experiences during the pandemic, including their ability to access care and preventative measures, their confidence about the COVID-19 vaccine, and more. Surveys and interviews were collected in five farmworker communities in Phase 1 of the project, 1) Monterey, Kern, Tulare Counties in California, 2) Hidalgo County in Texas; 3) El Paso County in Texas and Dona Ana County in New Mexico, 4) Coahoma and Calhoun Counties in Mississippi, and 5) Collier County in Florida. Approximately 200-250 surveys were completed in each community, with a total of 1,094 surveys collected in August through December 2021, and 53 qualitative interviews completed with farmworkers, employers, and representatives of farmworker-serving organizations. Data collection will expand into additional communities in 2022.

Data & Assessments - Conclusions

Through supporting public health efforts, NCFH has helped to identify how the CDC and other public health officials can help overcome barriers faced by farmworker communities in public health emergencies, including:

- Insight from agricultural employers on the feasibility of CDC recommendations and guidelines
- Geographic concentrations of farmworkers for CDC deployment and further farmworker community research
- Seasonality patterns of farmworker jobs within a community
- H-2A guestworker arrivals and concentrations of workers in communities
- Locations of community and health services.
- Farmworkers' experiences during the pandemic, including their ability to access care and preventative measures, their confidence about the COVID-19 vaccine, and more



LESSONS LEARNED

To achieve the goals of the project, NCFH and its partners provided direct services, conducted trainings, created resources, supported research, and disseminated health information through communication campaigns. In early 2021, vaccines against COVID-19 became publicly available. Despite farmworkers' status as essential workers, there were many challenges faced in both reaching farmworkers and getting farmworkers vaccinated during this grant period.

Challenges

Some of the key challenges in reaching farmworkers and creating avenues for vaccine access included:

- Misinformation from word of mouth, friends, family, and/or social media created vaccine hesitancy
- Farmworkers' concern of getting sick from the vaccine and needing to take time off from work
- Weather prohibiting outreach or outdoor events
- Trust between the health providers and the served community
- Lack of interpreters/multi-lingual health care providers and clinic staff
- Long working hours, language barriers, and lack of rural resources, among other challenges, create difficulties for farmworkers seeking COVID-19 vaccines
- Coordinating services and vaccination events for farmworkers around work schedules, clinic hours, transportation, and accessing isolated, rural areas is time-consuming and resource-intensive for program staff
- Some clinics required identification to receive a vaccine even though through law they are not required - this was a challenge for farmworkers without identification



In addition to reaching farmworkers, NCFH and its partners experienced internal challenges as well.

Some key challenges included:

- Limited capacity and ability of organizations serving farmworkers to participate in extra projects (such as the Farmworker COVID-19 Community Assessments) during a public health emergency, because they are already overwhelmed with vaccinations and continued outbreaks
- Staffing shortages experienced by farmworker-serving organizations, and that have impacted the entire country. Staff burn-out through secondary trauma is also a critical and ongoing issue
- Difficulty staying on top of changing public health guidelines and adapting materials in a timely fashion to get the correct information out to farmworkers. Many organizations relied on NCFH to send updated materials

Successful Strategies

In response to these challenges, project partners and NCFH found success reaching farmworkers and supporting vaccination efforts through the following:

- Bringing COVID-19 testing and vaccination services directly to the community, for example, Outreach Teams and Demonstration Projects team set up mobile testing sites in places that are integral to farmworker community (such as in their home neighborhoods, gas stations where farmworkers cash their checks, bus stops, food distribution sites, or directly on the farm)
- Responding quickly to weather delays (such as heavy rain) because workers are unable to work in the fields until they are dry again. When farms have weather delays, workers can get vaccinated without the fear of missing work and employers are more likely to view the vaccination as an efficient use of time
- Utilizing trusted messengers (such as health care providers, community leaders, family members, and Spanish speakers) to communicate health messages
- Conducting virtual listening sessions with farmworkers, employers, and others to hear directly from communities about vaccine hesitancy, COVID-19 prevention & control, and other topics of interest
- Supporting internet connectivity projects to improve farmworkers' access to telehealth care and information, as rural, agricultural areas often lack internet access

Successful strategies related to health education and communication campaigns include:

- Utilizing farmworker Facebook groups to share information, as farmworkers are very active on topic specific Facebook groups, making the groups a promising strategy to reach farmworkers with health education and information
- Communicating with farmworkers through WhatsApp, and collecting feedback on images, videos, scripts, and print materials developed for farmworkers. Farmworkers can provide their feedback via video calls, voice recordings, or text messages, depending on their schedule and the type of feedback needed allowing for more flexibility in collecting information
- Delivering health education and information through trusted messengers. Through radio content development, the Hispanic Communications Network (HCN) reported that relatable characters, music, and stories resonated with Latino/as. The target messaging was delivered as a family discussing campaign topics. HCN reports, “the storytelling approach was very well received among the target Latino communities and HCN recommends continuing to use this style.” Further, an NCFH-led evaluation of the Radio campaign reinforced that farmworkers trust information from relatable characters (such as a soccer announcer and a family conversation), as well as health providers, including doctors. Familiar Cumbia-style songs also resonated with farmworkers.
- Educational materials should be available in multiple languages (beyond English and Spanish), and should be formatted to include more pictures, audio, and video for low-literacy audiences.



