



Vaccine Message Testing Evaluation Summary Report

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Objectives

The objectives of this project were to understand how the vaccine health education materials developed by the National Center for Farmworker Health (NCFH) in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) affect farmworkers' beliefs, practices and uptake behaviors regarding respiratory disease vaccinations and farmworkers' preferences regarding material formats and styles.

Participant Recruitment & Methods

NCFH staff facilitated three focus group discussions with workers in Weld County, Colorado (June 29, 2024), Bailey County, Texas (August 1, 2024), and Gratiot County, Michigan (September 6, 2024). The Colorado focus group was in collaboration with Project Protect Food System Workers Promotora Network, and the Texas and Michigan focus groups were conducted in collaboration with local outreach workers. Focus group participants were recruited using snowball sampling, beginning with referrals from local outreach workers. Participating workers were also allowed to invite workers they knew. The total number of participants across all groups was 28.

The materials evaluated were an audio public service announcement (PSA) about flu vaccinations, a [fotonovela about COVID-19 Vaccinations](#), and a [flyer about COVID-19 vaccinations for children](#). Colorado evaluated the fotonovela and audio PSA, Michigan evaluated the flyer and audio PSA, and Texas evaluated the fotonovela and flyer.

Focus groups were conducted in Spanish with a trained facilitator and notetaker from NCFH staff. All focus groups were recorded, Colorado and Michigan's were transcribed. The audio quality for Texas' focus group was too poor to facilitate adequate transcription. The notes and debrief for the Texas focus group were analyzed instead. Analysis consisted of two NCFH research staff conducting card sorting together for thematic analysis.

Common Sources of Health Information



Participants in Colorado and Michigan agreed that the most common source of health information is the internet, with common sites mentioned being Facebook and YouTube. Texas participants stated they found health information through "a little bit of everything" including in-person sources such as posters and discussions with other people. Every group discussed that they had issues with disinformation or challenges in understanding of what or who to believe regarding health information online. When asked what sources of information were more trustworthy, participants discussed what they described as more formal sources such as the radio, brochures, and audiovisual materials. Participants in Colorado discussed in depth the advantages the radio had in reaching rural populations. Another Colorado participant countered that the number of consistent listeners of radio may be small.

“¿También a las redes sociales, pero cómo confiar en las redes sociales?”// “As well as social media, but how do you trust social media?” - Gratiot County Worker

“Es mejor folletos visual, creo que son la mejor manera de subir información y entenderlos.”//

“Visual brochures are the best, I believe they are the best way to distribute information and understand them.”- Weld County Worker

Participants in Texas stated that they found person-to-person (printed) materials were more effective than online sources. Participants in Michigan noted that they often searched for medical information directly online such as what pills to take for what illness, the dosage, etc. Michigan participants discussed as well that they would discuss medical issues with family in their home country for their advice.

“Lo que uno busca normalmente es ¿Qué pastilla puedo tomar? ¿Qué no se puede tomar y cuál y cuánto es la cantidad, o sea, la dosis?” // “What one usually searches for is, what pills can I take? What can I not take and which and what quantity, or more like, the dosage?” – Gratiot County Worker

“También la ventaja de la radio es que llega a lugares lejos más rurales y gratis”// “Also the advantage of the radio is it reaches rural far-off places and it’s free” - Weld County Worker

“Creo que la radio también puede llegar a ser un medio de comunicación muy, muy bueno, porque estoy de acuerdo que vivimos en un mundo que ya es moderno y digitalizado. Todo está en Internet, pero hay personas que desconocen el uso del Internet. ¿Entonces las fuentes, como la radio, son fuentes este más accesibles a este grupo de personas? Eso puede ayudar a que ellos se puedan enterar de la información.” // “I think that radio can also become a very, very



good means of communication, because I agree that we live in a world that is already modern and digitized. Everything is on the Internet, but there are people who do not know how to use the Internet. So sources such as radio are more accessible to this group of people? That can help them to find out the information they need.” – *Weld County Worker*

“¿Cuántos todavía siguen escuchando la radio? Para mí, pues podríamos decir que ya es un medio bastante obsoleto. Yo sí la escucho. ¿Por qué? Porque mi trabajo me lo permite para no aburrirme.” // “How many still listen to the radio? In my opinion, well, we could say that it is already a rather obsolete medium. I do listen to it, why? Because my job allows me to do so, so I don't get bored.” – Weld County Worker

Regarding Indigenous languages, participants in Colorado stated that information should be made available in the preferred languages to those who need such information. Five bilingual speakers of K'iche and Spanish were participants in the Texas focus group, and they stated that they preferred health information in Spanish. However, since the group was mixed with Indigenous and mestizo workers that may have affected how the Indigenous workers responded to this question.

