



# **THE SOUTHWEST CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH, INJURY PREVENTION, and EDUCATION**

## **Annual Report to NIOSH Cooperative Agreement: U50 OH07541-9 FISCAL YEAR 2010\***

(\*September 30, 2009 - September 29, 2010)

**December 22, 2010**

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention, and Education (SW Ag Center) continued a high level of research, education and outreach activities in this fourth year of the current funding cycle with eleven (11) peer reviewed publications, nine (9) trade association articles and one hundred fourteen (114) outreach activities that reached 68,400 target audience members. In addition, the SW Ag Center is finalizing enduring materials addressing commercial navigation safety, animal handling safety for 1) young adults and 2) inexperienced producers. Drs. Nonnenmann and Levin served as editors for a special issue of the Journal of Agromedicine dedicated to commercial fishing.

The annual board meeting was hosted by external advisory board member Chuck Tucker, Director of Member Services for the AR Farm Bureau. The convened meeting, attended by external and internal advisory board members, PIs and staff reviewed project updates, discussed progress on the Center's strategic plan and explored priorities for future work. Forestry sector stakeholder George Lease arranged a site visit to an active logging site hosted by Talbert Logging Company. This work site visit helped the board appreciate the nature and organization of logging work, industry challenges and gaps in information to reduce injury risks for loggers and logging truckers. Additionally, individual external board members participated in various activities on behalf of the center as well as providing guidance and recommendations for future directions. Routine and frequent interaction has been maintained with members of the internal advisory team using a virtual meeting platform as well as conference calls. New partnerships have been established and expanded with regional industry sectors particularly with logging/forestry, dairy, poultry, commercial fishing and the hired workers in those sectors.

Progress has been made to advance each objective from the Center's regional strategic plan. A work group comprised of external advisory board members and other strategic partners will be named at the fall virtual meeting to identify emerging issues, update regional priorities, and guide the efforts to update the strategic plan for discussion/ratification at the annual in-person meeting later in the year.

An Administrative Supplement proposal was submitted to NIOSH in March and awarded in July. Substantial progress was made on that proposed scope of work. Although it was not possible to convene the work group to address agroterrorism preparedness before the end of the fiscal year, it is planned to convene that group in the spring of 2011 in order to move forward with the Center's role to contribute to this important issue.

Each RO1 type research projects achieved timeline targets despite some unanticipated challenges. Dr. Eva Shipp, Co-PI for the Migrant Adolescent Farmworker study relocated to the TAMU School of Rural Public Health over the summer; she continued with scheduled project work to assure all deadlines were met. The Deep Horizon Oil Spill significantly curtailed commercial fishing in the Gulf of Mexico off the Louisiana Coast. The intermediate and long-term effect on the shrimping industry is unknown. However, project stakeholders in Louisiana and Texas and fishermen involved with the project maintain their connections with the Vietnamese commercial fishing community. These partners continue to share updates and recommendations for timing of activities to assure that the sponsored research project moves forward.

Promoviendo Farmworker Safety – Project FRESCO continued progress on schedule to prepare and pilot test heat stress prevention as an intervention strategy disseminated by promotores. The extreme heat in the southern U.S. and heat related deaths underscore the importance of this effort to protect all agricultural workers.

The Navajo Nation continues on target with the Model Farmers project to help provide educational support for effective pesticide and integrated pest management use to protect water quality, reduce risk

for worker exposures, and promote agricultural production.

Seven feasibility/pilot projects received support during this fiscal year; 5 were completed and submitted final reports, two are ongoing. Each pilot project was submitted for internal review and scoring according to the process outlined for the management of the program and with consideration of the contribution to advance the Center's strategic plan.

Outreach and education activities spanned the five states of the region. Topical emphasis included Tractor Safety Certification for Youth, Heat Stress prevention and treatment, pesticide and farm chemical safety, field first aid for Bites, Stings and Venomous Things. The SW Ag Center staff has remained stable and a half-time position was filled to assist with coordination of outreach/education efforts and dissemination of materials.

The SW Ag Center was pleased to have the opportunity to share research updates from sponsored projects at the ASHCA conference, the NIOSH/Houston ERC sponsored Border Partners conference in El Paso, and the NIOSH sponsored Latino Summit in Houston.

Collaborative relationships continue with the other NIOSH agricultural centers. The SW Ag Center co-hosted a regional workshop for dairy producers and industry leaders. An outgrowth of that meeting was a small project to create a safety training video in Spanish for dairy workers. The SW Ag Center made significant contributions to the database structure and data management for the ACE project in collaboration with HI-CAHS. Another collaborative effort with HI-CAHS is the project to evaluate the effectiveness of an educational intervention for 4-H youth. The SW Ag Center contributed a significant number of datasets to assure the target numbers for the project were met. This will allow the lead project team to report statistically significant findings that can be generalized to the larger population.

The SW Ag Center strives to expand funding sources beyond NIOSH. SW Ag Center partners UT School of Public Health – San Antonio and the National Center for Farmworker Health collaborated with Battelle to develop a funded proposal to create the infrastructure for data sharing across community health centers to facilitate secondary analysis by researchers.

The SW Ag Center conducted activities in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas as well as Colorado and Ohio. Materials were distributed nationally.