RECOMMENDATIONS

NCFH recommends the following strategies for future efforts to continue supporting farmworker communities as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves and changes, as well addressing other public health disparities and issues surrounding farmworkers, their families, and communities:



- Utilize collaborative networks and cross-sector partnerships to connect with farmworkers in difficult-to-reach areas, pool resources, identify needs among different communities, and more
- Collect farmworker feedback on products to create content that is informed by those who will use the content
- Create materials and resources that accommodate the diverse languages that farmworkers speak, including indigenous Central and Latin American languages such as Triqui, Mam, and Mixtec.
- Make health education and informational materials more accessible for those with low literacy levels, by using more pictures, audio, video, and less words (for example, NCFH plans to continue to produce “bite-size” information materials such as songs about COVID-19, health education graphics, and radio PSAs that can be sent through WhatsApp messages to farmworkers and that partner organizations can send to their clients)
- Utilize the NCFH collection of community-based & [promising practices](#) to inform outreach and education efforts
- Invest in time and resources to locate and reach pockets of workers who are still unvaccinated (which contrasts with spring and early summer 2021 when those that were highly motivated to get the vaccine were easier to find)

Support needed from governmental and non-governmental funders:

- Long-term, multi-year funding can help build capacity, staff retention, and sustainability so that organizations are able to address root causes of health disparities in their communities
- Funding and support for outreach workers (who may or may not be certified as Community Health Workers) is critical to reaching farmworkers and addressing health disparities. During the pandemic, many farmworker-serving organizations who were not previously engaged in health-focused activities have become engaged on health issues, and these individuals act as important conduits of information and services between government agencies, service providers, and farmworkers.

GRATITUDE

The project relies on collaboration among farmworkers, agricultural employers, community-based organizations, national organizations, public health entities, and more. In solidarity with our Outreach & Education projects, Demonstration Projects, NAWAC members, Farmworker Health Education Committee, agricultural employer partners, research partners, and many more...

AgSocio	Episcopal Farmworker Ministry	Justice for Farmworkers
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP)	Familias Unidas Economy and Ecology Project	Kansas Statewide Farmworker Health Program
Baystate Health	Family Support Services	Keystone Rural Health
Border Agricultural Workers Project	Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance (Texas chapter)	La Union Del Pueblo Entero
California Farmworker Foundation	Farmworker & Landscaper Advocacy Project	Lake County, Office of Education
Campesinos Sin Fronteras	Farmworker Advocacy Network	Latino Civic Association of Tompkins County
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Farmworker Association of Florida	Latino Community Fund
Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indigena Oaxaqueño	Farmworker Justice	Legal Aid of Nebraska
CIELO	Farmworker Legal Services	Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers
Coalition of Immokalee Workers	Farmworker Unit - Legal Aid of North Carolina	Medine Farms
Colorado Legal Services Migrant Farm Worker Division	Finger Lakes Community Health	MEZCOPH Primary Prevention
Colorado Migrant Education	Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida Lee Health	Mobile Units
Comite de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agrícolas (CATA)	Foundation	MHP Salud
Community Health Partnership of Illinois	Health Care Network of Southwest Florida	Migrant Clinicians Network
Community Health Service Inc	Health Outreach Partners	Migrant Education Program
Complete Care Health Network	Hispanic Communications Network	Migrant Justice / Justicia Migrante
Connecticut River Valley	HOLA Ohio	Migrant Legal Aid, Inc
Farmworker Health Program	Intercare Community Health Network	Mississippi Delta Council for Farm Worker Opportunities Inc.
Día de la Mujer Latina	Iowa Legal Aid	Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)
Diego Sánchez Sánchez	JBS International	Montana Migrant Council, INC.
East Georgia Healthcare Center		Mujeres Unidas en Justicia, Educacion y Reforma, Inc.

National Association of
Community Health Centers
National Council of Agricultural
Employer
National Migrant and Seasonal
Head Start Association
National Migrant and Seasonal
Head Start Collaboration Office
NC FIELD
NC Department of Agriculture and
Consumer Sciences
New Mexico Legal Services
New Mexico State University
Nicolas Garcia Mirabal
North Carolina Farmworker Health
Program
Northwest Workers' Justice Project
Office of Migrant Education (CO)
Oregon Health Authority
Oregon Housing and Community
Services
Organizacion en California de
Lideres Campesinas
Paulina Yamileth Galindo

Pedro Torres
Proyecto de Trabajadores
Agricolas de Pensilvania
Radio Bilingue
Region 16 Migrant Education
Program
Rural Women's Health Project
Salud Family Health Centers
San Luis Valley Area Health
Education Center
Saul Rojas Gonzales
Southern Poverty Law Center
Texas A&M University
Texas RioGrande Legal Aid
The Guatemalan-Maya Center
The University of Texas Health
Science Center at Houston
School of Public Health
Topashaw Farms
Treeplanters & Farmworkers
United of the Northwest
(PCUN)
Unete
University of Florida

University of Texas, LBJ School
of Public Affairs
V. Valencia Harvesting Inc.
Vaccinate Your Family
Vecinos Farmworker Health
Program
Venceremos
Ventanilla de Salud (Servicios
de La Raza)
Virginia Farm Workers Program,
CVLAS
Virginia Garcia Memorial Health
Center
Visión Y Compromiso
Washington State Department
of Health
WeCount!
WFK Giving Fund
Wonderful Citrus Packing LLC
Worker Justice Center of New
York
Yakima Valley Farmworkers
Clinic



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