“Lo importante aquí es la información que se tiene que transmitir y que sea entendible para la persona a la que tiene que llegar ese.” // “The important thing here is the information that has to be distributed and that it is understandable for the person to whom it has to reach.” – Weld County Worker

Audio PSA

The 90 second audio PSA covered flu symptoms, actions to prevent the spread of flu, vaccination, and the hotline for NCFH's "Una Voz Para la Salud" to find a vaccination site. Participants in Michigan and Colorado evaluated the PSA with favorable remarks. All participants understood the PSA and its messages, with a few Colorado participants preferring the PSA to the fotonovela. In Michigan, a participant noted that the audio PSA states "gripe" or flu but does not specify which type; whereas it is common for Spanish speakers to state "gripe estacional" or seasonal flu if that is the type discussed. Participants in Colorado and Michigan repeated the importance of the "Una Voz Para la Salud" phone number to access services.

“Pues yo creo que la intención ahí es de que uno esté prevenido. Decía de las cosas que pueden sentir.” // “Well I think that the intention there is that one is in the look out. It said the things [symptoms] that one may feel..” - Gratiot County Worker



“Los números de teléfono para comunicarse y atenderse. Pues son mejores.” // “The telephone numbers to get in touch with someone and be served. Well these are best.” Weld County Worker

“Lo que digo es que sí exactamente es que es confuso, entonces puede ser confuso. Por ejemplo, en México dice gripe estacional.”// “What I’m saying is that exactly it’s confusing, therefore it can be confusing. For example, in Mexico they say ‘seasonal flu’.” - Gratiot County Worker

Fotonovela

The four-page fotonovela covered long COVID-19 symptoms, vaccination to prevent COVID-19, and urged readers to access medical services if they believe they have long COVID. Each page contained the “Una Voz Para la Salud” service phone number. Colorado and Texas participants evaluated the fotonovela. The majority of Colorado participants evaluated the fotonovela favorably, noting that the material discussed long COVID symptoms and a phone line to discuss symptoms and access services. Many of the Colorado participants emphasized the phone line and its ability to connect people with health services. One Colorado participant had issue with the dialogue in the fotonovela stating that they found it confusing. Two Colorado participants discussed how they would prefer if the phone line was given at the beginning and end of the fotonovela rather than on every page. Texas participants preferred the flyer they evaluated over the fotonovela due to its simplicity and straightforwardness. Only one Colorado participant preferred the fotonovela over the audio PSA, as they found the fotonovela more practical and imaginative.

“Yo creo que también tiene que ver que tal vez si nos enfermamos de gripa y tenemos dudas y eso un COVID prolongado que hay líneas o lugares donde pueda uno resolver sus dudas.” // “I believe as well that it has to do with maybe if we get sick from flu and we have doubts that it is long COVID that there are phone numbers or places where one can resolve their doubts.” – Weld County Worker

“Al hecho de decir ‘Ay, porque no tengo dinero, mejor no, no me acerco y no me informo’, entonces creo que sí. También habla sobre ello al respecto de qué es importante que nos acerquemos a los profesionales de la salud para que nos puedan dar una orientación más precisa sobre COVID.” // , “The fact that people say ‘ Ay, because I don’t have money, I’d better not, I don’t go to the doctor and I don’t get informed’, so I think so. [The fotonovela] also talks about how it is important for us to approach health professionals so that they can give us more precise guidance about COVID.” – Weld County Worker



Flyer

The one-page flyer covered COVID-19 vaccinations for children six months and older, the side effects of the vaccine and their normalcy, the usefulness of vaccination, and that vaccinations are free. The flyer also contained the phone number for Una Voz Para la Salud and a QR code for scanning. Participants in Michigan and Texas evaluated the flyer. Key takeaways from the flyer material in Michigan were the phone number to call, the side effects of the vaccine, and that vaccinations are free. Participants in Texas greatly preferred the flyer over the fotonovela due to its straightforwardness and greater amount of information, and the information was easier to find as compared to the fotonovela. Two Michigan participants preferred the flyer due to the QR code presenting more information and the overall amount of information contained in the flyer.

