



Enhancing the health and safety of agricultural, forestry, and fishery workers

Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety

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Background

The **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)** awarded the **University of Florida** a grant of nearly \$10 million for a 5-year project to work with other Southeastern states to explore the occupational safety and health challenges of people working in **agriculture, fishing and forestry** in the Southeast.



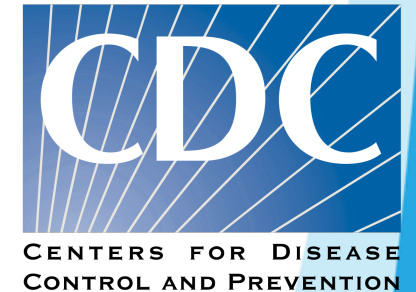
Background: NIOSH and OSHA

NIOSH is a research agency that is part of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; its role is to:

- develop recommendations for health and safety standards;
- develop information on safe levels of exposure to toxic materials and harmful physical agents and substances; and
- Conduct research on new safety and health problems

It is NOT a regulatory agency

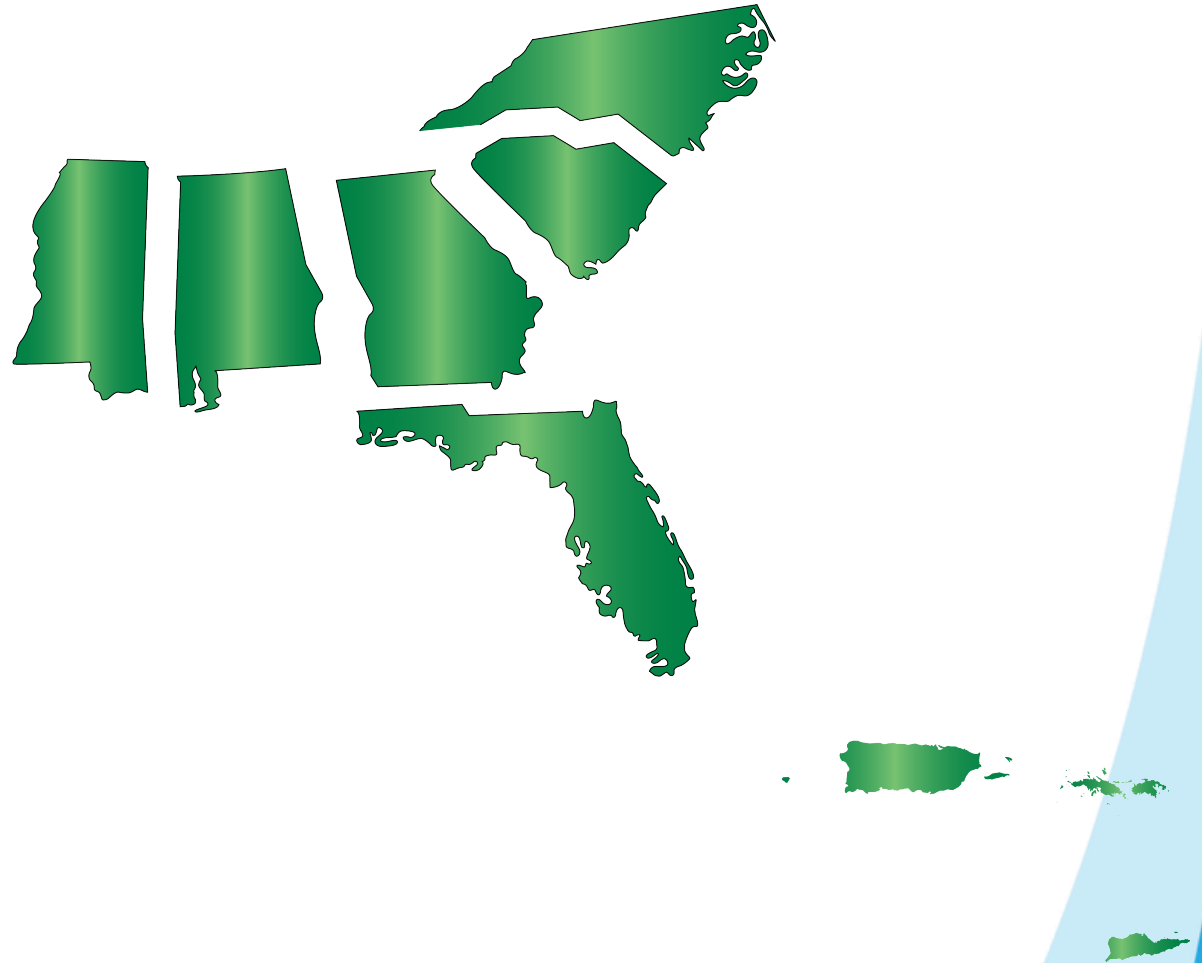
NIOSH is different from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), a regulatory agency that develops and enforces regulations. OSHA is an agency in the U.S. Department of Labor.



