

Using an arts-based approach to addressing mental health and stress challenges in farm worker populations

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Additional data on Suicide in migrant farm worker populations:

Risk factors:

- “Family dysfunction, ineffective social support, hopelessness, and high acculturative stress were related to high depression. Migrant farmworker women who experienced suicidal ideation reported lower self-esteem, greater family dysfunction, less effective social support, greater hopelessness, higher acculturative stress, and more depression than migrant farmworker women with no suicidal ideation.”

- “Farm labor is physically strenuous and migrant workers are often subjected to dangerous working conditions such as being sprayed with pesticides.”

-comment: many of the sources detailed that the pesticides were potentially causing depression and thus leading to higher chances of suicide. As well, with the dangerous working conditions that often leads to injuries (that many cannot get help for as they don't have health insurance), farm workers may have poorer mental that could lead to depression and suicide ideation.

Joseph D. Hovey & Cristina G. Magaña (2003) Suicide Risk Factors Among Mexican Migrant Farmworker Women in the Midwest United States, Archives of Suicide Research, 7:2, 107-121, DOI: [10.1080/13811110301579](https://doi.org/10.1080/13811110301579)

“Previous research indicates suicide risk is associated with low-skilled work (5), lower education (6), lower absolute and relative socioeconomic status (7), work-related access to lethal means (8), and job stress, including poor supervisory and colleague support, low job control, and job insecurity.”

-comment: essentially, jobs with less security and poor working conditions are associated with higher suicide rates

Peterson C, Sussell A, Li J, Schumacher PK, Yeoman K, Stone DM. Suicide Rates by Industry and Occupation — National Violent Death Reporting System, 32 States, 2016. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:57–62. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6903a1>

“Most live in rural areas far from mental health professionals. Urban counties average 10 psychiatrists per 100,000 people, but rural counties have three for the same number of people, a 2018 University of Michigan study found.”

-comment: lack of resources for mental and physical health

Sherman, K. W. and L. (2020, March 7). *Farmer suicide deaths alarm rural communities in the Midwest*. South Bend Tribune. Retrieved January 20, 2022, from <https://www.southbendtribune.com/story/news/2020/03/07/farmer-suicide-deaths-alarm-rural-communities-in-the-midwes/43905301/>

“many farmworkers lack a financial safety net, and a loss of employment can mean almost [immediate financial hardship](#). To make matters worse, undocumented farmworkers were excluded from financial support targeting COVID-19 hardships and [did not receive a single stimulus check](#) in 2020”

-comment: couldn't find it explicitly stated but its quite possible that covid hardships will correlate with increased suicide rates

Brown, M., Imperiale, S., Guerrero, M., & Rao, S. (2021, August 17). *Food work & covid: Farmworker solutions for an unjust system*. NRDC. Retrieved January 20, 2022, from <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/marisa-guerrero/food-work-covid-farmworker-solutions-unjust-system>

Preventative factors:

-better access to mental and physical healthcare

-education/training that encourages the inclusion of agricultural workers could alleviate the isolation many feel

-alleviating financial stressors caused by a lack of job security and poor wages

Barbosa Junior M, Sokulski CC, Salvador R, Pinheiro E, De Francisco AC, Trojan F. What kills the agricultural worker? A systematic review on suicide. *Rural and Remote Health* 2021; 21: 6067.

<https://doi.org/10.22605/RRH6067>

Statistics:

“For males in the *Agricultural Workers* category (a sub-group of the *Farming, Fishing, and Forestry* major group), the corrected 2012 suicide rate was 20.4 per 100,000 civilian noninstitutionalized working persons and the 2015 suicide rate was 17.3”

“since the farm crisis of the 1980s, when more than 1,000 farmers took their lives in response to farm losses, the suicide rate for male agricultural workers overall has remained [higher](#) than for those in almost any other occupation.”

Peterson C, Sussell A, Li J, Schumacher PK, Yeoman K, Stone DM. Suicide Rates by Industry and Occupation — National Violent Death Reporting System, 32 States, 2016. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2020;69:57–62. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6903a1>

“a [University of Iowa study](#) indicated that between 1992 and 2010, farmers and ranchers had a rate of suicide that was, on average, 3.5 times that of the general population.”

“the suicide rate for male “Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers” (a subgroup of the “Management” major group) was double that of the general population in 2012.”

Perdue, M. (2018, November 27). *A deeper look at the CDC findings on farm suicides*. National Farmers Union. Retrieved January 20, 2022, from <https://nfu.org/2018/11/27/cdc-study-clarifies-data-on-farm-stress/>

“The estimated fatality rate of 23.8 per 100,000 Indiana farm workers in 2018 compares to an estimated national death rate of 3.4 per 100,000 for workers in all industries.”

2018 Indiana Farm Fatality Summary with Historical Overview. Agricultural Safety and Health Program. (2019, September). Retrieved January 20, 2022, from <https://extension.purdue.edu/INPREPared/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2018-Indiana-Farm-Fatality-Summary.pdf>