“Lo más importante siempre es saber una explicación previa de por qué se está vacunando.... y también los efectos que tiene esta vacuna o que puede llegar a tener.”// “Always, the most important to know is an explanation of why people are being vaccinated...and also the symptoms that can happen after the vaccine.” - Gratiot County Worker

General Feedback on Materials

A common topic of praise from participants across the groups was the presence of the “Una Voz Para la Salud” phone line throughout the materials. Colorado participants specifically stated that after reviewing the materials they would take advantage of the ability to ask health questions through the phone line. Michigan participants stated that they found the materials important for employers, colleagues, and other community members to have. A Michigan participant stated that it increased the protection of everybody and trust in those distributing materials. Texas participants also discussed how they preferred printed graphic material that can be discussed in person for general health information.

General critiques of the materials were sparse but specific. A participant in Colorado pushed for more video materials due to their perceived effectiveness. Texas participants pushed for more information regarding the COVID vaccine whether through video or QR codes where one could access the information. Multiple Michigan participants found the timing of the materials unsatisfactory, specifically critiquing as to why these materials were not present earlier. One Michigan participant also discussed how after reviewing the vaccine materials it seemed as if the secondary side effects were more than the diseases’ effects therefore, they chose not to vaccinate.



“Sí hubo algo que no me gustó - porque a esta hora y no antes.”// “Yes, there was something I didn't like - why at this time and not earlier.” – Gratiot County Worker

“En el sentido de que en la fotonovela se habló de COVID y en el audio se habló de la gripe, es importante que el mensaje sea congruente para que no se malinterpreten.” // “In the sense that in the photo-novella they talked about COVID and in the audio they talked about the flu, it is important that the message is congruent so that it is not misinterpreted.” – Weld County Worker

“Yo creo que de que existen líneas gratuitos donde podemos consultar. Es que es lo importante de los dos materiales para mi.” // “I think that free phone lines exist that we can consult. That is the most important from the two materials in my opinion.” – Weld County Worker

“Creo que todo está bien, pero hay un cuando envías un mensaje por video creo que esta más completo. O sea, ya tienes tienes una parte de lo que puedes leer, ves, tienes una parte, que puedes escuchar, ahora que alguien te explique otra vez por video ¿creo el mensaje sería más concreto, mas bien que les complementa.” // “I think everything is fine, but when you send a message by video I think it is more complete. I mean, you already have a part of what you can read, you see, you have a part, that you can listen to, now to have someone explain it again by video. I think the message would be more concrete; I think it complements them.” – Weld County Worker

Desired Vaccine Information and Dissemination Mechanisms

Participants in Colorado discussed at length the information they would to have during a vaccination campaign. Participants noted information such as what the vaccine prevents, side effects, active ingredients, efficacy of the vaccine, and if farmworkers require any extra steps of prevention. Participants also noted having this information given ahead of time before the actual application of the vaccine was preferred, rather than during the application. Texas participants also emphasized the importance of explaining side effects of vaccines, and wanting to understand how effective the vaccine is, and how long it is effective.

Participants between the Colorado and Michigan focus groups commented on the dissemination of health information in farmworker communities. For example, Michigan participants noted the importance of phone numbers to call for accessible and reliable health information. Another Michigan participant also discussed the effectiveness of short videos on health information, they specifically noted videos of 2-minute length or shorter. Colorado participants discussed how, especially for those in rural areas, health information should be accessible, easy to understand, as well as easy to translate.



