

## FY22 NCCRAHS Emerging Issues Program (EIP) Project Summaries

**Title:** Investigating the work, education, and health experiences of hired Latinx child farmworkers in the era of COVID-19

**Principal Investigator:** Taylor J Arnold, MA, (PhD Student)

**Organization:** Wake Forest School of Medicine; Winston-Salem, North Carolina

**Abstract:** Latinx individuals and families comprise a large proportion of the US farmworker population and have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Little is known about the specific ways in which the pandemic has impacted Latinx children who do farm work. The goal of this project is to delineate the emerging issues related to the work, education, and health experiences of the vulnerable hired Latinx child farmworker population in the era of COVID-19. By using a novel model based on the precarity and structural vulnerability of Latinx farmworkers during COVID-19, this project will: First, describe the ways in which the pandemic has influenced the working characteristics and hours of Latinx child farmworkers, and the impact of these experiences and disruptions on their education and; Second, delineate the ongoing changes to farm workplace organization, protocols, and work safety culture during the pandemic, specifically investigating how these shifting work and life changes are affecting the health and safety of Latinx child farmworkers. These goals will be accomplished through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and Latinx child farmworkers in North Carolina. Findings from this study will identify and describe these challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic on Latinx child farmworkers, yield novel evidence for educators and policymakers, aid public health professionals in addressing current disparities and prepare for future disasters, and continue a long-term community based participatory research partnership.



**Title:** Exploring the Impact of Public Health Emergencies and Disasters on the Children of Agricultural Workers in Puerto Rico

**Principal Investigator:** Marysel Pagan Santana, DrPH

**Organization:** Migrant Clinicians Network; San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Abstract:** Agricultural workers are subject to various physical, environmental, and mental stressors throughout their work and have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The current climate crisis has significantly impacted agricultural workers in Puerto Rico (PR) by creating more hostile weather patterns and a greater frequency of natural disasters, which in-turn lead to health, food, and education disparities for the children of farm worker families. This project aims to explore the health effects of public health emergencies on the children of agricultural workers and identify strategies, programs, and policies to address health impact of public health emergencies on the health of agricultural workers' children. Based on the socio-ecological model, this project will conduct interviews and focus groups with multiple stakeholders through the Migrant Clinicians Network, including medical personnel, educators, parents, and other known influencers to assess the needs and experiences of farm families, their children, and their communities. The results from this pilot study will allow the researchers to prioritize the needs of the community and identify the appropriate funding to develop and adapt programs that will address the needs and improve the health outcomes of children of agricultural workers in PR.



**Title:** Together: A Safer Home on the Farm

**Principal Investigator:** Katherine Brieger, MA, RD, CCE

**Organization:** Warwick Area Farmworker Organization, Goshen, NY

**Abstract:** Warwick Area Farmworker Organization (WAFO) formerly (Warwick Area Migrant Committee) has been serving farmworkers and their families since 1959. WAFO will utilize its strong connection and experience with farmworkers to develop a unique program focused on the strengths of this community. WAFO will be designing and delivering a program on Child Safety in Agricultural Settings for parents working on farms who live in Orange and Ulster County, New York State. The goal of this project is to develop an educational module focused on child safety in agricultural settings. The module will be focused on general safety in agricultural home settings. The Module will be part of a training program designed for use by Community Health Workers (CHWs) in informal settings which will allow for greater access to those living in agricultural settings. The materials developed for this program will consist of low literacy materials in English and Spanish which can be produced for use across the country. The program will increase knowledge of and preventative steps farmworker families can take to improve child safety in their homes.



**Title:** Environmental Health Issues Among Children Living in Imperial County

**Principal Investigator:** Nicolas Lopez-Galvez, PhD, MPH, MA

**Organization:** San Diego State University, San Diego, CA

**Abstract:** Imperial County has the highest concentration of Hispanic/Latino populations of all California and ranks last among all California counties for injury deaths, income inequality, unemployment, and children living in poverty. Children in Imperial go to the emergency room for asthma related conditions at a rate three time higher than the states' average rate and have higher overweight and obese rates than California overall. The goal of this pilot project is to determine the levels of pesticides that children living in this region might be exposed to and investigate any potential neurodevelopmental issue associated with this exposure. We propose a mixed methods exploratory assessment study to characterize and quantify pesticide exposure levels using passive samplers (silicone wristbands) and the neurobehavioral and cognitive functioning of children cohabitating with farmworkers in Imperial County. The results from this study will serve to understand the patterns of child development in this population, and it could raise important questions regarding the human health impact of the pesticides usage in Imperial County. This study will develop grassroots understanding for further studies in the area.