Background

The NIOSH **Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (SCCAHS)** includes:

- Florida
- Georgia
- South Carolina
- North Carolina
- Alabama
- Mississippi
- Puerto Rico
- U.S. Virgin Islands



Background

- Other universities involved:
 - University of South Florida
 - Florida State University
 - Florida A&M University
 - Emory University
 - University of the Virgin Islands
- These universities are working together on a range of interdisciplinary research and educational projects designed to promote occupational health and safety among employers, families, and workers at the 240,000 farms estimated by the US Department of Agriculture to be operating in the region, as well as forestry and fishery industries.

Background

- As the lead on this project, the **UF College of Public Health & Health Professions** brought **IFAS** into the project to work on the Extension, evaluation, outreach and community engagement efforts.



Background

- **SCCAHS** joins **10 other agricultural health/safety centers** around the country that have been funded since 1990.

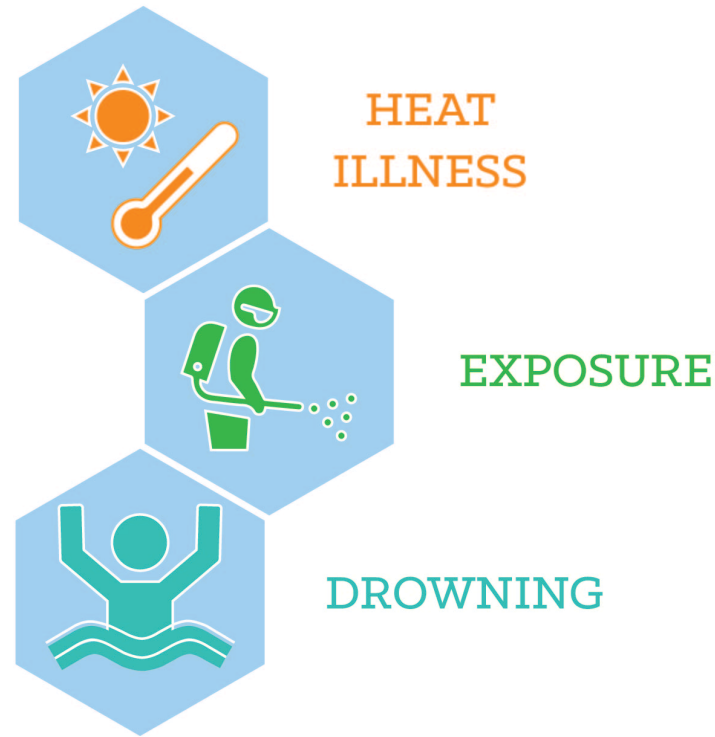


Need for the Center

- Nationally, the annual cost from agriculture injuries is **\$8.3 billion** in medical costs and lost productivity.
- Much of the information about the region's agricultural safety and health is outdated.
- Center will conduct research to learn about current status, relevant to farming, fishing, and forestry workers in the region.
- Center will develop new data sources to provide a **more complete picture of safety and health issues**.

