

Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health

About our Center

CS-CASH - University of Nebraska Medical Center - College of Public Health

Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health Emerging Issues Projects (2016-2022)

The CS-CASH Emerging Issues Program:

- *Using media reports, the CS-CASH annual surveillance survey and government databases, CS-CASH researchers examine trends and identify emerging issues affecting the health and safety of farmers, ranchers, family members and agricultural workers.*
- *Responds to identified emerging issues without delay by investigating the problems and solutions and communicating preventive information to the affected populations and stakeholders. CS-CASH prepares and delivers coordinated, evidence-based responses to identified emerging issues.*
- **The program funds small grants to outside entities who can respond quickly to emerging issues. Proposals can be submitted at any time. The Center Director and the Pilot Projects Program team evaluate the proposals and issue expedited funding decisions.**

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Examples of Emerging Issue Program and Projects

COVID Resources Created

Creation and dissemination of COVID-19 Pandemic Playbooks for feedyards and poultry-grower industries in collaboration with the UNMC Global Center for Health Security (GCHS).

In response to the need for guidance for the prevention of COVID-19 in the feedyard and poultry industries, CS-CASH and the GCHS collaborated to create two comprehensive guides for these industries covering topics from re-engineering workspace to personal protective equipment². As time was of the essence, resources were created and disseminated using the CS-CASH extensive industry email and postal mail databases with delivery to 687 poultry growers and 376 feedyards.

Development of COVID-19 informational series of webinars for rural healthcare providers and agricultural stakeholders.

In collaboration with the AgriSafe Network, CS-CASH developed and sponsored a 9-part COVID-19 educational webinar series³. To provide accurate and timely information to rural healthcare providers and the agricultural community, CS-CASH and AgriSafe brought together content experts to create weekly webinars on topics from basic virology to hygiene in agricultural settings. There were 1097 total attendees to the 9-week series. These webinars are now maintained on the AgriSafe website as enduring resources.

COVID-19 Resources for Agricultural Communities. CS-CASH developed and maintained an electronic resource site on the CS-CASH website. This site was updated weekly from April – December 2020⁴.

Creation of Train the Trainer Fit-Testing Workshops and Train the Trainer Fit-Testing Guide.



In response to a lack of personnel qualified to conduct fit testing for pesticide applicators (to meet new Worker Protection Standards), for OSHA ag industry respiratory programs, and workers requiring N-95 respirator use during the COVID-19 pandemic, a Train the Trainer Fit-Testing Workshop and Capacity Building Guide⁵ were developed in partnership with the Ag Safety and Health Alliance. These resources, targeted to Public Health, health care, safety professionals, and Extension educators, provide the hands-on training, information, and resources needed to conduct respiratory fit testing in agricultural communities. Training includes education on integrating fit testing into an organization’s business model. The workshop and guide have been evaluated and used in training and courses throughout the Midwest.

Flood Response

2019 Midwest Flood Response. In March 2019, a bomb cyclone hit the Midwest, causing record snowfall and rain followed by rapidly warming temperatures unleashing record flooding in 5 of the CS-CASH’s 7-states regions. This event cost agricultural producers \$4.5 billion in total sales⁶. Within ten days of the flood event:

- CS-CASH members working with ag journalist Loretta Sorenson created eleven media publications designed for ag communities on topics ranging from proper PPE for clean-up to protocols for composting dead animals. Over 90 unique news organizations published these articles.
- In collaboration with UNMC and a philanthropic organization (MAP), CS-CASH coordinated the creation and dissemination of over 2800 flood mitigation response kits to agricultural communities, including over 200 kits delivered to flood-ravaged Tribal Reservations (see photos on right).
- CS-CASH members took part in many flood-related presentations and media appearances, including two RFD-TV and two NE NPR-TV interviews discussing safe flood recovery^{7,8}.



Narratives Describing Emerging Issues

Telling the Story Project (TTSP). Since 2016 members from CS-CASH, Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH), the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (UMASH), and the National Farm Medicine Children’s Center have partnered to develop the Telling the Story Project. The project team includes expertise in industrial hygiene, incident investigation, agricultural engineering, media relations, and educational outreach. This translation activity conveyed emerging issues and injury prevention messaging through personal narratives based on first-hand experiences. These stories and relevant prevention messaging and resources, stored on a dedicated website⁹,

have been accessed over 25,700 times as of January 2, 2022. The website houses video and written narratives created by the TTSP team, educational resources, safety vignettes, and discussion guides created by the Telling the Story team. TTSP stories have been featured in SafetyWatch columns and weekly print agricultural media publications that reach over 84,000 households in the Midwest and online at www.agupdate.com. TTSP news articles shared through the Associated Press have reached over 900,000 viewers throughout the U.S.

All-Terrain Vehicles

Response to increases in agricultural ATV fatalities and Injuries. In response to the high number of ATV injuries and fatalities reported in the CS-CASH media monitoring, the following projects were funded through the Emerging Issues Program.

Assessing the prevalence and underlying causes of 2015-2017 ATV/OHV-related injuries on U.S. farms. P.I. Dr. Bryan Weichelt (National Farm Medicine Clinic) This study estimated the prevalence of exposure and injuries among farmers and ranchers, including working and non-working youth, and discussed the results in the context of injury prevention, including strategies of parental role modeling, helmet use, alcohol, crush protection devices, and legislation¹⁰.

New ATV Safety Design Features: Examining cultural acceptability and piloting an educational intervention among Midwestern youth in agriculture. Ag Health and Safety Alliance™ (AHSA) This project used the AHSA Gear Up for Ag™ Program to examine current awareness, beliefs, and cultural acceptability of new ATV safety design features among Midwestern youth in agriculture. The AHSA staff worked with an educational advisory panel to formulate questions for a standardized presurvey. Educators provided training with pilot-tested ATV safety resources to measure possible changes in beliefs or cultural acceptability. ASHA also developed a 2-minute evidence-based “ATV Safety Design” Motion Graphic highlighting the importance of ATV safety, including information on common causes of fatality/injury among young workers and effectiveness of numerous safety design features¹¹.

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