“Que sí debe la información que se pueden entregar a las personas del ámbito rural, debe de ser lo más digerible posible en todos los sentidos, visual fácil de comprender, fácil de interpretar y que no le cueste trabajo ni le de fuerza analizarlo que están, lo que se está tratando de decir en ese sentido.” // “The information that can be given to people in rural areas should be as digestible as possible in all senses, easy to understand, easy to interpret and that it is not difficult for them to analyze what they are trying to say in that sense.” – Weld County Worker

“Porque imagínese, tengo toda la información, todo, todo, pero no tengo una dirección o un número de teléfono o una página. Creo que no me sirve de mucho . ¿Cambio, si tengo un número de teléfono, puedo llamar.” // “Because imagine, I have all the information, everything, everything, but I don’t have an address or a phone number or a page. I don’t think it serves me much. But if I have a phone number, I can call.” – Gratiot County Worker

“Por lo que veo aquí, parece que la vacuna me da más más sufrimiento que el mismo, la misma enfermedad.... Siento que al leer esto me di cuenta que es más de lo que me da normalmente.” // “From what I see here, it seems that the vaccine gives me more suffering than the disease itself...I feel that when I read this I realized that it is more than what I normally get.” – Gratiot County Worker

Working Conditions & Regulations

Discussions regarding health information and its accessibility diverged into a discussion about working conditions and regulations in both Colorado and Michigan focus groups. Colorado participants discussed how often if one colleague were to get sick, the sickness would spread to everybody working with that colleague. Similarly, in Michigan, participants discussed how colleagues would often work while ill because there is not a guarantee of continued work if someone must take absence due to sickness. In Colorado, the conversation turned to comparisons between the U.S. and Mexico in the standard of care for workers in those countries. A Colorado participant discussed how there is a department for health and safety in Mexican companies of all sizes, which is not found in the U.S. Both Colorado and Michigan participants discussed how they would prefer changes in working conditions such as paid sick leave, a guarantee of work after sick leave, and more health and safety information given by the businesses. Colorado participants discussed how it would be ideal for businesses to deliver health information to their workers.

“Primero los jefes y ellos se encargarán de informarnos. Y todo eso sería lo ideal, pero ideal.” // “First the bosses and they will take care of informing us. And all that would be ideal, but ideal.” – Weld County Worker



“Sí, injustamente la parte que dice el compañero no hay días de descanso ¿Que padre sería que nos pagaran esos días?” // “Yes, unfairly, the part that the colleague says there are no rest days. What a great thing it would be if we were paid for those days?” – Gratiot County Worker

Lo ideal es que sí. Que nos enfermamos tuviéramos días de descanso. Por tanto, nos pagaron. Y que al fin nos regresamos.” // “The ideal is yes. That when we get sick we have days off and for all of them we got paid and at the end we could return.” – Gratiot County Worker

“Platicaba un poco más sobre cómo es la estrategia de las empresas mexicanas, independientemente qué tan chico, qué tan chico es o qué tan grande es, pero siempre hay un área de seguridad y salud.”// “I was talking a little bit more about how the strategy of Mexican companies is, regardless of how small, how small it is or how big it is, but there is always an area of safety and health.” – Weld County Worker

Sí, pues lo que he visto durante el tiempo que he trabajado acá muchas veces...Enfermedad y entonces, pues todos empiezan a enfermarse y ahí va y hasta que salga la enfermedad.” // “Yes, well what I have seen during my time working here many times...sickness and then, well everybody starts getting sick and there it goes till the sickness leaves.” – Weld County Worker

Conclusion & Recommendations

Based on the responses from participants all health educational materials mediums, video, print or audio, were well received. However, each medium has different uses. For example, printed materials are an easy way to distribute information to participants specially if “on-the-go” outreach is conducted, while PSAs and videos are beneficial because they provide auditory or visual cues, and can provide more details but may have limited range. These three formats were seen as trustworthy to workers, compared to social media messaging which many mentioned is hard for them to discern which information to trust in social platforms. One key aspect to keep any of these materials effective for workers is short and straightforward messaging.

For future material evaluations it may be best to not use materials that talk about different diseases. For this evaluation, materials that talked about COVID-19, COVID-19 vaccine, flu and flu vaccination were used. At times some of the workers expressed confusion because they thought the materials were related to each other. However, these discussions did provide understanding for better health education material development by health officials and outreach educators.



One of the main objectives of these discussions were to understand how these materials influence vaccine uptake practices in workers. From the discussion, vaccine educational materials need to provide more comprehensive information about the vaccine. In general, workers expressed the need for these materials to better lay out the functionality of the vaccine. Knowing the purpose and what disease it will provide protection for needs to be there, but they expressed that materials that included information on the efficacy of the vaccines would be better. Vaccine materials should also state the side effects from such vaccines as well as the list of ingredients or components present in the vaccine. It is important for these messages to include any precautions or tips that are specific to agricultural working conditions.

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