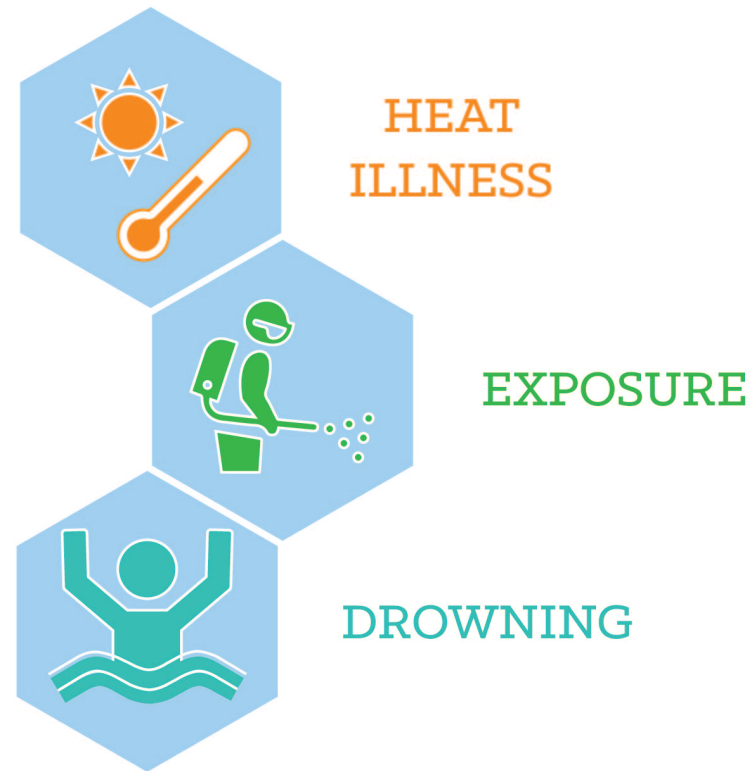
Hazards in agriculture, forestry and fishing

- Hazards include, but are not limited to:
 - Accidents
 - Falls
 - Excessive heat
 - Repetitive motion
 - Adverse agrichemical exposure
 - Lifting heavy objects
 - Injuries caused by machinery
 - Drowning
 - Entanglements in fishing gear
 - Slippery decks
 - Tidal surges and waves



Initial focus of the center

- **Innovative approaches to foster research-to-practice** (pesticide and heat stress education for Latino farmworkers)
- **Agrichemical exposure**
- **Coastal fishery worker safety and health**

