

Request for Funding

Pesticide Environmental Risk Reduction in Farmworkers;
A Project Using AmeriCorps WPS Trainers
in Primary Health Care Facilities

Submitted by

NC Farmworker Health Program
Office of Rural Health and Community Care, NC DHHS
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Background Information

The North Carolina Farmworker Health Program, within the Office of Rural Health and Community Care, NC DHHS is a migrant health voucher program that works with a statewide network of service providers to improve the health of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families in the North Carolina.

NCFHP accomplishes its mission by providing farmworkers with both medical and enabling services at our contract sites. Outreach workers at contract sites identify and visit farmworker families at their homes to address health needs that they may have. Medical services include provision of preventive and primary health care as well as referral to specialty services. Enabling services include outreach, health education, case management, interpretation, transportation, patient advocacy, and referral to other existing service agencies in the community, as needed.

In 2008, NCFHP served 9,603 migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their family members totaling 11,279 visits. Education efforts resulted in 29,353 health education sessions, with the top ten topics being Pesticides (2,839), How to call 911 (2,712), Dental Care (2,120), Green Tobacco Sickness (1,437), and Nutrition (1,351).

As part of our healthcare plan, NCFHP has as one of its priority goals the reduction of pesticide exposure among farmworkers through outreach and education. To achieve its goal, NCFHP has partnered with the Association of Farmworker Opportunities Program (AFOP) to bring the AmeriCorps SAFE program to North Carolina.

The AmeriCorps SAFE program supports the provision of free, bilingual pesticide safety and health training for farmworkers. Participating agencies are required to recruit individuals to become AmeriCorps members to carry out the program goals. AmeriCorps members are provided a living allowance, educational award, and workforce training to carry out program activities. AmeriCorps covers 75% of the expenses to support the members and NCFHP must provide a match of the remaining 25%. We have found the use of AmeriCorps members to be a very low cost approach to providing needed targeted services.

This program started in North Carolina at NCFHP in 2001, thanks to the support from AFOP, the Pesticide Environmental Trust Fund, and NCFHP contract sites. Due to budget cuts at AFOP, NCFHP was unable to have the program in our state for the last two years. Fortunately, AFOP has resumed the program and we have the opportunity to once again administer the initiative in our state.

Statement of Need

Existing Worker Protection Standard (WPS) regulations require that growers provide pesticide safety education to their employees in a manner that is understood, using non-technical terms, in a language they comprehend, allowing time to respond to questions workers may have.

However, attempts made by some farmers and crew leaders to comply with existing regulation have been hampered by language barriers, time, and inexperience with using a interactive teaching strategies to deliver effective training. While there are WPS trainers available to farmers, there are a limited number of bilingual WPS trainers in our State who target farmworkers.

Need for Trained Bilingual Pesticide Safety Trainers and Educators

In North Carolina, ninety-four percent (94%) of farmworkers are Spanish-speaking and speak little or no English; with 10- 15% having an indigenous language as their primary language. Some growers and crew leaders have depended on a pesticide safety video to train their workers, with little to no dialogue or follow up due to language barriers and time limitations.

In order to assure adequate training of farmworkers, there is a need for **bilingual WPS trainers**, at no cost to the grower, to ensure that the provision of Worker Protection Standards (WPS) training and education using methods and tools that are effective, easily understood, and culturally relevant and that questions can be responded to in a language that is understood by the worker.

In addition to farmers, crew leaders, and state-approved WPS trainers, pesticide safety training and education can also be delivered through outreach staff, college and/or university students, and other volunteers at entities across the state serving farmworker communities. Efforts can be made to identify and train bilingual individuals as WPS trainers.

Need to Expand Education Efforts on Pesticide Safety

According to the Employment Security Commission, there are approximately 86,855 farmworkers in our state. While farmworker serving agencies know this is an undercount, it still provides us with a baseline on the number of farmworkers we strive to reach.

In addition to training farmworkers on pesticide safety, NCFHP wants to reach and educate family members, care takers, and other community members working with and in farmworker communities to reduce environmental and health risks related to pesticide exposure.

Need to Improve Delivery of Training

The Worker Protection Standard (WPS), which intends to reduce occupational pesticide exposure among agricultural workers on farms, forests, nurseries and green-houses, mandates, must be communicated to agricultural workers in a way the is easy to understand. It can be presented orally from written materials or audio-visually and the presenter is required to respond to workers' questions.

