Prevalence and Predictors of SARS-CoV-2 Infection among Farmworkers in Monterey County, CA

Main study findings

- **13%** had active SARS-CoV-2 infection (PCR positive)
- **20%** were antibody positive by end of October
- **42%** had an active infection and no symptoms
- **57%** had symptoms and went to work

Household and workplace risk factors for having an active SARS-CoV-2 infection (testing PCR positive)

- Speaks indigenous language
- Primary education or lower
- Lived with someone with COVID-19 symptoms
- Worked with someone with COVID-19 symptoms
- Commuted to work with non-household members
- No screening upon arrival to workplace
COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on the health and well-being of farmworkers

- Inability to pay bills: 51%
- Food insecurity: 37%
- Difficulty getting medical care or medication: 20%
- Loved one died from COVID-19: 7%
- Loved one sick with COVID-19: 25%
- Likely depression: 8%
- Likely anxiety: 6%

Only half of the farmworkers are extremely likely to get vaccinated, mostly because of fear of side effects but also because they did not trust the government.

**POLICY AND ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Develop and implement a culturally- and linguistically-appropriate campaign to educate workers and their employers about farmworker benefits and their ability to remain at home awaiting test results or if sick and receive replacement income.

2. Bring rapid PCR testing to clinics, neighborhoods, and fields and immediately conduct culturally- and linguistically-appropriate contact tracing.

3. To provide a support structure that allows for immediate and simple to access wrap-around services, including on-the-spot income replacement, mental and family health services, housing, and child and food support.

4. To prioritize farmworkers, as essential workers, in rapid PCR testing and vaccination programs in order to protect this population and secure the United States food supply.

All the above actions should be developed and/or supported by respected and trusted sources, such as community-based organizations or clinics.

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