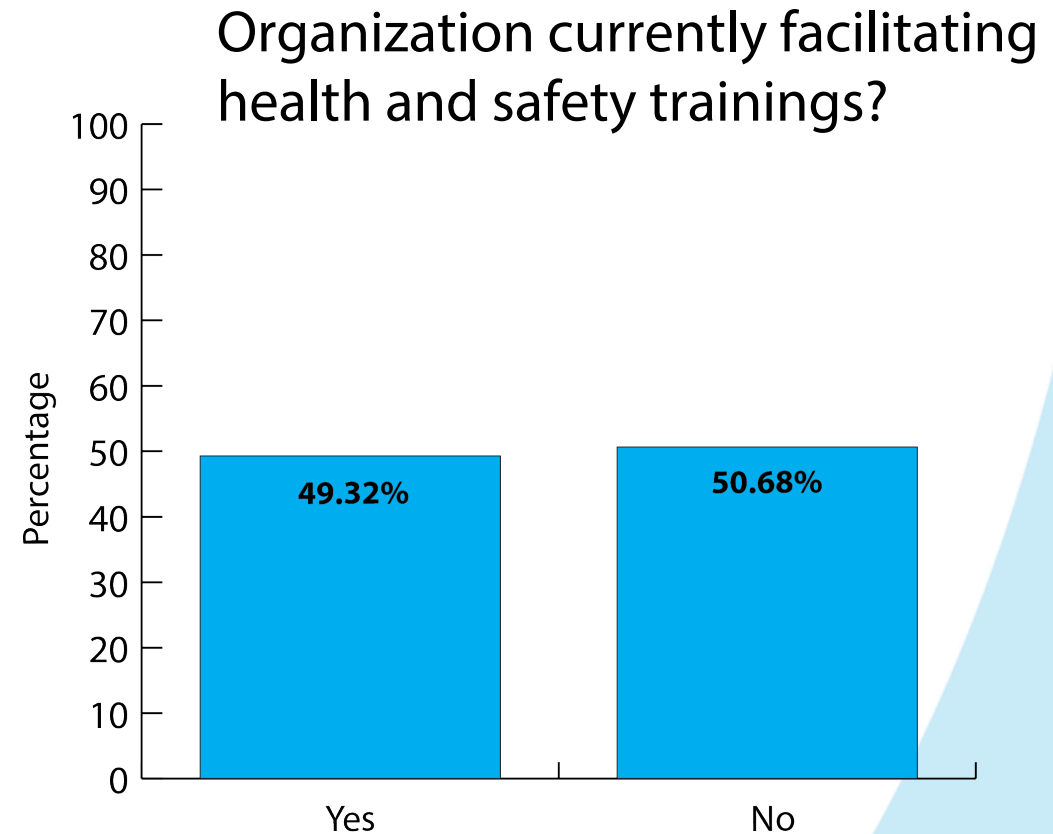
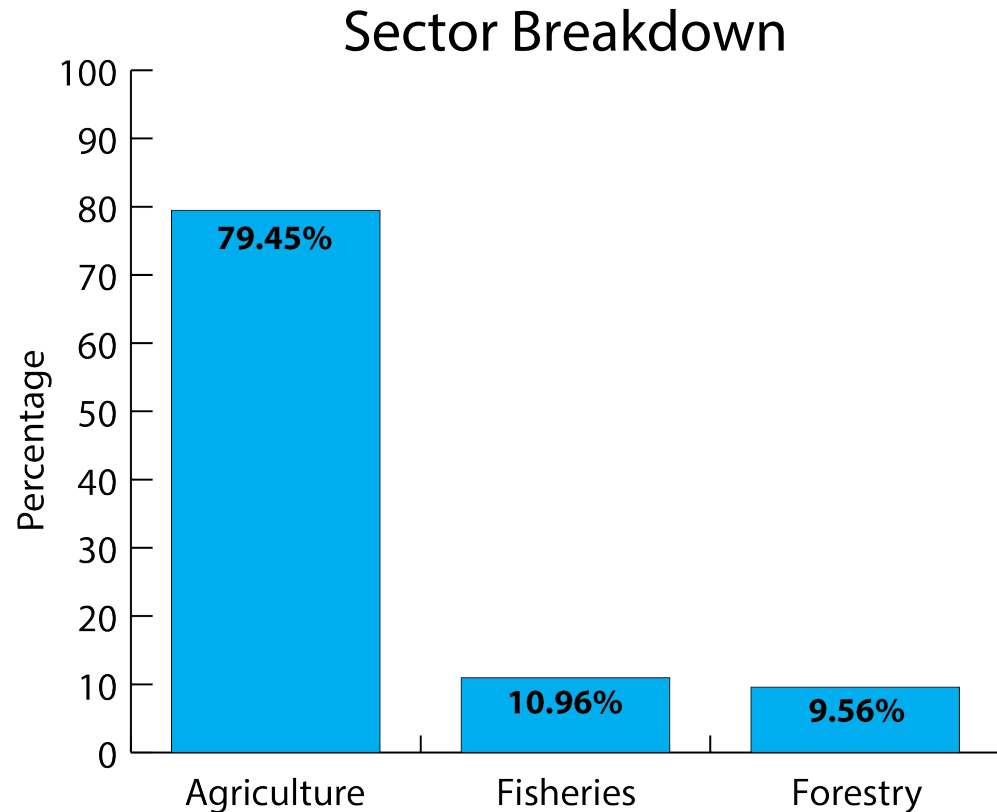


Needs assessment

- Currently conducting a statewide **needs assessment**.
- Surveying Extension agents, farmworker organizations, commodity associations.
- Needs assessment being done to determine:
 - What agricultural health and safety programs are in existence.
 - What programs may be needed.
 - What communication channels are appropriate to disseminate information.