To assure comprehension and utilization of safety precautions by farmworkers and their families, there is a need to assure effective teaching strategies are being used in connection with EPA approved materials to conduct training and education efforts. Growers and Crew leaders need to allow ample time and an appropriate location to conduct trainings to farmworkers.

Effective teaching methods use a variety of teaching strategies to ensure learning, such as guided discussion with question and answers, demonstration of PPE, role play, pre & post tests, follow-up, and customized information on the specific crops and practices of the grower who employs the farmworkers.

The Proposed Project

In order to assure adequate training of farmworkers in accordance to the WPS regulation and to educate farmworker communities on how to reduce exposure to pesticides, The North Carolina Farmworker Health Program (NCFHP), in collaboration with Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP), the Structural Pest Control and Pesticides Division of the NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and at least six North Carolina Farmworker Health Program (NCFHP) contract sites, will seek to achieve the following:

Overarching Goal

The overarching goal of this initiative is to reduce pesticide exposure through training, education, and outreach.

Program Objectives and Expected Outcomes

- 1) Increase the number of bilingual WPS trainers
 - a. Recruit and support eight (8) individuals to serve as AmeriCorps SAFE members through NCFHP contract sties; (2) year-long members, (5) six-month members, (1) three month members
 - b. Partner with at least "200" individuals to include growers, crew leaders, and/or community volunteers to promote trainings, assist with education efforts, and/or expand reach to farmorker communities

- 2) Increase the number of people within the farmworker community who receive training and education on pesticide safety
 - a. Train at least "2850" farmworkers in Worker Protection Standards
 - b. Conduct at least "900" pesticide education sessions to farmworker families, caretakers, and/or community members on environmental and health risks related to pesticide exposure
- 3) Improve the quality and delivery of training and education efforts by incorporating a variety of creative teaching strategies to assure learning.
 - a. Partner with EPA and Structural Pest Control and Pesticides Division to improve way training is provided
 - b. Secure and/or develop training materials that is EPA approved for training and education
 - c. Train AmeriCorp SAFE members and outreach staff on how to use effective teaching strategies to conduct training

Project Evaluation

NCFHP will utilize a variety of approaches to evaluate the effective of the program to include:

- a) pre- and post-training questionnaires with farmworker participants
- b) mid-year and end-of-year evaluation of AmeriCorps members' service
- c) assessment of training session provided to staff on effective teaching strategies
- d) monitoring by Structural Pest Control and Pesticides Division staff of the WPS training sessions, including the approval of curricula, training materials, and observation of some trainings

Measurements of Success

- Number of Farmworker trained
- Number of Educational Sessions provided
- Number of partnerships developed
- Number of staff that complete training of effective teaching strategies
- Results from pre- and –post tests conducted on farmworkers
- Findings of Mid-year and End-of Service Evaluation of AmeriCorp members

BUDGET

Proposal Year One Budget: 2010				
	PETF	Ameri-Corps	NCFHP	7 Host Agencies
Personnel				
Stipend for two 11-month AmeriCorps members @\$4,367 per member	8734			
Stipend for five 6 month AmeriCorps members @\$2,664 per member	15984			
Stipend for one 3-month AmeriCorps member @\$1,770 per member	5310			
Educational award for two 11-month members @\$4,725 per member		9450		
Educational award for five 6-month members @\$2,362 per member		11810		
Educational award for one 3-month members @\$1,181 per member		1181		
Standard living allowance for two 11-month members @\$11,400 per member		22800		
Standard living allowance for five 6-month members @\$5,700 per member		28500		
Standard living allowance for one 3-month members @\$2,850 per member		2850		
7 site supervisors at host agencies (4hrs/wk @\$16.50/hr x ave of 220 weeks)				14,520
1 Program Coordinator @ 8 hrs/wk @\$24.50/hr x 50 weeks			9800	
Travel/Trainings				
Outreach mileage for 8 AmeriCorps members (2 members x 11/mo x 600 miles + 5 members x 6/mo x 600 miles + 1 member x 3/mo x 600 miles)	33,000			
NCFHP health outreach trainings for 8 members: 3 workshops @\$350 each			8400	
3 national trainings for program coordinator @\$1,500		4,500		
2 national trainings for 2 11-month members @\$1,500		6000		
1 national training for 5 6-month members @\$1,500		7500		
Other Expenses				
Facility and supplies:office space, telephone, computer, office supplies, copier, etc. (8 members @ \$4350 per member)				34,720
Annual membership fee to participate in AmeriCorps SAFE	500			
Total	\$63528	94591	18200	49240
Total PETF three year request	\$190584			