What are our priorities?

The Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (CS-CASH) is one of 11 agricultural education, research and prevention centers funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. CS-CASH completed its first cooperative agreement period (2011-2016) and entered the second (2016-2021) with new research projects. CS-CASH works with partners in industry, labor, trade associations, professional organizations, and academia, focusing on the following areas:

- Protecting the hearing and respiratory health of agricultural workers.
- Improving the safety and health of workers in the livestock industry.
- Reducing the risk of serious traumatic injuries among farmers, ranchers and their family members.

What do we do?

Conduct research to:

- Understand the incidence, risk factors and sources of agricultural injuries through yearly surveillance, and translate the findings into practical prevention measures.
- Reduce injury and fatality rates of workers in cattle production by improving worker safety training practices and distributing educational materials in collaboration with feedyards and the insurance industry.
- Disseminate information on prevention of respiratory, hearing and injury risks to agricultural workers and their families via face-to-face and electronic outreach methods.

What have we accomplished?

- Identified previously unknown processes that occur during recovery from agricultural dust-induced inflammation. A biological factor in reducing inflammation following exposure to dust has been identified and is being tested.
- Partnered with feedyards in Nebraska and Kansas to conduct face-to-face surveys to determine the health status and occupational risks among Latino immigrant cattle feedyard workers.
- Assessed hazards on ten tribal bison handling sites. Meetings with herd managers have resulted in notable improvements in equipment and bison handling techniques.
- Published 33 peer reviewed publications between September 2016 and August 2017, including an article on knowledge, attitudes, and practices for respiratory and hearing health among Midwestern farmers.
- Awarded seven community and research pilot grants in 2017, bringing the Center’s 6-year total to 33 awards. These grants address a wide range of agricultural safety and health concerns, including emerging issues.
- Collaborated with Nebraska Extension to provide tractor safety certification training to over 100 young farmers in 2017.

What’s next?

- Improve approaches to treatment and prevention of respiratory disease in affected workers.
- Assist tribal and non-tribal bison producers in implementing best practices and employing effective training to enhance bison worker safety.
- Develop, disseminate and evaluate the effectiveness of bilingual (English/Spanish) health and safety training, educational and policy materials for cattle feedyard operations. Enhance injury surveillance and extend it to include alternative, innovative surveillance methods using 'big data'.
- Develop outreach safety and health “toolkits” for women and military veterans in agriculture, and provide education and training through webinars and face-to-face meetings.