Preliminary needs assessment results

Responses as of June 23, 2017



Preliminary needs assessment results

- Occupational health and safety issues identified as **most critical** (in order):
 - Heat stress
 - Access to healthcare
 - Injuries from equipment
 - Agrichemical exposure
 - Transportation accidents in work vehicles
 - Worker mental health/substance abuse

Sampling of topics researched at existing ag safety/health centers...

- Emerging technologies
- Accident reporting & analysis
- Falls (workers)
- Safety around machinery
- Agritourism
- First aid/response time
- Chemical safety
- Opioid abuse
- Exposure methods
- Community health worker programs
- Hearing and eyesight protection
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)

SCCAHS Structure



- Planning and Evaluation Core

- Emerging Issues Program
- Evaluation Program



- Research Core

- **Innovative approaches to foster research to practice:** Pesticide and heat stress education for Latino farmworkers that is culturally appropriate.
- **Agrichemical exposure:** Extent of agrichemical applications in Florida, using best practices.
- **Coastal fishery worker safety and health:** Occupational health and safety surveillance of Gulf seafood workers.
- **PILOT GRANT PROGRAM**
 - Chronic low back pain in seafood workers
 - App for heat stroke prevention among migrant farm workers



- Outreach Core

Innovative approaches to foster research-to-practice

- *Pesticide & Heat Stress Education for Latino Farmworkers that is Culturally Appropriate*
 - Florida State University, Department of Family and Child Sciences
 - This project aims to reduce pesticide and heat-related poor health outcomes among Latino farmworkers, through a community-advocate-university partnership.
 - Joseph Grzywacz



Heat-related illness



- Nine out of the 10 hottest years on record have occurred in the past decade.
 - The Southern United States is of particular concern.
 - Recent data from South Florida indicates an increasing number of days with a high temperature above 90 degrees.
- At a global level, average air temperatures are predicted to increase by 0.1°C per decade.
 - With every degree Centigrade increase, mortality rates related to heat rise by 2-5%.

Heat-related illness

- Workers face severe risk of **heat stroke** when the core body temperature rises to 105 degrees in 10 to 15 minutes. Death or permanent disability can occur if emergency treatment is not provided immediately.
- Farmworkers are more than 20 times at risk for heat-related deaths compared to other occupational groups.

2,630

American workers
who suffered from
heat illness on the
job in 2014

*(U.S. Occupational Safety and
Health Administration, 2016)*



Heat-related illness

- From 1992 to 2008, more than 400 workers in agricultural and non-agricultural settings combined suffered heat-related deaths, most of whom were workers between the ages 20 to 54 (CDC).



Agrichemical exposure



- *Extent of Agricultural Pesticide Applications in Florida Using Best Practices*
 - University of Florida, Department of Geography
 - Study proposes to develop estimates of the potential site-specific environmental exposures to agrichemicals that should be expected.
 - Utilize **remote sensing technology** to map locations of projected agrichemical use.
 - Gregory Glass

Agrichemical exposure

- Exposure to agrichemicals can be dermal, oral, and respiratory and can occur through direct contact with agrichemicals during application, contact with residue on plants, upon entering a recently treated area, or through drift from nearby application.
- Farmworkers' family members may also be exposed to residues that are brought home on farmworkers' clothing, skin, and equipment.



Agrichemical exposure

- Exposure acute health effects
 - Nausea
 - Dizziness
 - Vomiting
 - Headaches
 - Stomach pain
 - Rashes
 - Eye problems
- Research has indicated that populations with increased, regular exposure to agrichemicals have higher rates of some kinds of cancers.



Agrichemical exposure

- There is limited understanding of the cumulative, additive, synergistic, and chronic effects of long-term exposure to multiple agrichemicals among high-risk populations.

8

Years since last
assessment of
commercial agrichemical
use in Florida

(Wells & Fishel, 2011)



Coastal fishery worker safety and health



- *Occupational Health and Safety Surveillance of Gulf Seafood Workers*
 - University of Florida, Department of Environmental and Global Health
 - Project will assess the current status of commercial fishery worker safety in the coastal Gulf of Mexico, with emphasis on Florida and Alabama.
 - Andrew Kane

Coastal fishery worker safety and health



- What makes Gulf of Mexico fisheries unique:
 - Regional fishing and seafood industries have historically shaped the local economies of communities along the Gulf Coast.
 - Third or fourth generation seafood workers.
 - Fishing and seafood industry plays a central role in the culture.
 - Coastal seafood industries provide capital, infrastructure, and small businesses that generate tens of thousands of jobs in the region.



