



# AgConnections

AGRICULTURAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

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NIOSH Agricultural Research Centers Update

**Collaborate:** to work together, esp. on work of an intellectual nature (New Webster's Dictionary, 1995)

As the Agriculture Centers Initiative has evolved, the Centers have been encouraged to engage in multi-disciplinary research, bridge the traditional agricultural safety and health work with public health perspectives, as well as to move research findings into practice through intervention and education activities. A key objective for the Centers is to "Develop linkages and communication with other governmental and non-governmental bodies involved in agricultural health and safety with special emphasis on communication with other CDC/NIOSH-sponsored agricultural health and safety programs."

From 1997 through 2001, with support from NIOSH, the Centers all participated in a project to standardize reporting of activities that respond to objectives for the Agricultural Centers initiatives.

Formal collaborative relationships have been established between the Centers and constituent organizations and between individual Centers. The vast number of collaborative partners reported through this process was organized into categories. Samples of specific partners are indicated here to demonstrate the variety of organizations that maintain an active role in the safety and health of agricultural workers.

*continued on page 3*

## AGROTERRORISM WORKSHOP: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR COLLABORATION

It is a privilege for the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention, and Education to host AgConnections, the newsletter for the NIOSH Centers Initiative. As we reflect on the purpose of such a newsletter and on its very title, the theme of this issue, "Collaborations," is entirely appropriate. In an attempt to build capacity, create awareness, and focus on reducing those factors which pose a risk to agricultural workers, it seems clear that collaboration is and should be a central premise to success. I am pleased to illustrate the value of such collaboration with a topic of current interest and importance throughout the nation.

In 2003, the NIOSH Southwest Center at The University of Texas Health Center at Tyler received a conference grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop a workshop on agroterrorism that would truly engage local community leaders in preparing for and responding to a terrorist event involving the food supply. With support of this grant and in-kind contributions, this workshop was held on February 12, 2004.

The workshop was an effective collaboration between two NIOSH Ag Centers, the state department of health and regional offices (Texas), a school of public health, and the Texas Agricultural Research and Extension Centers in five locations with substantial agricultural production. In order to reach a diverse and geographically widespread

audience, the workshop was conducted by synchronous two-way interactive televideo (linking 9 sites). The audience included over 200 extension agents, public safety personnel, veterinarians, sanitarians, health care providers, and other public health officials; speakers connected from around the state and across the nation. The workshop design involved breakout sessions that engaged the audience.

The Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health was a welcome partner in this collaborative workshop. Center Director Dr. Wayne Sanderson commented that he "learned a great deal preparing for the workshop and even more from the other presenters."

Since the workshop on February 12<sup>th</sup>, preliminary dis-

ussions have taken place with the High Plains Intermountain Center to add a forum on this topic at the 2004 National Symposium on Agricultural Health and Safety in Keystone, Colorado. The value of such collaboration among Centers, and between Centers and their constituencies, is and will be to reach a broad base of community members who might be on the "front lines" of an agroterrorism episode. A key goal is to enhance communication and planning among involved groups for effectively detecting and addressing such public health events. This is the very nature of outreach and education which the Ag Center Initiative has undertaken as part of its critical mission. AgConnections is but one tool for achieving such a collaborative effort.



Jeffrey L. Levin, M.D., MSPH Director  
SW Center for Agriculture Health,  
Injury Prevention and Education.



## Timber Medic Certification Project

*Susan Gustke MD, Director, Southern Coastal Agricultural Center and Mr. Doug Duncan, NC Forestry Association*

Many logging operators have horror stories of co-workers trapped under felled trees or caught in logging equipment. Logging is considered the nation's most dangerous occupation. Injuries are often severe and rescue is often difficult. To quote Dr. Juan March, emergency physician at East Carolina University, "EMTs are really good at cutting people out of cars – but their cutting tools are pretty useless when dealing with logging equipment and felled trees." The first hour is critical, and EMTs need to be familiar with the logging scene and trained to work with the loggers and the logging equipment at the injury site.

In an effort to improve logging injury outcomes, the Southern Coastal Agromedicine Center (SCAC), in collaboration with the North Carolina Forestry Association, implemented an innovative Timber Medic Certification program currently being delivered through the NC Community College System. A unique aspect of Timber Medic training is hands-on training at active logging sites. EMTs learn to work with loggers using logging equipment to aid the rescue. Thanks to the enthusiasm and involvement of the NC Forestry Association in both development and promotion of the project, Timber Medic Training will become self-sustaining in NC this year. One hundred fifty-one EMTs have been certified so far. SCAC plans to expand Timber Medic into VA and SC where the program will receive support from the VA Logging Association and the SC forestry Association working with the NC Forestry Association.

*Contacts: Susan Gustke MD, Director of the SCAC (252-744-1000) or Mr. Doug Duncan, NC Forestry Association (919-834-3943).*



## Conference Reflects Unique Partnership

*HI-CAHS*

The High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (HICAHS) is pleased to announce the 2004 National Symposium on Agricultural Health and Safety. With the theme "Creating Partnerships across Multiple Disciplines" the conference will take place June 20-24, 2004 at Keystone, Colorado. The symposium is presented by the NIOSH Agricultural Health & Safety Centers, North American Agromedicine Consortium and National Institute for Farm Safety. This is the first such collaborative effort among these three organizations. The conference is multi-disciplinary covering the broad spectrum of agricultural health and safety. Topics at the Keystone Symposium will include: Agroterrorism, Farmers and Migrant Farmworkers, Surveillance and Health Care Provision, Occupational Diseases, Tractors, Ergonomics, Respiratory Disease, Toxicology and Pesticide Programs, Agricultural Youth, Farm Vehicles and Machinery, and Health and Safety Education. The deadline for early registration is April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Conference registration and more information is available at [www.hicahs.colostate.edu](http://www.hicahs.colostate.edu) or contact [Angi.Buchanan@cahs.colostate.edu](mailto:Angi.Buchanan@cahs.colostate.edu). Hope to see you in the beautiful Colorado Mountains!

## Collaboration for Community Health Intervention

*Pacific Northwest Center*

The Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (PNASH) is working with a rich mix of community groups to develop strategies enabling Hispanic, farm workers in Washington's Yakima Valley to respond to the many occupational and environmental risks they face. The Northwest Communities Education Center/Radio KDNA, a community-based nonprofit organization and Spanish language public radio station, is leading outreach. Heritage College is the training site and field research home. The Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic will produce clinical protocols and guidelines on occupational and environmental health concerns. One anticipated, lasting benefit of this project is sustainable partnerships between community organizations, the Yakima Valley Hispanic community, and University of Washington scientists. (This project is supported by a CDC/NIEHS Environmental Justice grant #1R25OH008143.)

## External Partners Enrich Center Work

Wayne Sanderson, Ph.D., CIH,  
Great Plains Center

“Health Tracking of Musculoskeletal Disorders Among Iowa Farmers” is a study that compares what is known about musculoskeletal problems among manufacturing workers with a population of 853 dairy farmers in Northeast Iowa. Solutions for alleviating work-related symptoms in manufacturing, such as job-rotation, may not be feasible in the dairy industry. The investigators, John C. Rosecrance, PT, Ph.D., Colorado State University, and Daniel Anton, PhD, The University of Iowa, think that the repetitiveness of tasks in dairy farming is amenable to changing equipment or methods to reduce physical stress.

Work with The National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) is another example of Great Plains Center collaboration to expand dissemination of a successful intervention. NECAS is adapting the Certified Safe Farms program for implementation with dairy farms.

## Agricultural Centers



### Other Center News

■ **The Northeast Center** is continuing with very active collaborations involving migrant health programs across the Northeast. One project partners us with clinics to form injury prevention and intervention committees of farmworkers and farm owners. The study involves onion harvesters in NY and blueberry workers in Maine. In another study NEC is collaborating with New York apple growers and an ergonomic team from Penn State University to investigate ways of reducing neck, shoulder and back injuries during the apple harvest.

■ **The Great Lakes Center** sponsored a conference for agricultural health and safety educators, professionals, and researchers on March 15-16—“Improving Agricultural Health and Safety Programs Through Evaluation: Rigorous and Practical Strategies”. National experts shared theory, methods, and experience to help answer the questions, “do our agricultural health and safety programs really work?” and “how can we do a better job at evaluating our programs?”

■ **Western Center** In the spirit of achievement and advancement through cooperation, the Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (WCAHS) and the Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health (PNASH) Center have agreed to co-sponsor an annual conference. Nearly 100 participants discovered their common ground at the first conference, in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho - September 2002. It was titled “Cultivating Collaborations: Health and Safety in Western Agriculture”. The event last September, “Challenges in Agricultural Health and Safety,” attracted 120 participants from 13 American states and Australia. This year’s conference hosted by the PNASH center, will convene in Portland, Oregon, Sept. 12-14, 2004. Details will be available in late spring on the PNASH Web site at <http://depts.washington.edu/pnash/>, and the WCAHS Web site at <http://agcenter.ucdavis.edu/>.

*Collaboration,  
continued from page 1*

*This list is a sample and not meant to be an all-inclusive list.*

#### Agribusinesses

Tropicana, Cargill

#### Agricultural Organizations

SENSOR, NIOSH  
Community Partners Projects,  
Agricultural Statistical  
Services

#### Agricultural Organizations for Children

FFA, 4-H clubs, Farm Safety  
4 Just Kids; SAFE Kids  
Coalition, National  
Children’s Center for Rural &  
Agricultural Health and  
Safety

#### Community Organizations

Area Agency for Aging,  
Migrant Services  
Consortium, Farm Partners,  
Area Health Education  
Centers

#### Cooperative Extension Service

Navajo Nation, County and  
District offices

#### Equipment Dealers

Barren & Fleming Counties,  
KY, John Deere

#### Government Agencies

National Center for Health  
Statistics, U.S. Dept. of  
Labor, Health Canada;

#### Health Care Providers

MORE HEALTH, Suncoast  
Community Health Centers

#### Health Departments

Many State, Regional, and  
County

#### Insurance Companies

AR Farm Bureau, Wellmark

#### Media

Radio KDNA, Uzzell  
Advertising; Progressive  
Farmer

#### NIOSH

Work Organization and  
Stress Research Section

#### Producer/Grower

UNISEA; Powell’s Plant Farm

#### Research Organizations

Center for Rural Studies; NC  
Institute for Health & Safety,  
Schools

#### Trade Associations

National Center for  
Farmworker Health, TX  
Nursery & Landscape Assn.

#### University Academic

Departments

#### University Research Centers

#### University Institute

## Working Together to Deliver Services

Robert McKnight, Sc.D., Center Director, Southeast Center

The Southeast Center and the Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (KY DVR) are partnering to ensure that migrant and seasonal farm workers with disabilities receive culturally competent services. Dr. Robert McKnight (College of Medicine) and Dr. Ralph Crystal (College of Education) are co – PIs on the project. The main goal of the project is to design, implement, and evaluate a partnership model between the university and the KY DVR. This model is a cooperative effort to deliver services to migrant and seasonal farm workers. Staff from the KY DVR participate in monthly training sessions to facilitate their interactions with the migrant farm worker population. The five year project goal is to serve 500 migrant and seasonal farm workers. Currently in year four, 250 farm workers have been referred into the program. The project is staffed by a group of outreach workers from all over Latin America. The outreach workers have all become trained medical interpreters and have received training in aspects of cultural competency. This grant is funded by the US Department of Education.

Agricultural Research Center Initiative Centers funded as of October 1, 2003

### Great Lakes Center for Agricultural Safety and Health

Ohio State University  
590 Woody Hays Drive  
Columbus, OH 43210  
(614) 292-9455

Center Director: Thomas Bean, EdD

### Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health

100 Oakdale Campus, #124 AMRF  
The University of Iowa  
Iowa City, IA 52242-5000  
(319) 335-4887

Center Director: Wayne Sanderson, PhD, CIH

### High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health & Safety

154 B Environmental Health Bldg.  
Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1681  
(970) 491-6151

Center Director: Steve Reynolds, PhD, CIH

### Northeast Center for Agricultural Safety & Health

One Atwell Road  
Cooperstown, NY 13326  
(607) 547-6023

Center Director: John May, MD

### Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety & Health Center

Department of Environmental Health  
Box 357234  
University of Washington  
Seattle, WA 981543-1452

Center Director: Richard Fenske, PhD, MPH

### Southeast Center for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention

Department of Preventive Medicine  
University of Kentucky  
1141 Red Mile Road, Suite 102  
Lexington, KY 40504-9842  
(859) 323-6836

Center Director: Robert McKnight, MPH, ScD

### Southern Coastal Agromedicine Center

East Carolina University  
West Research Bldg., 1157 VOA Site C Road  
Greenville, NC 27858  
(252) 744-1000

Center Director: Susan S. Gustke, MD

### Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention, & Education—The University of Texas Health Center at Tyler

11937 U. S. Hwy. 271  
Tyler, TX 75708-3154  
(903) 877-5896

Center Director: Jeffrey L. Levin, MD, MSPH

### Western Center for Agricultural Health & Safety

University of California  
One Shields Avenue  
Davis, CA 95616  
(530) 752-4050

Center Director: Marc Schenker, MD, MPH

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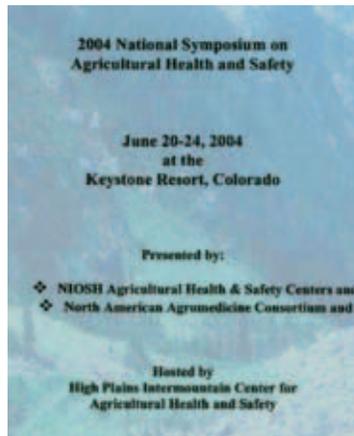
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## LATEST CATCH HOT TOPICS



Host partners for the 2004 National Symposium are: **The High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (HI-CAHS)**, created in 1991 at the University of Colorado by NIOSH, HI-CAHS targets research, intervention and education activities in Public Health Service Region VIII. The **North American Agromedicine Consortium (NAAC)**

<http://www.agromedien.org> is an affiliation (since 1998) of faculty representing schools of agriculture, life sciences, family and consumer sciences, medicine, nursing, veterinary medicine, agribusiness, governmental agencies and others to encourage agricultural safety, rural health, and the practice of rural medicine. The **National Institute for Farm Safety (NIFS)** [http:// www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~agsafety/NIFS/nifs.htm](http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~agsafety/NIFS/nifs.htm) is dedicated to the professional development of agricultural safety and health professionals; it provides national and international leadership in preventing injuries and illnesses in agricultural communities.

## LOGGING IN VALUABLE RESOURCES

This is not meant to be an all-inclusive listing. Suggestions for websites, videos, books, and articles related to agricultural health and safety are invited.

### Safety Education Resources for Youth:

The Iowa Extension Service has developed a safety publication for youth ages 8-14 to supplement and reinforce information gained during farm safety day camps. Check it out at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pubs/sa.htm> scroll down to PM 1877 for the series of lessons.

### Tractor and Machinery Virtual Classroom [www.tmvc.iastate.edu](http://www.tmvc.iastate.edu)

**The TOOLBOX** – agricultural tools, equipment, machinery, and building for farmers and ranchers with physical disabilities is now available on CD. The TOOLBOX was created by the *Breaking New Ground Resource Center* at Purdue University. The cost per CD is \$25, call 1-800-825-4264 for ordering details.

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