Coastal fishery worker safety and health



- What makes Gulf of Mexico fisheries unique:
 - Commercial fisheries support an historic multi-billion dollar industry that supplies some 70 million pounds of finfish, shrimp, oysters, and crab to US markets annually, representing approximately 78% of the shrimp, 62% oyster, 16% finfish, 7% blue crab domestic harvests.



Coastal fishery worker safety and health



- Commercial fishing industry hazards
 - Prolonged shift work and fatigue.
 - Unpredictable conditions and often unstable work platforms.
 - Use of heavy equipment with remarkable forces and torque.
 - Exposure to bites, spines, poisons, and associated infections.

Coastal fishery worker safety and health



- Commercial fishing industry hazards
 - Commercial ocean fishing is one of the most dangerous occupations in the world.
 - The rate of fatal injury for US fishery workers is among the highest of any civilian occupation: 203.6 per 100,000 full-time workers, more than 50 times the all-worker rate of 3.5.
 - Within the Southeastern US, Florida has the highest percentage of fatal injuries for the fisheries industry (9%), and nationally is third to Alaska (21%) and Massachusetts (12%).

Coastal fishery worker safety and health



- Commercial fishing industry hazards
 - Under-reporting of injuries is reflected in the number of fishery-related Worker's Compensation claims in Florida: out of 13,828 AgFF workers that submitted claims, 1/1/2011 through 10/8/2015, only one of these claims was related to a fishery incident.

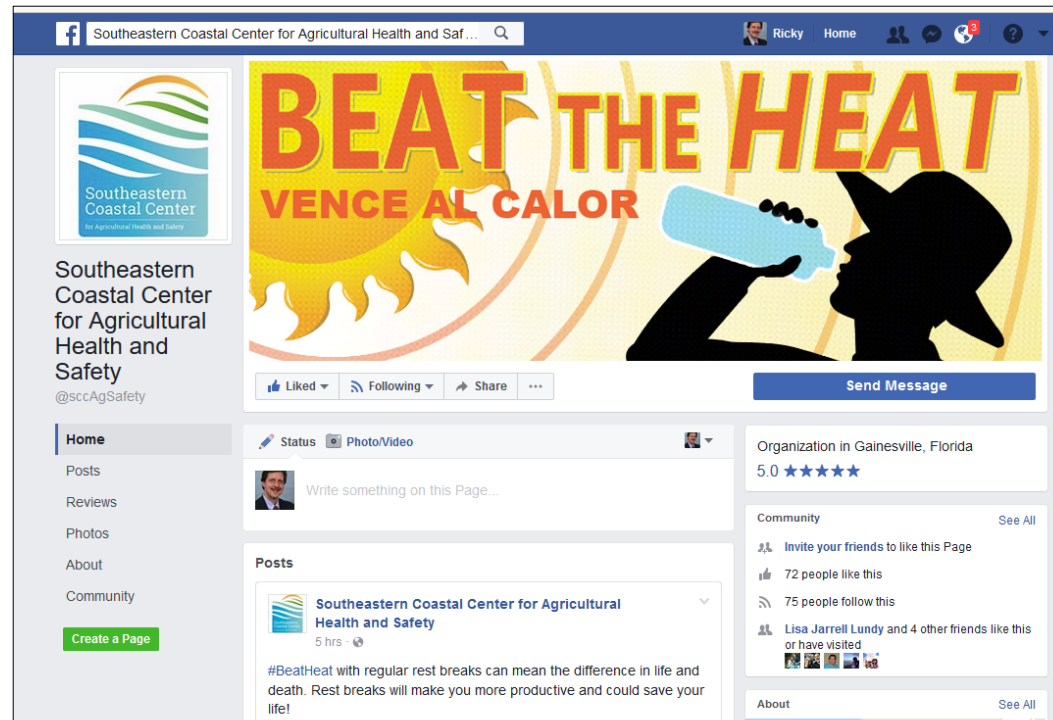
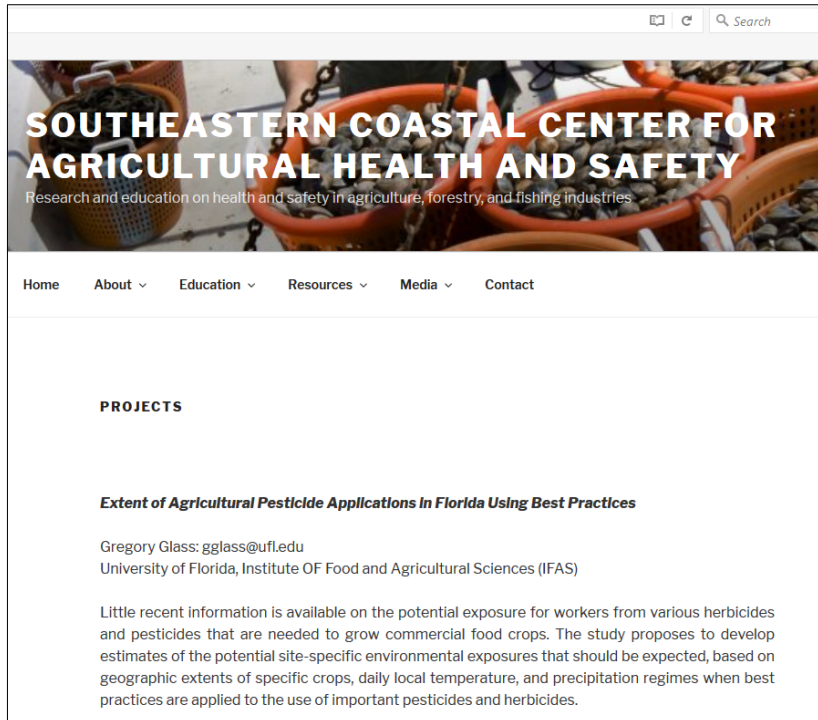
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Fatal injuries that
occur in the Gulf of
Mexico fishery
workforce every year

*(Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention/National Institute for
Occupational Safety and Health, 2015)*

Outreach Core: Recent activities

- Visits to major commodity associations.
- Creation of website, social media.
- Participation in national **Beat the Heat** campaign.



Bilingual materials

- Translating educational materials for Spanish-speaking audiences.
- Using social media with tested messages in English and Spanish, targeted to ag workers.
- Integrate Spanish-language media (newspaper, radio, TV).


Extension in-service trainings (ISTs)

- Coordinate and expand training workshops, webinars, and multiple train-the-trainer activities on safety topics.
- Conduct and expand farm labor supervisor safety training and work with existing Extension programs, such as worker protection safety.
- Conduct farm family awareness of property and liability risk web-based Extension in-service trainings.


Center outreach/communication activities


- Utilize web, social media, email and industry trade publications to:
 - Actively engage agricultural, forestry, and fisheries leaders.
 - Communicate best safety and health practices derived from studies.


#BeatHeat with the OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool. A visual indicator of the current heat index and associated risk levels specific to your geographical location in the U.S.



#VenceAlCalor con la Herramienta de Seguridad en el Calor de OSHA-NIOSH. Un indicador visual del índice de calor actual y niveles de riesgo asociados, específicos para tu ubicación geográfica en EE.UU.

 Southeastern Coastal Center
for Agricultural Health and Safety

 #sccAgSafety
sccAgSafety.org

 +1-352-294-3181
Add us as a contact and send "Start" to receive our news.
Agrégenos como contacto y envía "Inicio" para recibir nuestras noticias.

Center outreach/communication activities

- Utilize web, social media, email and industry trade publications to:
 - Actively engage agricultural, forestry, and fisheries leaders.
 - Communicate best safety and health practices derived from studies.
- **If you have a meeting you would like us to attend to provide information about the center, please let us know.**



For more information...

- To find out more information about the **Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety**, visit **sccaahs.org**.
- Join our email list to receive our updates.
 - Send an email with the subject line **SUBSCRIBE SCCAHS-L** to listserv@lists.ufl.edu.
- **Facebook:** **<https://www.facebook.com/sccAgSafety/>**



For more information...

- **sccaahs.org**
- News release
- Fact sheet
- Graphics for use in your publications and social media

**Southeastern Coastal Center
FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

A 2006 National Academy of Sciences report notes that agriculture, forestry and fishing are among the most hazardous occupational sectors nationally, with an average annual 740 fatalities and 130,000 worker disabilities from agriculture alone. Farmworkers who harvest fruit, vegetables and ornamental plants by hand frequently bend, crouch and lift to carry crops and tools weighing as much as 90 pounds. They can be exposed to agrichemicals sprayed on crops and are at risk from heat stress and injuries caused by farm machinery. Fishers also labor under hazardous conditions, and transportation to a medical facility can be difficult if workers are injured while on the water. The Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety will address these issues through various trainings, educational programs, and research projects.

ENHANCING HEALTH & SAFETY OF AGRICULTURAL, FORESTRY AND FISHERY WORKERS


HEAT ILLNESS
The center's following research projects will improve the health and safety of agricultural, forestry, and fishery workers:
Innovative approaches to foster research to practice: Agrichemical and heat stress education for Latino farmworkers that is culturally appropriate

EXPOSURE
Agrichemical exposure: Extent of agrichemical applications in Florida using best practices


DROWNING
Coastal fishery worker safety and health: Occupational health and safety surveillance of Gulf seafood workers


GOALS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN COASTAL CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Providing occupational safety and health education training, capitalizing on existing work at the University of Florida and the partnering institutions.
- Developing and testing whether safety and education materials produce changes in safety behaviors.
- Conducting research documenting hazards and risks in northeastern Gulf Coast fishery worker populations and testing training materials aimed at reducing injuries.
- Researching the use of remote sensing technology to map agrichemical uses.
- Supporting other projects, such as looking at heat stress tolerance and evaluation of the UF/IFAS farm supervisor safety training extension program.

 **Southeastern Coastal Center**
for Agricultural Health and Safety

 **UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA**

 **NIOSH**

 **abc**

SCCAHS.ORG
#SCCAGSAFETY

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American workers who suffered from heat illness on the job in 2014
(U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2016)

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Years since last assessment of commercial agrichemical use in Florida
(Wells & Pihel, 2011)

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Fatal injuries that occur in the Gulf of Mexico fishery workforce every year
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 2015)

Workers face severe risk of heat stroke when the core body temperature rises to 105 degrees in 10 to 15 minutes. Death or permanent disability can occur if emergency treatment is not provided immediately.

Remote sensing technology can estimate agrichemical levels used in Florida under best practice conditions. This research, coupled with UF/IFAS Extension worker training programs, will help keep Florida farmers and workers safe, reduce costs and contribute to the sustainability of the agricultural industry.

Occupational injuries and fatalities for fishery workers occur at much higher rates than the national averages for all occupational injuries and fatalities. Collaboration with community partners and fishers can reduce these rates.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (SCCAHS) was established in 2016 to explore and address the occupational safety and health needs of people working in agriculture, fishing, and forestry in the six Southeastern coastal states. The University of Florida is the lead institution for the center, partnering with the University of South Florida, Florida State University, Florida A&M University, Emory University and the University of the Virgin Islands, to promote occupational health and safety among employers, families, and workers at the 240,000 farms estimated by the US Department of Agriculture to be operating in the region, as well as forestry and fishery industries.

This document was supported by the Grant or Cooperative Agreement Number: 1U54 OH 011230 - 01, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services. The entire cost of the development and publication of this document was financed with federal funds. This document supports the \$10 million CDC/National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) grant, which funds the Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (sccaahs.org).



Southeastern
Coastal Center

for Agricultural Health and Safety

Questions?

sccaahs.org

Research and education on health and safety in agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries.