

# Ag Labor Management With a Latino Workforce

Migration, Cultural Considerations, Labor  
Management & Community Resources



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# **Farming Across Cultures Communication Project**

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Table of Contents:	Page Number
<b><u>Introduction</u></b>	
<b><u>Migration</u></b>	
The Sending Communities of VT Migrant Workers .....	1-2
Illegal Immigration from Mexico.....	3-4
Coyotes, Jobs, Family, and Cheap Corn .....	5-6
Nine men Found in Sonoran Desert after Attempted Border Crossing .....	7-10
Migrants Risk Everything in Arizona Desert Crossing.....	11-12
Invisible Odysseys: Art by Mexican Farmworkers in VT.....	13-14
Poem by “Gomex” A Vermont Farmworker.....	15-16
The Golden Cage “La Jaula de Oro” by Los Tigres del Norte.....	17
<b><u>Cultural Considerations</u></b>	
Cultural Interpretations.....	19-22
Cultural Differences and Diverse Environments .....	23-26
<b><u>Ag Labor Management</u></b>	
Labor Management .....	28-35
Recommended Basic Hiring Practices.....	36
Bottom-of-the-barrel employees: Who is to blame?.....	37-38
The job description activity .....	39
Outline of job description.....	40
Sample job description in English.....	41
Sample job description in Spanish .....	42
Blank job description in English.....	43
Blank job description in Spanish.....	44
The Value and Common Sense of Job Descriptions.....	45-46
Survey Results: Training, Information Transfer, Safety, Health, and Housing on Vermont Dairy Farms with Spanish Speaking Employees	47-48
New Employee Orientation.....	49
The First 30 Days – Orienting New Employees.....	50-52
New Employee Information Checklist and Guide in English.....	53-54
New Employee Information Checklist and Guide in Spanish.....	55-56

Safety Orientation and Emergency Plan.....	57
Dairy Farm Safety Checklist – English & Spanish.....	58
Employee Safety Training Documentation .....	59-60
OSHA Fact Sheets in English and Spanish.....	61-62
Safety Risk Areas at the Dairy Farm.....	63-69
Sample Dairy Safety Instructions for Employees in English.....	70-73
Sample Dairy Safety Instructions for Employees in Spanish.....	74-77
Emergency Information Card.....	78
Communication Plan.....	79
Job Safety and Health in English and Spanish.....	80-81
Bilingual Label and Sign Examples.....	82
Developing Effective Standard Operating Procedures.....	83-88
Basic SOP Example .....	89
Hierarchical Procedure SOP Sample.....	90
Flowchart SOP Sample.....	91
Calving Record Sample Form.....	92
Heat Detection Sample Form.....	93
Milk Quality Record Sample Form .....	94
General Health Record Sample Form.....	95
Excerpt from Hiring and Managing Spanish Speaking Employees.....	96
Practical Concepts for Employee Training and Dairy Performance.....	97-99
Training Dairy Farm Workers.....	100-101
Oversight of Employee Housing.....	102
House Sanitation and Upkeep Informational Handout English .....	103-111
House Sanitation and Upkeep Informational Handout Spanish.....	112-120
Bilingual House Maintenance Products List.....	121
Bilingual House Inspection Checklist.....	122-125
Extra Commitments when Hiring a No/Low Level English Speaker .....	126
with No Transportation	
Bilingual Food List.....	127-129
Legal Compliance Issues.....	130
<b><i>Community Resources</i></b> .....	131-133
<b><i>Latino Ag Labor Management Evaluation</i></b> .....	134-138

# The Sending Communities of Vermont Migrant Workers

## 1) Community Settings (Rural? Urban? Desert? Mountain? Town layout?)

Many workers come from rural, hilly or mountainous towns. They are often an hour or more away from the nearest city. Communities may be comprised of as few as 30 families or as many as 300 households. Even in the smaller towns, the houses tend to be close together. Often, land has been subdivided overtime so that family members can build a house next to their parents. There is usually a central area (park, soccer field, and/or church) where people congregate. Some workers, however, come from regions that have ocean access. These areas tend to be hotter, flatter, and drier.

## 2) Livelihoods (How do folks make their money)

The rural mountainous communities grow corn, beans, coffee and other crops for sale and for personal consumption. Most families, even if they do not sell produce, cultivate a small section of land to grow food for their own use. Such a large percentage of workers from certain communities have left that many families solely rely on remittances (money sent from the U.S.) for their day to day purchase. Men are the primary wage earners in each family. Women in rural areas increasingly have a role (though often small) in household income either through migration to the United States or small stores within the family home. Migration from rural communities to cities within Mexico is common for men. Workers that are from communities within a state with ocean access may migrate within the county or state for work as a fisherman or in oil exploration rigs. Many workers report their male family members work as day laborers on the fields of large land owners though the availability of work is seasonal and crop dependent. The minimum daily wage is less than \$5.

## 3) The home (What are houses like, made of, who lives where, how do they cook?)

Traditionally, houses were made of adobe. Overtime, wood and tin appeared more frequently in house construction. Floors might be of dirt or poured cement. Houses built by money sent from the U.S. tend to be made of cinderblocks, with a plaster layer to smooth out the walls and more often have brightly tiled flooring. Generations often live together especially if a family member is in the United States. It is common for a grandmother to live with one or more of her children, a daughter in law, and a few grandchildren. Bedrooms are often shared by 2 or more people. Table top burners are much more frequent than ovens though many families still use traditional open wood fires to cook at least some of their food daily. Women, especially in the rural areas, are expected to cook, clean, and wash clothes.

## 4) Water Access (Where and how do people access water)

Some communities have water systems in place. These communities draw water from a central source through pipes that travel through the main parts of town. Each family is responsible for paying for a connection and bringing water from their "spigot" to their house. This is often done by attaching a plastic PVC pipe and bringing water to a pila (deep cement sink) near the house. It is rare the house in rural México that has water access from within the house. Other communities or outlying houses stick PVC in a stream or spring and use gravity to bring water to house. Pumps are not common and therefore running water in the house is very uncommon. Bathing is often done outside behind a sheet or shower curtain to one side of the Pila. Most bathrooms in these rural areas are latrines which do not require water.

## 5) Education (What are schools like, education system, average education level)

Schools in rural Mexico and Central America have few resources to provide beyond desks and chairs. Text books tend to be very well used and often need to be shared by pupils. Libraries in the rural areas are not common. Schools are often open air, even in cooler climates, and therefore noise travels from classroom to classroom. Teachers in the rural areas are not well paid (though make much more than an agricultural worker) and do not receive much additional training beyond their initial graduation. The average grade

*completed by Latino migrant workers in Vermont is 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Many workers site a lack of money as the reason for leaving school. Students are responsible for purchasing a school uniform and any school supplies required during the year. Boys who leave school at an early age often begin working in the fields and girls begin helping the family with housework.*

**6) Transportation** (Common ways of getting around)

*Through remittances an increasing number of families have access to their own truck or car. That said, many individuals rely heavily or solely on public transportation or group transportation. In rural communities within an hour or two from the major cities entrepreneurs have set up transportation systems with 15 passenger vans or pickup trucks. They have regular routes and fares. In other communities, especially the really rural ones, individuals rely on the few people that have vehicles for their rides to town. A guy with a pick-up will let people know he intends to go to town the next morning at a certain time and people will pile on the back and pay a fare. Travel between rural towns is still done at times by horseback. Walking 15 minutes to 3 hours is still common for the rural areas. A few communities where VT Latino workers come from have no roads and rely solely on walking and horseback for transportation.*

**7) Access to food and purchases** (Where do they buy their food, from whom?)

*Even the smallest of communities have little stores (*tienditas*). These stores buy in bulk from the city or purchase off pick-up salesmen that travel from community to community. These stores tend to have only a small selection of basic foods – eggs, dry beans, chips, candy, frozen chicken, rice, oil, margarine, instant soup, and medicines. Fruits and vegetables can also be purchased off trucks that pass through or are purchased at the central market in the closest city. Some communities have bike and foot vendors that sell bread, gadgets, and medicine (most medicines that are purchased with a prescription here can be purchased without one there)*

**8) Religion/Holidays** (What religion are they? Church attendance? Religious holidays?)

*The majority of Mexican and Central Americans are Roman Catholic though religious conversion is becoming more common. Latino workers in Vermont tend to be Catholic or Evangelical. Chiapas, one of the Mexican states with the highest presence in Vermont, has a higher proportion of Evangelicals than other areas of Mexico. If they are Catholic they might go to regular Sunday mass though it is increasingly common that young people, especially men, do not attend church. Evangelical churches vary in their practices but may have meetings at different times during the week including Saturday and Sunday. The Day of the Dead is observed as a way to remember the deceased (November 2<sup>nd</sup> In Mexico- November 1<sup>st</sup> in Guatemala). Christmas is celebrated universally throughout Latin America and Semana Santa (Easter week) is generally a week that school and government are closed. A shared belief among most Mexicans is the reverence of the Virgin of Guadalupe who is a symbol of faith and hope.*

**9) Culture** (What do you know about their history, traditions, practices)

*While the majority of Mexico and Central America speak Spanish, many communities in Mexico and Guatemala especially are tied to an indigenous language. Between Guatemala and Mexico there are over 80 official indigenous languages still being spoken. It is a small percentage of the overall population that speaks an indigenous language but because many workers come from rural southern Mexico there is a definite presence of workers who speak Spanish as their second language and an indigenous language as their first. In some areas, especially in rural Chiapas, women and even sometimes men wear traditional dress that includes certain colors and fabrics used to make a basic blouse and skirt or pant outfit. The women who still wear indigenous dress wear only skirts. There is a heavy reliance especially in rural areas on a basic diet of corn tortillas, beans, eggs, and rice with occasional fresh cheese if there is access to cows. Music has a large presence in rural and urban communities. It is rare to walk down a street without hearing music coming from a house or storefront.*

## Illegal Immigration from Mexico\*

<http://www.usimmigrationsupport.org/illegal-immigration-from-mexico.html>

**\*Please note that while the author of this piece refers to the presence of immigrants in the United States without proper documentation as "illegal", the publisher of this booklet, as well as most other farmworker advocates, prefer the terminology "undocumented immigration" and "undocumented worker."**

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For many generations Mexicans have illegally crossed the border into the United States. Reasons for the high rate of migration from Mexico include the close proximity of Mexico to the U.S. and the noticeable difference in the quality of life between the two countries. Many individuals come from poverty-stricken towns in Mexico and desire to come to the United States to achieve the "American dream." For many, just gaining employment at a low wage job in the United States provides a much higher standard of living than in their home country. During the 1980s, the United States saw a significant increase in illegal immigrants from Mexico. The [immigration](#) influx was not limited to Mexicans from one specific region but rather from communities all throughout Mexico.

Those from bigger cities such as Guadalajara, Monterrey, and Mexico City do not necessarily have a higher quality of life than those Mexicans residing in rural communities. However, individuals from larger cities do tend to have a greater access to opportunities. Many who live in smaller towns tend to be employed in the agriculture sector or try to set up a small business in order to make a living. The average Mexican wage is about \$4.15 an hour and those in the agricultural industry make even less. While an individual may be able to survive on that wage alone, it becomes more difficult for those with families. Currently about 40% of the Mexican population is below the poverty line. Unemployment is about 4% but it is estimated that nearly 25% of those working are classified as underemployed.

Even when jobs are created, in many instances they are not sufficient to meet the growing demand of the Mexican people. Their pay may be so low that they cannot afford to cover even the most basic necessities. Thus, many Mexicans from both small and big cities find the neighboring United States to be extremely attractive. Treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have brought more American companies into the country. However, the jobs that have been created are not enough and many wages are still relatively low. Many dream of going to what is known as the "the North" to make more money. However, illegal immigration to the United States is becoming increasingly difficult due to advanced technology, infrastructure, and enforcement. Some illegal immigrants illicit the assistance of a "coyote", or smuggler, to help them navigate through the land and cross the border. Once they reach a certain destination on American soil, a vehicle is used to transport them to another location. It is here that family and/or friends will pick them up and pay the "coyote's fee." Sometimes the fee is paid beforehand and other times a deposit is given and the rest is paid upon completion of their services. "Coyotes" generally have insider knowledge about crossing the border, and know the best routes to avoid detection. However, in order to help to deter "coyotes," serious fines and penalties if someone is caught smuggling illegal immigrants into the United States. For immigrants who are intercepted en route to the United States, they are usually returned to Mexican soil.

Increasingly, illegal immigrants and "coyotes" have tried to cross the border through the Arizona desert. This is due to increased security along the Mexico-U.S. border near California. Especially during the summer months, there tend to be more cases of illegal immigrants who try to cross the Arizona desert and die from dehydration. Throughout the U.S. - Mexican border, more check points with U.S. border patrols have been added on the American side of the border. At these checkpoints, individuals may be asked for documentation in order to verify U.S. [residency](#) or [citizenship](#). As stated previously, there are an increasing number of security measures that have been implemented at and around the Mexico-U.S. border. As a result, it has become more difficult to illegally cross the border. As such, the assistance of "coyotes" is in high demand. The fees for a "coyote" easily runs into the thousands per individual. Many illegal immigrants save up money or borrow money to cover this fee. Once a Mexican immigrant successfully crosses the border into the United States, they generally have two main goals. Their first aim is to send part of their earnings back home to their family and their second goal is to bring more family members to the United States. Eventually they hope to gain permanent residency (green card) and possibly U.S. citizenship status. Other illegal immigrants come with a different purpose. They emigrate to the United States with the sole intention of finding a job that will allow them to save enough money to buy a house or set up their own business upon their return to Mexico. Whatever the specific intentions of the Mexican immigrant are, many agree that their main desire is to come to the United States in search of a better life.

## Coyotes, jobs, family, and cheap corn

By Alan Shapiro

<http://www.teachablemoment.org/high/immigration.html>

Do you start your morning with a glass of Florida orange juice? If so, there's a chance that Manuel Osorio may have helped to provide it.

"Manuel Osorio is a coyote," Florida's Palm Beach Post reported (12/03). That's someone who smuggles migrants from Mexico into the United States. "Three hundred crossings. A few jail terms. Plus the bumps on his head. 'La migra,' he says, leaning his skinny frame back in his tiny house in Tecoman, Mexico. 'They caught me 20 times. The next day I always cross back.'" (By la migra, he means U.S. immigration police.)

Manuel Osorio became a coyote at 13 because his father, a farm laborer, could not make enough money to support his nine children. Unable to read or write, he took a bus to the border and "studied like a graduate student." Now the Florida fields are filled with the fruits of his labor—friends, relations, and strangers he helped cross. 'God bless Manuel,'" says his sister-in-law in Florida. 'He is a very good man.'"

The United States Border Patrol says it arrested one million people trying to sneak across the Mexican border last year. Most are eventually returned to Mexico and try again. Manuel Osorio is illiterate, but he has studied the border and the best routes into the U.S. "like a graduate student." He has made himself a good, if dangerous, living guiding poor, job-hungry Mexicans into Texas. Some of these immigrants later make their way to Florida to pick the oranges whose juice ends up in your glass.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that there are 8 to 9 million "undocumented workers," as they are often called, in the U.S., and each year the number goes up by about 500,000. Other estimates are much higher.

"Migration from Mexico to the United States will remain, for the foreseeable future, one of the largest mass movements of workers and families in the modern age," reported the U.S.-Mexico BiNational Council (April 2004). About 15 percent of Mexico's workers reside in the United States. Mexican nationals represent 20 percent of annual legal immigration to the United States and 30 percent of the U.S. foreign-born population. Yet unauthorized Mexican migrants represent 83 percent of all migrants from Mexico." (Quotes are from [pbs.org/now/politics/migrants.html](http://pbs.org/now/politics/migrants.html); statistics are from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.)

Why do so many Mexicans come? The Cruz family is typical. Beginning in 1984, Antonio Cruz, the father, crossed the border back and forth illegally many times to work at construction jobs. The jobs paid him triple what he could make in Chihuahua, Mexico, and he was able to send money back home to his family. In the late 1980s a U.S. amnesty paved the way for 3 million illegals, among them Antonio Cruz, to begin the road to citizenship. But bringing his family to the U.S. legally was so difficult that in 1995 he paid coyotes to smuggle his wife and daughters across the border.

"I needed to be with them. I didn't want to be going back and forth," Cruz says. "I would suffer a lot being there without them and I decided to bring them, I don't know, because I had to be with them."

His daughter Jessica, then a small child, remembers the day she came. "You had to jump above the wall. I remember like seeing, like, big, big trees and like far away, you could see like

houses. And above those, were like helicopters. Which was like, I was scared. Because I would think that they would come back. That they would come down. And they would send us back." More than 300 people died on such attempts last year. Jessica wasn't even in kindergarten, but she had already broken the law. Today she lives with her family in North Carolina, where her father Antonio is a successful welder in building construction.  
(pbs.org/now)

Jobs and family are what drive most immigrants to enter the U.S. illegally. A typical Mexican worker earns one-tenth what a typical American worker makes. A better-paying job was the reason behind Antonio Cruz's first border crossing. And his desire to be with his family was the reason he paid smugglers to bring his wife and daughters into the U.S.

But behind these immediate reasons for immigrating is often a more complicated reality. Lorenzo Rebollo farms corn in Manzanillo, Mexico, which archaeologists say was the first place on earth where people grew corn as a food crop. But Rebollo says he may be the last man to farm corn there. He cannot compete with the mechanized, subsidized giants of American agriculture. Because of billions in subsidies from Congress, these U.S.-based companies can sell their corn in Mexico for less than it costs to grow and still make a profit. They now supply Mexico with a quarter of its corn. This is good for Mexican shoppers but not for Mexican farmers like Rebollo. He now gets such low prices for his corn that he loses money on every ear he grows. His two sons have left to make a living in the United States.  
(New York Times, 2/26/02)

Such undocumented workers keep coming, even though most suffer many problems once they are in the U.S.: less than minimum wage pay; no unemployment insurance; no union protection; housing in shacks without bathrooms; exposure to pesticides if they work in fields.

"American businesses are willing to hire cheap, compliant labor from abroad," states a report from the Center for Immigration Studies ([www.cis.org](http://www.cis.org)). "Such businesses are seldom punished because our country lacks a viable system to verify new hires' work eligibility. In addition, communities of recently arrived legal immigrants help create immigrants' networks used by illegal aliens and serve as incubators for illegal immigration, providing jobs, housing, and entrée to America for illegal-alien relatives and fellow countrymen."

## Nine Men Found in Sonoran Desert After Attempted Border Crossing

By Keph Senett

<http://www.pvpulse.com/en/news/mexico-news/nine-men-found-in-sonoran-desert-after-attempted-border-crossing>

On January 31, 2011, 31-year old Jade Beall set out into the Sonoran desert with two other Samaritan volunteers. They were trying to locate a migrant boy whose group had left him behind when he broke his foot during the grueling walk over the U.S./Mexico border.

The boy had last been seen near the Tohono O'odham Nation reservation, about 50 miles outside of Tucson, Arizona. The Samaritans didn't locate the boy, but they did find a group of 9 starving men who had been lost for 16 days in the desert.

"Their sneakers were torn to bits, blisters so large they could hardly stand," Jade describes the scene in an interview with PV Pulse. "They were drinking the green slime water meant for cattle. [It's] poisonous for humans. They hadn't eaten in over a week."

The men, who were from Veracruz and Mexico City, had been abandoned by their coyote – the man they paid to smuggle them across the border. Of the group, the oldest was in his mid-60s; the youngest was a teenager.



The issue of 'illegal migration' is a thorny one, a tangled knot of history and politics. "Indigenous people have been migrating from South America to North America for thousands of years," Jade points out. "That's all they're doing – they just want to migrate to better work and then migrate back home."

But of course it's not that simple. While on the one hand Mexican workers offer a supply of cheap labor to American homes and companies, on the other hand, the workers themselves are seen by some to be "stealing" jobs that could be held by Americans. Additionally, the towns that dot the U.S./Mexican border are already notorious for drug cartel violence, and all Mexicans crossing the border are sized up as possible drug smugglers. Finally, there's the assumption that Mexican migrants are trying to illegally *immigrate* – to cross the border and remain in the U.S.

Mistrust and increasingly stringent immigration policies had already created a situation whereby legal migration was extremely difficult and unavailable to many Mexicans. Then, after 9/11, things got even worse. The United States erected walls at the Tijuana and Nogales crossings. "They put in lights, flew planes overhead," Jade explains. "The U.S. government thought the desert would be a natural ally but even more people have been crossing. Over 5,000 bodies have been found in the last 10 years. They essentially funneled [migrants] into this deathtrap. It's a four-day walk through the desert, and that's at a high speed."

The hostilities toward Mexican migrants were expressed in law in early 2010 when Arizona passed the controversial bill SB 1070. Proponents of the bill defended its means by highlighting its end. [In the words of SB 1070's author State Senator Russell Pearce](#), it “simply takes the handcuffs off of law enforcement and lets them do their job.”

Challengers said that SB 1070 entrenched a racist system. "It's beyond the pale," said Chris Newman, legal director of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, in the [L.A. Times](#). "It appears to mandate racial profiling."

[The L.A. Times' Nicholas Riccardi offered this analysis](#): “The bill … makes it a misdemeanor to lack proper immigration paperwork in Arizona. It also requires police officers; if they form a ‘reasonable suspicion’ that someone is an illegal immigrant, to determine the person’s immigration status. Currently, officers can inquire about someone’s immigration status only if the person is a suspect in another crime. The bill allows officers to avoid the immigration issue if it would be impractical or hinder another investigation. “

In the same article Riccardi suggests that SB 1070 is simply another in a series of laws that make Arizona’s position on Mexican immigrants clear: “In 2006 the state passed a law that would dissolve companies with a pattern of hiring illegal immigrants. Last year it made it a crime for a government worker to give improper benefits to an illegal immigrant.”

Despite the divisive context in which her work takes place, for Jade, politics are beside the point. “There’s no political charge [in this work] for me. Yes, there’re borders to respect, but there’s so much abundance. We just have to believe in it.”

So why would anyone risk their savings to pay a coyote - who could abandon them - so that they might survive a life-threatening passage through the desert and into a country that doesn’t want them there?

Jade recalls the nine men she found last week. “The boy told me ‘*Veracruz está muy bonito pero muy pobre*’. Veracruz is very pretty but very poor. That’s why he had decided to come north.”

It’s a sentiment she’s heard again and again. “‘My home is beautiful but it’s poor.’ That’s everyone’s answer when you ask them in the desert. I’ve had farmers tell me they can’t even afford to buy their own tortillas.”



Jade is an American whose family moved to Yelapa, Mexico when she was two years old. The town is a tiny mixed community of Mexicans, Americans and Canadians. Though technically not an island, Yelapa’s only reachable by water taxi and this relative remoteness – along with a laid-back, hippie vibe – makes it a perennial favorite of off-the-beaten path tourists. It’s a

living example of a place where (indigenous) Mexicans harmoniously and equitably share the land and the community with (immigrant) Americans and Canadians.

When Jade returned to the States, she was struck by the stories of migrants lost in the desert – and by just how lucky she is. “Moving to Tucson and reading in the papers about all these deaths happening only 25 miles from my cozy home...” Jade’s voice trails off as she reaches for a way to express herself. This contrast, along with the familiarity she feels with the Mexican community, prompted her to find a way to help.

She found three organizations dedicated to helping migrants: [Derechos Humanos, No More Deaths](#), and [Tucson Samaritans](#). It was the latter that she approached, partly because it was the first she found, and partly because the Samaritans accommodate shorter volunteer time commitments. “I can sign up for a day at a time,” Jade notes.



And what a difference a day makes. On January 30, nine men had been lost and starving in the Sonoran desert for fifteen days. The next day, Jade and her Samaritan partners found them and delivered assistance in the form of their usual kit: pre-made food packets of non-perishable goods, water, socks, and medical supplies.



“There are thousands of migrant trails,” Jade explains, “and we just begin walking them.” The search is not as haphazard as it sounds. The Samaritans use tracking techniques, scanning the ground for footprints and cast-off litter. “We pick up the trash as part of the job too,” Jade says. “When the migrants are about to be picked up by their ‘ride’, they discard everything... You wouldn’t believe some of the things we find. Bibles, backpacks, kids’ toys, everything. Sometimes you find women’s bras.”

Migrant workers used to be almost exclusively men, but Jade says she’s seeing more and more women and children showing up in the desert. “It’s gotten so much harder for the men to come home, so women are trying to join them there,” Jade explains. As treacherous as the trek is for men, it’s even more so for women. “Yes, sexual assault is very common. It’s not the migrants – the drug smugglers prey on migrants in the desert,” Jade clarifies.

Once the Samaritans locate the migrants, they are bound to adhere to strict rules limiting their aid. “We give them the food and clean water, and tend to their blisters. We ask them whether

they want to go back to Mexico. If they don't, we let them go on, but we can't take them in our car or let them use our phones. If they say they do, we call Border Patrol."

Given the political and social context in which these rescues take place, it's easy to imagine Border Patrol as authoritarian villains, but Jade says this just isn't so. "We're not at war with [migrant workers]. The BP has to deal with drug smugglers, too, and there's just no way to know. The Border Patrol is pretty humane overall."

In a strange contradiction of policy, there's a substantial budget allocated to helping with the rescues. Helicopters are dispatched to administer first aid and take the migrants back to a detention center where they'll be fingerprinted and held. Jade says that first offenders are almost always released but that people who try to cross a second or third time might be incarcerated.

"These people are economic refugees," Jade says. "They're treated as if they're smuggling cocaine, but they're just frail men who are hoping to make a better life. They're people who have the faith that there's something there – and they're going to walk to it. It's awesome."

*Photo credits: all via [Tucson Samaritans](#) except the last photo, which is from the [Arizona Department of Environmental Quality](#).*

## **Migrants Risk Everything in Arizona Desert Crossing**

*By Jeb Sprague*

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51086>

NOGALES, Mexico, Apr 17, 2010 (IPS) - As he drops his last purification tablet into a pail of swirling, murky water, Sergio, 26, stares out toward the desert. Recently deported from Arizona, where he has a young child and where he has lived for the majority of his life, he explains, "I have to return, it's my home."

Lacking official U.S. documentation, Sergio, like other undocumented migrants is unable to get a driver's license. Using a fake ID, he was originally deported to Mexico after being pulled over in a routine traffic stop and jailed for four months.

In fluent English, he explains that immediately upon his deportation he attempted to cross the desert but was captured by U.S. border patrol agents and jailed for another eight months. He has no family ties in Mexico's frontier states, he explains, his life is in Arizona.

On Apr. 13, the harshest anti-immigrant bill in the country, SB 1070, passed through Arizona's state legislature. Criminalizing people for not having proper identification, the bill requires police to check the legal status of anyone they suspect of being undocumented.

Just two days later, a huge operation with 800 agents and officers from nine federal and local law enforcement agencies arrested 50 people working in the shuttle service sector, in what U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials described as including "unprecedented cooperation with Mexico's Secretaría de Seguridad Pública", in an investigation that has "implicated high-level members of human smuggling organizations".

On the same day, members of the anti-immigrant Tea Party organization held a few rallies in Arizona's Maricopa County. Former Republican congressman Tom Tancredo blamed undocumented migrants for committing murder and pointed to the case of an unsolved killing last month of an Arizona rancher named Rob Krentz.

"The blood of those people is on the hands of every politician who runs a sanctuary city," said Tancredo, speaking in Tempe.

On Pacifica Radio, Isabel Garcia, co-chair of the Tucson-based Coalition for Human Rights, said that she "put the onus and blame on the federal government, in addition to the state government, for funneling and purposely creating Arizona as the laboratory for all of these anti-immigrant measures".

With urban border crossing points such as Nogales heavily fortified, migrants deported to Mexico and wanting to return to their families in Arizona make dangerous treks across the desert.

According to U.S. civil rights groups, the number of migrants who die each year attempting to enter Arizona increased from nine in 1990 to over 200 by the mid-2000s.

The Barack Obama administration has continued its predecessors' policy of using death as a deterrent, which under U.S. and International law has been deemed illegal.

In 1994, with the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, then President Bill Clinton officially militarised the border with 'Operation Gatekeeper' and 'Operation Hold The Line'. By redirecting government resources to the major U.S./Mexico urban crossing sites - Tijuana/San Diego, Nogales/Nogales, El Paso/Juarez - where water, food, and shelter are more readily accessible, successive U.S. administrations have explicitly used open desert conditions as an immigrant deterrent.

Engracia Robles, a nun with Sisters of the Eucharist, helps run a small volunteer walk-in centre for deportees.

With no money, a location to sleep is hard to find, she says, and "people often sleep in the cemetery" just a few hundred feet away.

"People come in with their feet blistered, cuts on the face and bruised. They are hungry, destitute; shoes are broken from walking in the desert for days," she said.

IPS witnessed an emotional family reunion at the centre, as two children separated from their parents for months were finally brought together again. Wiping away their children's tears, the parents embraced their children for nearly half an hour before letting go.

Nearby, at the Mariposa port-of-entry, hundreds of trucks pass fuming up the hill crossing the border.

"This is a NAFTA border," explains Connie Romero, a volunteer with Arizona-based No Mas Muertes. "Money moves freely, people with money do too, but the poor are pushed into a dangerous cycle of crossing the desert."

On the Mexico side of the border, sitting beneath a tree near a bus bench across from the local cemetery, one group of deportees spoke with IPS about the dangers of desert crossings.

Agustín García, a construction worker, explained, "We have been in the U.S. for the last 18 years but we were shipped back by [Joe] Arpaio [referring to the sheriff of Maricopa Country, where Phoenix is located]. We have no family here. We have nothing here."

Another labourer, deported recently, could not understand why a country so large and with so much opportunity would not allow him to work, as he was breaking no laws. "Sheriff Arpaio does not like people with brown skin. John McCain, the senator of Arizona, hates me because I'm brown. But Obama is a black man, he should understand, but he also hates me. Why?"

Corey Jones, a local kindergarten teacher, undergoing a training seminar with Samaritans Patrol, a migrant advocacy organisation, says, "Arizona is the site of a social struggle. On one hand you have very powerful wealthy people that benefit from the labour of a super-exploitable class of workers, and on the other hand you have some of the poorest people in North America seeking to make a living any way they can."

Amore, B. ed. *Odiseas Invisibles: Arte de trabajadores mexicanos en Vermont*. Kokoro Press, Benson, Vermont, 2010.

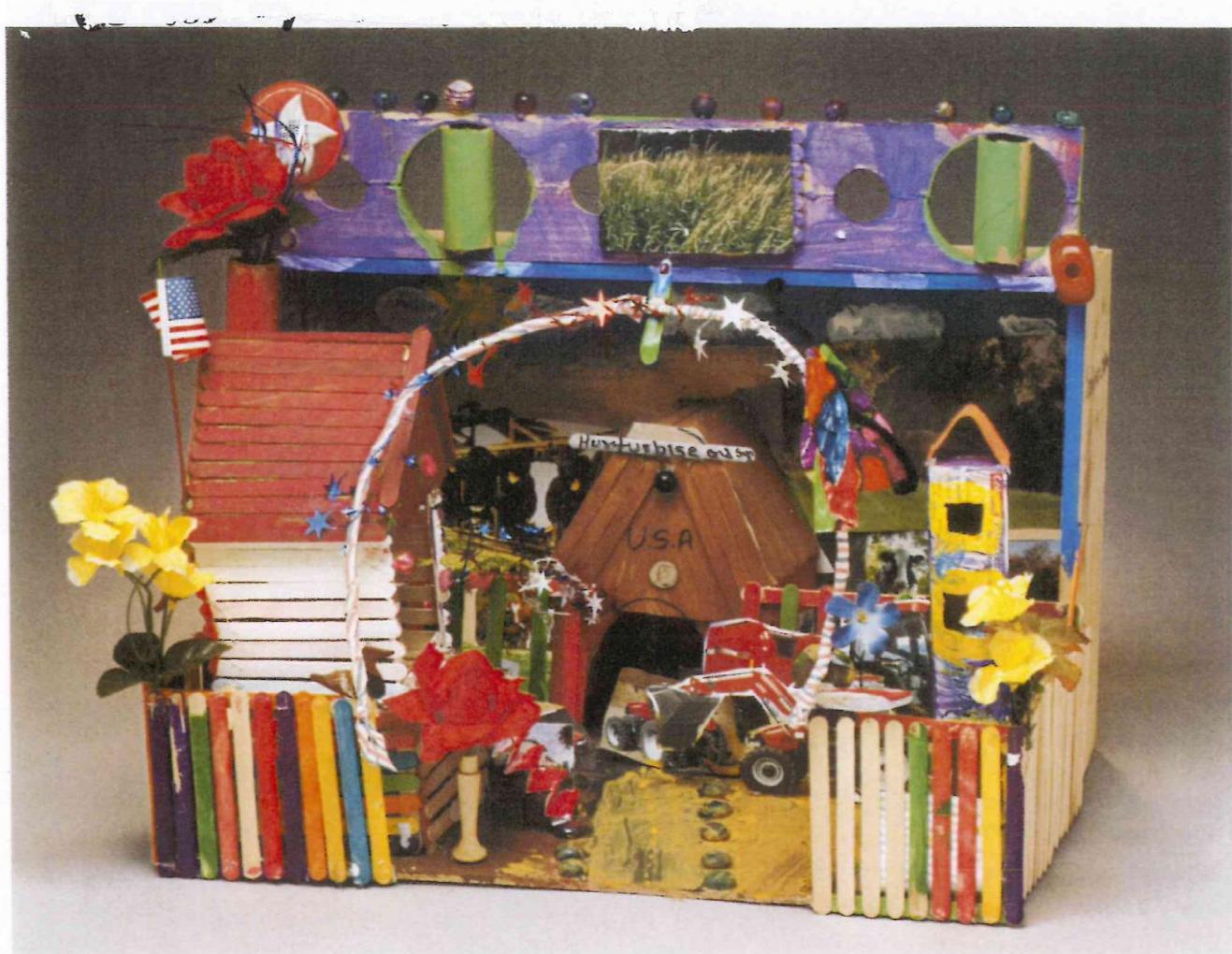


photo: Tad Merrick

**La caja de un rancho**  
**Boxed in on the Farm**

**Juan Carlos**

Wood, acrylic, photo, glass, mixed media  
17.5" x 19.5" x 15", 2010

He estado en este mismo rancho tres años y ocho meses. En este tiempo he salido del rancho solo unas ocho veces. Me siento muy bien trabajando aquí pero por ratos me siento muy infeliz. ¿Porqué? Ni yo lo sé, porque mi vida no la entiendo nada. En México yo era divertido. Me gustaba salir, convivir, Me gustaba platicar y estar con la gente. Y ahora con poco me enojo o me siento triste. O solo quiero estar solo. Me da ganas de hacer cosas que sé que no debo hacer. Una vez pegué a la pared. Siento adentro algo en el corazón algo que traigo adentro que no está bien.

Mis carnales, hasta mi mamá me preguntan qué me pasa. Que porqué soy así, enojón. Que con tantito que no me

gusta me altero. Hasta con mi mamá le cuelgo el teléfono a veces si me dice algo que no me gusta. Y no entiendo porque hago lo que hago, porque ahora soy así. Dicen que con el alcohol que te quita la pena y a veces cuando me siento así agarro una cerveza y otra y tomo. Creo que no puedo estar contento porque siempre que me siento contento pasa algo a mi familia o a mí. La semana pasada me sentía bien, y al rato me habló mi mama, y me contó que mi abuelo que está enfermo estaba muy grave. Ya no me gusta estar contento porque siento que algo mal ya me viene.

En los Estados Unidos piensan que nosotros venimos a

quitar el trabajo a los americanos; por eso no quieren a los mexicanos. Es porque no tenemos papeles que algunos americanos nos humillan. Pero ¿porqué nos humillan? Somos iguales como personas. Como mexicanos no nos damos por vencidos. Seguiremos luchando sobre tener los papeles para tener libertad.

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### **Boxed in on the Farm**

Juan Carlos

I have been at this same farm for three years and eight months. For all this time I have left the farm only about eight times. I feel good working here, but sometimes I feel really unhappy. Why? I don't even know because I, myself, don't understand my life at all. In Mexico I was fun. I liked to go out and spend time with people. I liked to talk and be with people. And now for something small, I get angry or I feel sad. Or I just want to be by myself. I have the urge to do things that I know I shouldn't do. One time I hit a wall. I feel something in my heart, something that I have inside me that isn't right.

My family, even my mother, ask what's wrong with me, why am I like this, always angry. When there's just one small thing that I don't like, I get upset. Even with my mom, I hang up the phone on her sometimes if she says something I don't like. And I don't understand why I do what I do, why I am like this now. They say that alcohol erases your sorrow, and sometimes when I feel like this I grab a beer and then another, and I drink. I don't think I should be happy, because every time I feel happy something happens to my family or me. Last week I felt good and a while later my mother called and told me that my grandfather, who is sick, was in serious condition. I don't like to be happy anymore, because I feel like something bad will happen then.

In the United States they think that we come to take work from the Americans, and that's why they don't like Mexicans. It's because we don't have papers that some Americans humiliate us. But why do they humiliate us? We are the same: people. As Mexicans we won't give up. We will keep fighting to have papers, and to have freedom.

Translation by Naomi Wolcott-MacCausland

## Poema

Por Gomex - Un Trabajador de Rancho de Vermont \*\* By Gomex - A Vermont Farmworker

Para poderte explicar, tengo que mirar hacia atrás, hacia mi cruda realidad.

Yo tuve que dejar de estudiar para trabajar; lamentablemente, tuve que inmigrar.

Como me dolió el día de la partida. Pues, nunca me han gustado las despedidas; como me dolió ver a mi madre llorar.

Neta que me dieron ganas de poderme quedar, pero los quería ayudar y no me podía yo rajar así que los tuve que dejar.

Con un nudo en la garganta, en la mente muchos sueños, y mi corazón se quedaba sin dueño. Es un sentimiento misterioso pues te separas de lo más valioso.

Lágrimas tuvieron que rodar para llegar a este lugar; los kilómetros que recorrió, los recuerdos, paso a paso, en pedazos está mi corazón, porque aquí recibo mucha discriminación.

El sufrimiento ha sido mi mejor amigo y mi sombra mi único testigo. Yo no sé por qué nos odian tanto si no estamos robando; al contrario estamos trabajando y ellos nos están deportando, nos tratan como todo un criminal; nuestro delito: el querer progresar.

¡No más deportación! Los inmigrantes somos útiles para esta gran nación. En mi alma este murmullo se escucha: "Mi mundo es mi orgullo" y yo sigo en la lucha.

Aún recuerdo a mi familia allí parada mirándome como me alejaba; no sé si los volveré a ver; tal vez en este país la vida puedo perder. Si eso pasa, que digan que se fue y este sueño al menos lo traté.

A cada momento, dormido o despierto, a cada instante no se me olvida que soy un inmigrante; pero eso no me quita las ganas de seguir adelante mientras esté ayudando. A lo más importante, seguiré luchando por un mejor mañana porque no arriesga no gana.

Debemos unirnos antes que suba la marea; tenemos que romper todo las fronteras. Necesitamos ver más allá de colores y banderas.

Siempre hay una oportunidad para mejorar y voy a enfrentarme a la realidad. Yo sé que no es fácil la vida que construyo pero aunque no me creas, mi mundo es mi orgullo. Mi familia de mí está dependiendo y para no hacerlos sufrir, les estoy mintiendo: les digo que aquí muy bien me está yendo. Sintiendo cómo pasa el tiempo lento, llorando y sufriendo por dentro, el tormento que está pasando no puedo ignorarlo y me está ahogando.

Es difícil nadar contra la corriente pero solamente unidos saldremos sobrevivientes. Es difícil comer cuando tienes ganas de llorar. Es difícil de creer que te estoy ayudando y tú de tu país me quieras sacar.

No hagas cosas de las cuales te vas a arrepentir. Somos la fuerza de trabajo que facilita tu vivir. Discúlpame si te ofendo, pero lo tenía que decir.

Esto es un poco de mi vida ilegal. Día a día, al riesgo de ser deportado, me tengo que enfrentar el miedo; lo hago a un lado, lo aprendí a controlar. Esto no es ficción, esto es mi cruda realidad.

Espero que me entiendas y hagas conciencia detrás de cada inmigrante hay una dolorosa vivencia.

## Poem

In order to explain to you I have to look back to my harsh reality. I had to stop studying to work; unfortunately I had to migrate. How the day I left hurt me. How I have never liked goodbyes, how it hurt me to see my mother cry.

Believe me, I wanted to be able to stay, but I wanted to help them and I couldn't just give up, so I had to leave them. With a knot in my throat, many dreams in my mind, and my heart was left rudderless. It is a mysterious feeling to separate from that which you hold most dear.

Tears had to be shed to arrive at this place; the miles that I traveled, the memories, step by step, my heart is in pieces, because here I am the object of much discrimination.

Suffering has been my best friend and my shadow my only witness. I don't know why they hate us so much, as we are not stealing; on the contrary we are working and they are deporting us, they treat us just like a criminal; our crime: the desire for progress.

No more deportation! We immigrants are of service to this great nation. In my soul this murmur is heard: "My world is my pride" and I'm still in the struggle.

I still remember my family standing there watching as I was moving away; I don't know if I will see them again; perhaps in this country I might lose my life. If that happens, may they say he went away and at least tried for this dream.

At every moment, awake or asleep, at every instant I cannot forget that I am an immigrant; but this doesn't stop me from wanting to keep on as long as I am helping. Most important, I will keep on fighting for a better tomorrow because nothing ventured, nothing gained.

We must unite before the rising tide; we must break through all boundaries. We must see beyond colors and flags. There is always an opportunity for improvement and I am going to face reality. I know that the life I am building isn't easy and although you may not believe me, my world is my pride. My family is depending on me and so that they may not suffer, I lie to them: I tell them that things are going well for me here. Feeling how slowly time passes, crying and suffering inside, I can't ignore the torment that is happening and that is suffocating me.

It is difficult to swim against the current but only by being united will we come out survivors. It is difficult to eat when you feel like crying. It is hard to believe that I am helping you and you here want to throw me out of your country.

Don't do things you are going to regret. We are the workforce that enables your way of life. Forgive me if I offend you, I had to say it. This is a bit of my illegal life. Day after day, at the risk of being deported, I have to face the fear; I put it aside, I learned to control it. This is not fiction, this is my harsh reality.

I hope you understand me and become conscious that behind every immigrant there is a painful existence.

### The Golden Cage – Los Tigres Del Norte

I'm established here  
In the United States  
Ten years have passed  
Since I crossed as a wetback  
With no proper documents  
I'm still an illegal

I have my wife and children  
Whom I brought when they were young  
And they've already forgotten  
My beloved Mexico  
Which I can never forget  
And cannot return to

What's money good for  
If I live like a prisoner  
In this great nation  
When I'm reminded of this, I cry  
Although this cage is made of gold  
It's still a prison

Listen son,  
Would you like to go back and live in  
Mexico?  
"What are you talking about dad?  
I don't want to go back to Mexico,  
No way dad."

My kids don't speak to me  
They've learned another language  
And they've forgotten Spanish  
They think like Americans  
They deny that they're Mexicans  
Though they have my skin color

From work to my house  
I don't know what's going on with me  
Although I'm the head of the household  
I almost never go out  
Because I'm afraid that they'll catch me  
And deport me

What's money good for  
If I live like a prisoner  
In this great nation  
When I'm reminded of this, I cry  
Although this cage is made of gold  
It's still a prison

### La Jaula de Oro – Los Tigres del Norte

Aquí estoy establecido,  
en los Estados Unidos,  
diez años pasaron ya,  
en que cruce de mojado,  
papeles no he arreglado,  
sigo siendo un ilegal,

Tengo mi esposa y mis hijos,  
que me los traje muy chicos,  
y se han olvidado ya,  
de mi México querido,  
del que yo nunca me olvido,  
y no puedo regresar,

De que me sirve el dinero,  
si estoy como prisionero,  
dentro de esta gran nación,  
cuando me acuerdo hasta lloro,  
aunque la jaula sea de oro,  
no deja de ser prisión,

" Y escúchame hijo,  
Te gustaría que regresaramos a vivir a  
Mexico"  
whatcha talkin about dad,  
I don't wanna go back to Mexico,  
no way dad,

Mis hijos no hablan conmigo,  
otro idioma han aprendido,  
y olvidado el español,  
piensan como americanos,  
niegan que son Mexicanos,  
aunque tengan mi color,

De mi trabajo a mi casa,  
no sé lo que me pasa,  
que aunque soy hombre de hogar,  
casi no salgo a la calle,  
pues tengo miedo que me hallen,  
y me pueden deportar,

De que me sirve el dinero,  
si estoy como prisionero,  
dentro de esta gran nación,  
cuando me acuerdo hasta lloro,  
aunque la jaula sea de oro,  
no deja de ser prisión,

## Cultural Differences

The behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular ethnic group

## Diverse environments

Language, Education, Class, Gender,  
Religion, Origin

## Cultural Interpretations

"It is important for you to understand that what people do and say in a particular culture, ..... are not arbitrary and spontaneous, but are consistent with what people in that culture value and believe in. By knowing people's values and beliefs, you can come to expect and predict their behavior.....

Moreover, once you accept that people behave the way they do for a reason, whatever you may think of that reason, you can go beyond simply reacting to that behavior and figure out how to work with it. Knowing where ..... behavior is coming from doesn't mean that you have to like or accept it, but it should mean that you're no longer surprised by it--and that is a considerable step toward successful cultural interaction." *Peace Corps Excerpt from Culture Matters* <http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/enrichment/culturematters/index.html>

**A person comes to a meeting half an hour after the stated starting time. How might this act be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?**

In the United States, punctuality is considered important. It is often considered a sign of respect to arrive on time and disrespect to arrive late. Employees that arrive late to work are seen as not committed or interested in the job. Punctuality is linked to productivity.

In Latin America, time is flexible. It is not uncommon for someone to show up thirty minutes to an hour late for a meeting. The general assumption is that if someone is late there is a "good reason" for their lateness.

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**Someone kicks a dog. How might this act be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?**

In the United States, dogs are considered to be pets and as such are afforded a certain place in society. Some people are said to treat their dogs better than their children.

In Latin America, especially in rural areas, dogs are not kept as pets but rather as protectors of the home. They are often fed with left overs and scrounge for food as purchasing dog food for dogs in rural areas is almost unheard of. Dogs are sometimes considered dirty and diseased and as such are often treated roughly. It is not uncommon to see people throw stones and sticks or kick a dog to get it out of the kitchen or away from the person.

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**A woman carries a container of water on her head while her husband walks in front of her carrying nothing. How might this be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?**

In the United States, the husband might be viewed as lazy or unsupportive.

In Latin America, there are more specific gender rules that are followed. Women in the rural areas are expected to do household chores and hauling water is often considered a woman's chore

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**A woman is in the middle of chopping vegetables for dinner when her husband comes home. Her husband yells to her from the living room that he wants a cup of coffee. There is a full pot of coffee sitting on the table in front of him. The woman stops what she is doing, goes into the other room, and pours her husband a cup of coffee. How might this be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?**

**In the United States, it is expected that a man help himself to food or drink if he is thirsty or hungry. If there is food or drink in front of the husband he would more than likely just help himself.**

**In many parts of Latin America, women are expected to stop what they are doing to serve their husband's needs. The kitchen is the woman's domain and she may be expected to serve food and drink as requested.**

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**A male guest helps a hostess carry dirty dishes into the kitchen. How might this act be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?**

**In the United States it is common for both male and female guests to help clean up after a meal.**

**In parts of Latin America, especially in rural areas, women are expected to clean. The gender roles are clearly defined and generally not broken. Both the women and men at the dinner might react negatively or not understand why a male would help the hostess with the dishes.**

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**An employee looks down while the employer is asking him to do something. How might this act be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?**

**In the United States, direct eye contact is important. If someone doesn't make eye contact it might be assumed that he is not listening, is uncomfortable, or is lying about something.**

**In Latin America, too much direct eye contact might be considered rude or offensive. Not making frequent eye contact could be a sign of respect.**

**An employee invites the employer in to his house for some food. After giving the employer a drink and a plate of food the employee starts doing something in the other room and leaves the employer sitting by himself. How might this act be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?**

**In the United States, the employee might be seen as rude or the employer might feel uncomfortable sitting and eating by himself. In the United States the host is expected to sit at the table and accompany the guest.**

**In Latin America, it is common for an individual to be invited in to partake in a drink or food and be left on his own.**

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**The employer asks Maria a question, she looks at Pedro and Pedro answers. How might this be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?**

In the United States it might be assumed that Maria didn't understand the question and therefore looked at Pedro to answer for her.

In many parts of rural Latin America, the woman is expected to treat her husband with deference. Therefore, even though Maria understood the question and could have answered on her own she is expected culturally to defer to Pedro.

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The employer forgot to turn on the cooling system on the tank when his worker calls this to his attention the next day the employer starts swearing and kicking the door to the parlor. How would this be interpreted by a worker from the US? By a worker from Latin America?

An employee from the United States might attribute the employer's anger to the mistake the employer made. The employee might know that the employer has a temper and is not angry at the employee but rather at himself.

An employee from Latin America might think the employer is angry at him for telling him about the problem. In some parts of Latin America, it is not common to express anger or frustration so vocally in the work place.

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The employer invites a worker to his home. The employer opens the door wide. The employee stands outside and doesn't come in. What might be going on?

In Latin America, it is customary that upon opening the door that the invited individual wait until he be invited in. As he enters he will ask permission to do so by saying "Con permiso"

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The employer asks how the job is going and the worker says todo bien (all good). The next day the worker tells the employer that he is leaving that very day. What might have happened?

Confrontation and expressing discontent are often avoided by workers from Latin America. Because conflict might make the worker uncomfortable sometimes it is considered easier to just leave a frustrating situation instead of talk about the problem.

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The employer explains that he wants a couple of the cows switched from one group to another. He asks the employee if he understands. The employee says yes. The next day the employer notices the cows are in the same groups as before. What might have happened?

It is likely that the employee, to avoid upsetting el patron, said that he understood what the patron explained even though he did not understand.

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**An employee offers you a jar of canned fruit from Mexico. You've tried it before and you don't like it. You politely decline and explain why. The employee as you leave hands you the jar of fruit. Why might this be?**

Refusing something that has been offered can be considered rude and impolite. Therefore, it is expected that when something is offered the other person is going to receive it.

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You've got two brothers working on the farm. They've been there for 2 years. They tell you that their father is coming to stay for a few days. Next thing you know one of the brothers tells you he is leaving. You tell him that you appreciate his work and that you wish he wouldn't leave. He seems really sad to go. Later you find out that his father had been fired from his last job and told his son that he wants his job and that is why he left. How would this be interpreted in the US? In Latin America?

In the United States, a person earns his place by working hard and if a job has been earned the individual would not be expected to give it up because someone older or someone in the family wants it.

**In many parts of Latin America, age commands respect. This, in combination with loyalty to the family may result in a younger individual deferring to older workers and especially their family members.**

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You ask one of your employees if they would like a bag of apples that you and your family picked at an orchard. The employee says yes so you bring them over the next day. Two weeks later when you stop in to the house you see the untouched bag of apples rotting on the counter. What might have happened?

Refusing something that has been offered can be considered rude and impolite. Therefore, despite the fact that the employees do not like apples they said yes to be polite.

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# Cultural differences and diverse environments

## Implications for farm owner-farm worker relationships

The following is a list of cultural and environmental observations of Latino migrant workers in Vermont that may or may not apply to the Latino workers on your farm. Each individual comes from a unique home and cultural environment. The following information is to provide some insight into how culture may impact the workplace. Additionally, this information may assist employers with decisions when working with a Latino workforce.

### 1) Respect of authority and hierarchy

- There is a high regard granted to people in authoritative roles and power positions, such as bosses and managers
- Expectation that work delegation and decisions are made by the boss
- The business owner has final say (worker might request meeting with owner rather than manager)
- Family hierarchy is important – youth are taught to respect their elders. An older brother may take on authoritative role if parents are absent
- Conflict may arise due to co-workers or others not viewed as supervisors giving orders or correcting work methods

#### Examples:

- ❖ Pedro does what is asked of him without questioning why and doesn't complain.
- ❖ Daniel asks for a meeting to clarify some issue with the owner even though there is a manager that has been put in charge of the Latino workers
- ❖ Marcos, though more experienced, defers to the instructions or opinions of his older brother.
- ❖ Hugo decides to leave because Pablo, who has been there the longest, tells him what to do all the time. Hugo says that if the boss didn't like how he worked the boss would tell Hugo himself.

#### Recommendations

- ✓ Co-worker/boss/supervisor roles should be clearly defined
- ✓ Communication should be directed to all workers or individual worker in question rather than utilizing the best Latino English speaker
- ✓ Training should be done by owner and/or manager rather than another worker especially if the new worker is not family
- ✓ If another worker is expected to train, the owner/manager should speak with both new and old worker(s) to clarify that the boss is delegating training responsibilities to the experienced worker.
- ✓ Use an interpreter whenever possible to ensure communication is understood and consider taking a Spanish class to allow better communication

### 2) Machismo and women in the work place

- Women and men have distinct societal roles
- Traditionally, men provide for the family and women are in charge of home
- Women may look to their husband/boyfriend to make decisions
- A woman supervisor might have more difficulty managing male employees. Male co-workers might delegate responsibilities to female co-workers but a female co-worker might not delegate responsibilities to a male co-worker.

#### Examples:

- ❖ Dora and Jorge have the same job and work the same number of hours. Dora speaks more English than Jorge. When you ask Dora a question in front of Jorge, Dora looks at Jorge before he answers or gives her permission to talk.

- ❖ You notice that Alex often tells Maria to do certain things at work for him but she never tells him what to do.
- ❖ Sara is the farm owner and manager. She is in charge of making sure all the work gets done correctly in the parlor. You notice that your male employees call you and listen to your instructions more readily than Sara's.

#### **Recommendations**

- ✓ Clearly define women co-workers as equal and women supervisors as authoritative figure (decision maker)
- ✓ Be aware of role conflict between married couples due to both partners working. Recognize that a female employee might be responsible not only for working all of her hours but to cook and clean.
- ✓ If boss needs information directly from the woman worker, approaching her directly without presence of her husband/ male co-workers might be more successful. **HOWEVER**, it is not recommended that a male supervisor or co-worker be alone in a room with a female employee.
- ✓ Use an interpreter whenever possible to ensure communication is understood
- ✓ Consider taking a Spanish class to allow better communication

### **3) Living standards & gender roles**

- Many Latino workers in Vermont come from rural living environments – basic house structure, outhouse, different sanitary conditions
- Workers may not have used microwaves, dishwashers, ovens, indoor plumbing, indoor heat before coming to the US
- Women are traditionally assigned all household chores, cleaning, and cooking in addition to jobs outside of the home. Mothers often take care of their sons until they marry – at which point their wives take over the mother's role.

#### **Examples:**

- ❖ You notice that the wash settings are on delicate and cold water. You ask if this is how he usually washes his clothes and Juan says that he just turns the dial until he hears water starting to fill up the washer.
- ❖ Poncho asks for a different kind of coffee. He says that the Folgers that he has been using is really grainy. After investigating further you realize that Poncho has been trying to prepare ground coffee as if it were instant
- ❖ Sofia and Eli work the same number of hours but you notice that Sofia does all the cooking and cleaning not only for Eli but for the rest of the workers as well.
- ❖ Your workers throw their toilet paper in the trash bag or on the floor instead of flushing it.
- ❖ The heat in the house is always turned up really high.

#### **Recommendations**

- ✓ Clear explanation of appliance use if they have not used them before
- ✓ House and appliance safety considerations
- ✓ Explain use of and safety for unfamiliar cleaning products
- ✓ Clearly define house maintenance expectations
- ✓ Explain housing and maintenance costs especially heat and water usage
- ✓ Give clear directions if there are guidelines on how you would like heat and water to be used
- ✓ Do monthly housing inspections to make sure guidelines are being followed and to follow up with employees on any questions or concerns there are about appliance use and house upkeep.
- ✓ Use an interpreter whenever possible to ensure communication is understood
- ✓ Consider taking a Spanish class to allow better communication.

#### **4) Family values/community relationships**

- ✓ Sacrifice to come to the USA – Choice made to support family
- ✓ Close-knit family in Mexico – workers provide moral and economic support to family and community who are far away
- ✓ Workers struggle with loneliness, nostalgia, and the heavy sense of responsibility
- ✓ Machismo – a strong or exaggerated sense of manliness, may prevent male workers from expressing their emotions

##### **Examples:**

- ❖ Sergio traveled over 5000 miles by land and now lives in remote Vermont. He hasn't left the farm in over a year.
- ❖ Juanita buys \$100 of phone cards every week to call her family in Mexico.
- ❖ Abel sends 90% of his earnings home to his parents to support their everyday expenses and to send his little sister to high school.
- ❖ Pedro usually sings in the parlor while milking but Sunday nights he is always a bit quiet after phone calls home to Mexico. If you ask how he is, however, he always says he's fine.
- ❖ Marta is pregnant but does not want her family in Mexico to know because she is ashamed that she will no longer be able to work to support them.

##### **Recommendations**

- ✓ Support farm visits from community members to help combat loneliness
- ✓ Facilitate recreational and social activities
- ✓ If a worker seems down but says he is ok, continue trying to connect with him periodically as he might just not be expressing his emotions.
- ✓ Hire family members and community members, allow workers to self-replace or be involved in hiring process when possible
- ✓ Facilitation of communication and money transfer (cell phones, land lines, international phone cards, Western Union)

#### **5) Religion**

- Many Latinos have close ties to religious institutions
- Catholic and Evangelical are the primary religions. They have differing practices but dedication to religious observances and participation in religious community is important
- Inability to attend place of worship, celebrate holidays, mourn in traditional ways increases feelings of isolation

##### **Examples:**

- ❖ Fermin has been working for you for 2 years. The only thing hanging on his walls is a picture of the Virgin de Guadalupe.
- ❖ In many parts of Latin America, an overnight wake is held at the home of the deceased. Family, friends, and neighbors arrive at the house to mourn the loss, view the body, and support the surviving family members.
- ❖ Attending a Sunday service in Latin America is a large part of many communities.

##### **Recommendations**

- ✓ Identify worker religion
- ✓ Support religious farm visits if workers want them
- ✓ Support workers in attending church services if possible
- ✓ Acknowledge and respect mourning traditions in case of loss
- ✓ Consider taking Spanish classes to allow for better communication

#### **6) Conflict/discomfort avoidance**

- Cultural desire to promote positive relationships and avoid conflict or disharmony (Avoiding conflict sometimes results in overnight departure)
- May indicate understanding of instructions despite confusion

- May agree to something despite no intention of follow through

#### **Examples**

- ❖ You explain to Jose that you want him to scrape the alley ways once a day from here on out. You ask if he understands and he says yes. A few days later you notice that the alley ways haven't been scraped since your conversation with Jose.
- ❖ Miguel tells you he is leaving the following day because he has decided to go back to Mexico. You find out later that he is working on a neighboring farm.
- ❖ You ask Arturo if he would like to go to your house for dinner. He says yes but then never shows up.

#### **Recommendations**

- ✓ Clarification of plans or requests
- ✓ Be aware of body language indicating discomfort
- ✓ Confirm understanding of instructions
- ✓ Follow-up with workers if there was no follow through
- ✓ Use an interpreter whenever possible to ensure communication is understood
- ✓ Consider taking Spanish classes to allow better communication

### **7) Language/Education**

- Educational systems in rural Latin America are at lower standards than the US
- The average worker attends 6 years of school
- Illiteracy is a concern especially with older workers and workers from rural Guatemala
- Spanish may be a second language
- Due to difficulty understanding English, workers frequently depend on both positive and negative body language for clarification

#### **Examples:**

- ❖ You ask Edgar to fill out the W-4 form in Spanish. He gives it back as says he would rather you fill it out.
- ❖ When you listen to Javier and Jose speak you don't recognize any words despite having studied Command Spanish.
- ❖ You give Lorenzo a dictionary and try to show him how to use it but it doesn't seem like he understands.
- ❖ You hear from the farm interpreter that Martin is worried that you are angry with him. He told her that you walked by looking really upset. A pin for the tractor had just broken so you were angry but not at him.

#### **Recommendations**

- ✓ Know workers language abilities and limitations
- ✓ Provide training in Spanish
- ✓ Use visual aids if worker is illiterate
- ✓ Recognize that your body language even when you are not talking to an employee could be interpreted positively or negatively
- ✓ Be aware of what body language conveys- if language abilities vary reiterate instructions to worker in private rather than highlight limitations in a group
- ✓ Use an outside interpreter for training, clarifying worker responsibilities, and resolving conflict to avoid disharmony among workers
- ✓ Consider taking Spanish classes to improve communication

## Ag Labor Management

What is it all about?

- Decisions related to who, what, how, where, why, and when
- **Having strategies in place** to make sure the who, what, how, where, why and when happens effectively and efficiently
- Good ag labor management is pro-active management not reactive management

# Labor Management

D. R. Bray, D. W. Webb, and J.E. Umphrey<sup>2</sup>

Management, the direction of employees and other resources to achieve objectives, is essential to the smooth operation of all organizations. The job of a manager is to create an environment in which people can use resources to reach the stated goals of the organization. Managing effectively requires planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Labor management, specifically, is the planning, organizing, leading and controlling of the operative functions of personnel.

The purpose of the labor management program on a dairy farm, or in any business, is to get the job(s) done correctly and on time. For one-person or small, family-operated dairy farms, labor management problems are usually minimal because management and labor responsibilities are performed by the same person or within the same family. As herd size increases, however, managers must devote more time to management per se, which leaves them less time to milk, feed, haul manure, and perform other routine tasks themselves. As farms grow and more of the daily work is performed by hired personnel, the importance of a labor management program increases. The continued success of the operation depends not only on the dairy manager's ability to manage land, capital, cows, etc., but also on the ability to delegate parts of the job to other people and see the same quality and efficiency of operations. Many dairy managers who, through hard work and good cowmanship, have developed successful family-size dairy operations, have failed when they expanded to larger operations. For many of them, a major reason for failure was an inability to get the job done as well through others as they could do it themselves.

Labor management increases in importance as herd size, level of production, and degree of mechanization increases. More cows will mean more hired personnel, and more people create more opportunity for disagreement or friction between employees. Higher production will increase the susceptibility of cows to a variety of problems and requires more precise feeding, milking, etc., to avoid a high incidence of problems. Increased mechanization increases the number of cows each person handles and means there will be less time to observe and care for individual cows. The risk is that a small problem may be overlooked until it becomes a larger, more expensive problem. To be a successful manager of a dairy operation large enough to require hiring labor, a dairy owner must learn how to get the job done right and on time through others—in other words, to manage people as well as cows, land, and capital. This task demands that the owner estimate the farm's labor needs accurately, hire good people, and train them well so that they will do the job(s) correctly and efficiently. In addition, a good manager will motivate employees, provide them with safe and healthy working conditions, and maintain good employer-employee relations—and relations among employees as well. The principles of effective personnel management apply to family as well as nonfamily labor, and many dairy farmers would do well to heed them in regard to their children who help on the dairy farm.

## **Wage Incentive Plans**

Many Florida dairies consider implementing wage incentive plans. Because each dairy has its own set of conditions, it is difficult to make blanket recommendations for designing such a plan.

Incentive plans should be designed to enhance or improve productivity. Many plans get started because there is a big problem area on the dairy, and a bonus is one way to correct this area. Once the problem is corrected, the plan has to be modified.

Incentive plans can be designed for problem areas, to increase production, or for a variety of reasons. Payments may be received weekly, monthly, or in some cases annually. If employees know that if the job is done correctly they will get a bonus, they are likely to police themselves, because a few bad oranges can spoil the plan for everyone.

### **Ideas for Designing an Incentive Plan**

1. Incentives should be above and beyond a good salary, not a substitute for wages. They should range from 5% to 100% of base salary.
2. The bonus should be large enough to make it worthwhile for the employee to want to participate.
3. The plan should be based on performance that is in the control of the employee and attainable in a definite time period.
4. Means for determining the bonus should be simple and understood by both the employee and employer. One-time bonus plans such as year-end bonuses usually don't work. Employees may change jobs after the bonus payment.
5. Method of payment and frequency should be stated in advance.
6. Performance should be measured by objective criteria.
7. The plan should be stated in writing to avoid any misunderstanding. It should include the purpose of the plan, a description of the employee's responsibility, methods used to calculate the bonus, how and when payments are to be made, duration of the agreement, and provisions for arbitration.
8. Each area should have a separate plan. For instance, if the milkers are doing an excellent job without a bonus plan, they may feel slighted when the heat detectors and breeders are doing a poor job and get what is perceived as more money due to a bonus plan.
9. The plan should not encourage practices that are unprofitable to the dairy. You should have control over practices that could increase costs over returns. Breeding every non-pregnant cow every day of the month may get more cows bred, but it won't increase your profits. Major management decisions must remain in your hands.
10. Incentive plans should be designed for a specific period of time and should contain provisions for annual revision or update.
11. Incentive plans can include either supervisors or workers or both.
12. A safety bonus for injury-free quarters or periods of time is always a good idea, even on dairies with no other plans.

### **Example of Bonus for Milk Quality**

1. \$50 bonus per month if bacteria counts are below a 10,000 average.
2. \$25 bonus per week for keeping somatic cell count below 200,000.
3. \$15 bonus per week for keeping somatic cell count below 250,000.

All above bonuses are paid only if less than 3% of the herd is in the sick cow string.

### **Example of Bonus for Increase Reproductive Performance**

1. \$0.50 for every cow or heifer detected in heat and properly recorded, whether or not the animal is eligible for breeding.
2. \$0.50 bonus for each cow bred.
3. \$10 for every cow confirmed pregnant 100 days post calving.
4. \$5 bonus for every cow confirmed pregnant 100 to 120 days post calving.
5. Depending on when you wish your heifers to calve (24 months, for example), a \$10 bonus for each heifer pregnant in time to calve at 24 months and a sliding scale for every month past this.
6. To change calving interval, you can pay a bonus of \$500 per year for every one-tenth point reduction in calving interval between where you are and where you wish to be.

### **Steps to Implement a Bonus Plan**

To ensure that your plan will be effective, you must see to it that you start with competent employees and then train them well to ensure that they understand what is expected of them. Before you begin, make sure that a bonus plan is the best way to solve your problem or reach your goals. Employees should be well trained before you start a bonus plan. Every employee should understand his or her job description, should set realistic goals, and should be evaluated on reaching those goals at annual review. The problem could be that employees don't know what is expected of them and could accomplish what you want without additional incentives if they simply understood the goals of your operation. An incentive program will not work with untrainable or incompetent help, of course, but even excellent employees need good training to understand procedures and expectations. Once you've selected and trained your employees and determined that a bonus plan is the best way to improve, the steps to devise and implement the plan are as follows:

1. Determine your problem areas.
2. Set realistic goals for each area and discuss these goals with your employees. Ensure that both parties agree on the goals and believe that they can be attained.
3. Increase pay in return for increased performance. Make sure the employees can see the link between their effort to improve and the increase in their pay.
4. Make sure that the problem can be solved by the employee you're rewarding for effort to solve it. For instance, it might seem to make sense to try to eliminate reproductive problems by offering an incentive to the employee breeding the cows, but if the cause of the reproductive problems is poor nutrition or some employee tearing up the cows by pulling every calf at 8 p.m. so he can sleep all night, then the employee doing the breeding doesn't stand a chance of getting a bonus and you can't improve what you hope to.
5. Anticipate loopholes in the plan that might encourage wasteful, unprofitable changes that hinder progress toward your goals. For instance, if you offer a reward for breeding more cows, you may see every cow bred every day, and your employees may receive bonuses, but your herd productivity will not improve.
6. Determine whether you want an individual or group plan. Group plans work best if it's difficult to separate contributions of individuals or if you want to foster group cohesiveness.
7. Anticipate changes in the dairy and technology. Changes in herd size may affect performance; the use of drugs to synchronize heats could change reproductive performance; as will changing to 3X milking. It is important to review the plan and to take these changes into consideration.
8. Give employees feedback and review the program often. Good communication keeps employees interested and builds their confidence that you can attain your joint goals.

9. You may wish to try an experimental program first so that if things don't work out as expected, either party can cancel the agreement.

## **Summary**

1. Incentive plans should not be a substitute for fair wages.
2. Bonus plan goals should be realistic and attainable.
3. All plans should be in writing and understandable.
4. Incentive plans should not foster unprofitable practices.

## **Employee Retention**

Why is it important to keep good employees? The obvious answers are: 1) reduced problems on the farm and a smoother-running operation; 2) reduction in the amount of time and money spent training new employees; and 3) a more profitable operation.

Some managers routinely attempt to hire their way out of labor problems, but in fact it's usually easier to make a model employee than to find one. Why not work a little harder to maintain and nurture the employees you have? Many personnel managers would do well to treat people as if they were what they ought to be in order to help them to become what they are capable of being. The following is a list of problem areas commonly found on operations that are experiencing labor problems.

## **Respect**

You as the employer must develop and maintain a mutual respect with employees. Simply "Follow the Golden Rule." Most employees start on a job with respect for their employer. It's what happens after hiring that can cause severe problems. Mutual respect for one another's roles is key: employees trust and value good managers, and managers trust and value good employees. You can maintain the respect of employees by being honest and fair with them. Good employers will work hard to develop a team spirit among employees.

Some employers have indicated that group meetings to discuss plans, goals and objectives with employees are a big part of keeping good employees. Business meetings are good for making employees feel like part of the team. Social activities such as a July picnic also are helpful in making employees feel good about their work, once again be careful to respect the culture of your employees by having food that your employees like rather than your favorite food.

## **Written Job Descriptions**

Many problems that occur between employer and employee develop out of a misunderstanding of expected performance. A well-written job description can prevent most of these. The job description is a written statement describing the objectives of the position, the work to be performed, the skills needed, the responsibilities involved, the relationship of the job to other positions, and its working conditions (hours of work). A good job description will also include the job title, salary, and who the immediate supervisor is. Make rigorous use of the job description when hiring a new employee, in orientation and training, and in the appraisal process.

## **Job Training**

It would be rare to find a person who does not want to do a good job. It's usually not a lack of employee motivation to do good work that causes problems on dairy operations but improper or deficient training. Some job training programs may only need to be four to six weeks long, while others may require a full year. The extra time spent with a new employee at the beginning of a relationship usually will pay off in the long run. A periodic update or training program also can be of tremendous value.

## **Employee Suggestions**

You as a manager should encourage suggestions from your employees. Who is better able to evaluate problems and see a solution than the one who works with it closely every day? While not every suggestion will be valid, many of them will be. If a suggestion is made that is not a true solution or would decrease the profitability of the operation, a proper explanation should be given to the employee. Also, if a good suggestion is made, give proper credit to the employee.

## **Compliment Your Employee**

This can be a short road to success and failure. A hard, fast rule for dealing with employees is "Praise in Public and Criticize in Private." Everyone likes to be told that they are doing a good job, especially when their peers are present. Equally important is to constructively criticize in private by offering suggestions for improving performance. Constructive criticism also should be a part of the Annual Performance Evaluation Meeting.

## **Advancement**

For employees to remain happy, there must be some opportunity for advancement. Advancement in position may be difficult on small operations, but there are other ways to allow for employee growth. Plan to offer "continuing education" to all interested employees. Artificial insemination training, herd health college, mastitis training and herdsman's schools offer employees the opportunity to grow and contribute to the success of the overall operation.

## **Communication**

Workplace relationships, like all relationships, depend on the ability and willingness of people to communicate with one another. Good people managers foster communication with an "open door policy" that will allow an employee to discuss problems and suggestions at any time. There is more to good communication than having an open door policy, however. Roadblocks to effective communication are almost infinite, but some of the main ones to avoid include poor timing, inadequate information, inappropriate channels, noise, selective perception, premature evaluation, mishandled emotions, and false beliefs.

The largest communication problem on many large dairies is that most of the labor force is Hispanic and the cultural and language differences become a barrier to implement any of the management factors covered in this paper.

The manager must know when and how to communicate with these employees who may not understand you completely, so often an employee who speaks the language and understands the culture is needed to be the lead person in dealing with these management issues. If an

employee fails to take action to improve performance, it may be because the manager assumed the employee knew when or how to do a job. A milking crew supervisor, for instance, might assume that a milker would know how to treat a mastitic cow. Yet a milker might not treat for mastitis without specific instructions, if for instance, the cow was a tail-end and a chronic case. This case may be reversed. An employee may find a mastitic cow and proceed to treat her even though management has decided to cull her tomorrow.

The selection of an appropriate channel or method of communication is very important. In general, written communication is better for details and when accuracy is needed. For example, a parts number and model of the broken equipment that you need from town should be written down, while the name of the parts store that has the part could be effectively communicated orally.

Another problem with the communication channel is noise. Noise refers to any situation that interferes with or distorts the message being communicated. This could be physical noise, as when a rearing tractor engine drowns out the supervisor's oral instructions. Or it could be noise in a more general sense, as when a manager tries to communicate with two people with different problems while on the phone with a third. This is called communication channel overload. In such a case, the manager is lucky if one person of the three understood adequately what he wanted done.

Selective perception deals with how people respond to a message. It is based on past experience, emotion, and belief. This can also lead to premature evaluation. Suppose the manager said something like this to a milking supervisor: "John, you are the hardest working and most conscientious supervisor I have. I need you to take over the hospital group." Do you think John had already decided to perform the task to the best of his ability before he knew what it was? What do you suppose John would think if he were told instead, "John, we are having a major problem with the people working in the hospital group. Would you take over supervision of that group?" John might say yes, but he would probably feel somewhat less enthusiastic about the new responsibility.

### **Be Selective in Hiring**

When hiring new personnel, try to hire the person who will fit into the group of employees you have. Try to find someone with skills that will complement those of current employees and fill any void that you may have in your operation. Current valued employees might suggest potential employees. Other producers in your area may be a valuable source of information.

### **Benefits**

Benefits and bonuses should be just that; they should never be used to make up for poor salaries. There are numerous ways that employers can provide benefits that will mean extra available income for an employee. Make sure that these benefits are truly benefits and not burdens or sources of potential problems. If you provide housing, make sure it is decent housing. Poor housing can cause problems within a family, and that will translate into problems for you as employees become dissatisfied. If you give an employee a bull calf to raise for beef, make sure to provide feed and common medical supplies as well. Raising a calf can be more costly than people realize.

Most important is simply to remember that employees are people. They have values, desires and needs like all people. You can control whether you have good employees or mediocre ones. You as a manager of people must ask, "Would I want to work for myself?" Then try to imagine a successful and profitable operation with unhappy employees.

## **Good Herdsmanhip/Cowmanship**

The dairy cow is a marvelous creature, a highly specialized and complex biological system capable of growing, reproducing and efficiently manufacturing large quantities of milk. She is also susceptible to many diseases and abnormal conditions that can prevent her normal growth, reproduction, and synthesis and let-down of milk. Some disorders can cause her premature death. It is the people who care for a dairy cow who largely determine whether she will be healthy and productive or unhealthy and unproductive, for, in spite of all her marvelous qualities, she is a mute animal. She is dependent on people with good herdsmanship to perceive whether or not she is in heat; whether she is normal or abnormal, and what the abnormality is; whether she is well or ill, and what illness afflicts her; whether she is contented or discontented, and what is causing the discontentment.

Herdsmanship, or cowmanship, may be defined as interest in and concern for cattle; awareness or perception (seeing, hearing, and sensing when an animal is normal or abnormal); and taking prompt action to correct abnormal conditions. Some people have livestock sense. They can readily detect or even anticipate abnormal or unusual conditions, and are interested enough to take prompt, meaningful action. These people are good cowpersons. Others cannot perceive abnormal or unusual conditions until the animal is so abnormal or the condition is so serious that performance is likely to be permanently impaired or even until death is imminent. Cowmanship, or the lack of it, can determine the profitability of a dairy herd of any size. Cowpersons are essential to successful dairying. You need one or more of them working with the cattle and caring for the animals on your farm.

Herds handled by people who lack cowmanship show a few tell-tale symptoms. Some of these symptoms are as follows:

## **Symptoms of Poor Cowmanship**

1. Calf and heifer problems -- calf mortality above 5%, unthrifty appearance.
2. Excessive cull rates in excess of 40%.
3. Low reproductive efficiency (e.g., calving interval above 13.5 months).
4. Periodic high incidence of various diseases such as mastitis, foot rot, metritis.
5. Periodic milk-quality problems.
6. Wide fluctuations in daily production.
7. Nervous cows.
8. Low production.

Herds benefiting from good cowmanship show opposite characteristics. The cattle in these herds are healthy and contented. They produce large quantities of a high quality product and reproduce regularly. These dairies are profitable operations, and people associated with these herds are optimistic about dairying and enthusiastic about their profession.

Good cowpersons realize their importance to the cattle, as well as the importance of cattle to them. Good cowpersons are aware that success is dependent on their high performance and that their high performance is dependent on their cowmanship.

## **Characteristics of a Good Cowperson**

1. Moves quietly and easily when near cattle, avoiding sudden rapid movement and loud talking or other noises.
2. Is naturally observant of cows, finds them interesting, and simply notices their condition (rarely misses swollen quarters, abnormal feces and discharges, etc.).
3. Visits cow lots several times a day (including at night) to check on cattle welfare, feed consumption, cows not milked, etc.
4. Takes prompt, meaningful action when unusual conditions exist rather than waiting for a convenient time--treating a sick cow, giving aid at calving, etc.
5. Knows the cows--calving dates, production, source, history, etc.

These characteristics indicate interest, awareness and ability to take proper corrective action. Combined, they indicate cowmanship ability, the essential ingredient in maintaining a profitable herd of any size.

A dairy is a complicated business, and a very important aspect of labor management is getting the right person in the right job. Some people like machinery. Others are comfortable with computers. Some do well with people. You'll need people with all these abilities to run your operation. The people you'll rely on most, though, are the cowpersons—whether you make them or find them ready made, you definitely have to have them! They'll keep your cows happy, healthy, and producing.

### **Footnotes**

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## **Recommended Basic Hiring Practices**

1) Minimum information to gather from a potential employee (in person or by telephone)

- Name
- Previous work experience
- Work experience related to job being offered
- Previous employer information (name and phone number)
- Length of last employment
- Why did he/she leave or is planning to leave
- Machinery or tool use experience relevant to job being offered
- Work specific knowledge relevant to job being offered (heats, calving, mastitis, dry cow treatment)

2) Information that you should share with a potential employee

- Job description
- Any policies you have (work hard, respect manager and coworker, be on time, no alcohol in the workplace...)
- Hours
- Time off
- Pay (starting and incremental)
- Other benefits (heat, electricity, cable, beef...)
- Housing situation (own room, sharing room, living room)

3) What to do before offering a position

- Call previous employer to gauge work experience, skill level, initiative, and ability to work with co-workers
- Revisit job description to make sure potential employee meets all requirements of the job

## **Bottom-of-the-barrel employees: Who is to blame?**

El Lechero Dairy Basics - Management  
Written by Santiago Ledwith, DVM  
Thursday, 09 December 2010 10:23

“No one in this area can get a decent worker.”

This is a common statement made by many dairy owners and managers in different areas of the country. Although this statement may ring true, it is not usually accurate. Employers have a direct responsibility to adequately interview and hire a reliable and informed worker, even if the potential worker’s primary language is not English.

There are some others issues that will influence the availability of hiring good workers, immigration policies, farm economics, etc.

Here are a few tips will help you hire “top notch” employees from the moment you interview them and avoid discovering that you employed a person with inadequate skills or character.

If asked how did you hire your last five employees, most would likely say, “I remember telling Jose (a trusted employee) to find someone he knows to hire.” This is a common hiring practice today.

Or perhaps you tried calling a phone number that was left by a walk-in, likely disconnected by now, or tried talking to a priest or a pastor of a local Hispanic religious congregation to see if he knows some good people who are in need of a job.

If you are using any of the above-mentioned hiring practices, then you will likely not find an awesome, hard-working employee. Why? You are not able to identify and determine the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate. You don’t know if the candidate has the skills or personality that best suit the work position.

In both cases, the applicant will not be attentive to your expectations, aware of his or her job description’s goals or attentive to official policies and your operation’s goals.

So what are the appropriate ways to identify and hire new reliable employees?

1. If you are not able to communicate in Spanish, find someone who you trust who can “speak dairy” in the applicant’s language. Translate all interview questions and job description and expectations before an interview.
2. Communicate the job description. Read the translated version, if necessary.
3. Clarify your expectations for the position and also explain what you expect from a member of your operation.
4. Have all the policies of your farm ready and explain them to a candidate.
5. Ask how candidates feel about your vision and goals of your operation.

6. Explain clearly the salary for the position such as how much per hour the position pays. Be clear and specific if you will not pay overtime.
7. Detail other employment benefits.
8. Describe the advantages the new employee will have working for you if compared to other operations.

Make no mistake, it is impossible to always “weed out” outstanding employees from mediocre ones but once you have developed and put in place a hiring practice, like the one we suggested, it is guaranteed that all new employees will start on the right path because: you have informed the goals of the position, you have set expectations, you have opened the communication channels, you have made clear the vision of your operation and most importantly you have identified in your candidates not just their set of skills but also their potential areas for training.

In conclusion, when executed properly, a hiring practice will determine the training and tools needed for developing outstanding employees. If you neglect this, the members of your staff cannot be held responsible for their mediocre performance. The one left to blame will be the employer. EL

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## **A Job Description Activity**

A job description provides both employees and supervisors with:

- A job summary
- Qualifications needed, responsibilities, tasks and duties
- Supervisory relationships
- Hours
- Working conditions
- Salary and benefits

A job description is used to:

- Inform applicants about the job
- Help the employer identify the best candidates
- Identify new employee training needs
- Clarify employee responsibilities to supervisors
- Evaluate job performance
- A document in the event of termination or other legal procedures

## Job Description

**Job Title:** Simple but descriptive

**Summary:** Overview of job

**Qualifications:** Any required or preferred experience, training, education

**Duties:** Tasks performed on any given day

**Work Relationships:** Any information about hierarchy, co-workers, managers, owner

**Hours:** Typically weekly schedule (be sure to include any occasional “extra” work)

**Salary:** Pay per hour or per week (include incentive program info)

**Benefits:** List all benefits beyond salary (housing, electric, heat, cable, milk, meat, etc)

## Sample Job Description

Job Title: Milker/Cow Handler

Summary: The milker/cow handler is responsible for all general duties associated with machine and parlor set-up, moving cows in and out of the parlor, milking, and cleaning of the parlor. Additionally, this person is responsible for reporting cow health and will occasionally be involved in treatment of sick or injured cows.

Qualifications:

- 1) Experience with cattle
- 2) At least 1 year milking experience (parlor preferred but tie stall ok)
- 3) Experience using skid steer to move and push up feed
- 4) Ability to learn fast and work independently after training period
- 5) Basic or better level of English language abilities
- 6) Ability to stand for up to 6 hours
- 7) Ability to lift up to 30 lbs
- 8) Training on mastitis detection and general cow health preferred

Duties

- 1) Sanitize and set up milking equipment
- 2) Move groups in and out accordingly
- 3) Milk all cows
- 4) Clean parlor, alleyways, and milk house daily
- 5) Separate and dispose of milk from identified cows
- 6) Maintain milking equipment
- 7) Detect and report all cows with mastitis
- 8) Recognize and report all cow health problems
- 9) Check birthing pen before and after each shift and report all fresh animals
- 10) Move newborn calves to calf holding area and feed colostrum
- 11) Note all cows showing signs of heat including heat signs
- 12) May be asked occasionally to assist with additional barn and stall cleaning

Work Relationships: This position works with one co-worker performing same duties. The milker/cow handler reports to the farm manager who reports to the farm owner. The milker/cow handler will sometimes work with the maintenance employees.

Hours: Saturday– Thursday 4am- 9 am, 4pm-9pm. Fridays off.

Salary: \$7.00 per hour for first 60 days. Provided job duties are performed to manager and owner satisfaction salary will increase to \$7.50. Position will increase .25 cents per 6 months.

Benefits: Workers Compensation, housing, heat, electricity, DirectTV, milk from farm, occasional beef and poultry

## Ejemplo de un Puesto de Trabajo

Puesto: Ordeñador/Manejo de Vacas

Resumen: El ordeñador y empujador de vacas es responsable para todas las áreas generales asociadas con alistar el equipo y sala de ordeno, entrar y sacar vacas de la sala de ordenó, ordeñar, y limpiar la sala. Además, esta persona es responsable para avisar sobre la salud de las vacas y a veces tendrá que ayudar en el tratamiento de vacas enfermas o lastimadas.

Requisitos:

- 1) Experiencia con vacas
- 2) Un mínimo de 1 año de experiencia en la sala de ordeño (en sala de ordeño de preferencia pero amarada está bien)
- 3) Experiencia en usar el eskids para mover y acercar alimento
- 4) Habilidad de aprender rápido y trabajar independientemente después del periodo de capacitación.
- 5) Nivel de inglés básico o mejor
- 6) Habilidad estar parado por hasta 6 horas
- 7) Habilidad de levantar peso de hasta 30 libras
- 8) Capacitación en detectar mastitis y salud general de la vaca preferida

Tareas

- 1) Esterilizar y alistar equipo de ordeño
- 2) Entrar y sacar grupos a la sala de ordeño
- 3) Ordeñar todas las vacas
- 4) Limpiar sala de ordeño, pasillos, y cuarto donde se guarda la leche diariamente
- 5) Separar y desechar de leche de vacas identificadas
- 6) Mantener equipo de ordeño
- 7) Detectar y avisar/anotar todas vacas con mastitis
- 8) Reconocer y avisar/anotar todas problemas de salud de las vacas
- 9) Chequear corral de vacas preñadas antes y después de cada turno y avisar sobre vacas recién paridas.
- 10) Mover beceras recién nacidas al corral de beceras y dar calostro
- 11) Anotar todas vacas mostrando celo y anotar cual seña se nota
- 12) De vez en cuando asistir con limpieza general del rancho y camas

Relaciones en el trabajo: Este puesto trabaja con otro trabajador que hace las mismas tareas. El supervisor del ordeñador/empujador de vacas es el mayordomo quien esta supervisado por el dueño/patrón del rancho. El ordeñador/empujador a veces tendrá que trabajar con el encargado de mantenimiento de equipos.

Horas: Sábado – Jueves 4am- 9 am, 4pm-9pm. Viernes - día libre

Salario: \$7.00 por hora por las primeras 60 días. Con tal de que el mayordomo y patrón estén contentos con la manera de hacer las tareas el salario aumentara a \$7.50. De ahí el puesto se aumenta .25 centavos cada 6 meses.

Adicionales: remuneración de los trabajadores, casa, calificación, factura de electricidad, DirectTV, leche del rancho, carne de res y pollo de vez en cuando

Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner \_\_\_\_\_  
Address 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Address 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

### **Job Description**

Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Summary \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Qualifications \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Duties \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Work Relationships \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hours \_\_\_\_\_

Salary \_\_\_\_\_

Benefits \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Nombre del Rancho \_\_\_\_\_

Dueño \_\_\_\_\_

Dirección 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Dirección 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Número de Teléfono \_\_\_\_\_

Correo Electrónico \_\_\_\_\_

### **Puesto de Trabajo**

Puesto \_\_\_\_\_

Resumen \_\_\_\_\_

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Requisitos \_\_\_\_\_

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Tareas \_\_\_\_\_

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Relaciones de Trabajo \_\_\_\_\_

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Horario \_\_\_\_\_

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Salario \_\_\_\_\_

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Adicionales \_\_\_\_\_

# **The Value and Common Sense of Job Descriptions**

By Bernie Erven

Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics  
Ohio State University

The dairy world has an interesting job description gap. Most dairy farm employees want job descriptions. Few dairy farmers provide them. More important, dairy farmers who work with their employees to write and use job descriptions praise their benefits. Most labor management specialists highly recommend job descriptions.

We start with an employee perspective. “Why didn’t you tell me what the job really is when you hired me?” “Why should I get blamed for not doing something that I didn’t know I was supposed to do?” “How can you expect me to do what you want, the way you want it done, and at exactly the right time if you haven’t taken the time to tell me?” We should expect these reasonable questions from people who do not have job descriptions.

Dairy employers also have questions. “Must I accept an employee saying no to something that needs to be done because it wasn’t precisely explained in her job description.” “No two days are alike so how can a job description cover everything that will come up?” “Why aren’t milker, and worker perfectly good job descriptions?” These too are reasonable questions.

Job descriptions gain support because they clarify duties and responsibilities, provide performance standards to be achieved and improve communication. They also help to sell jobs to recruits, develop training programs, motivate employees, make evaluation simpler, reduce turnover and reduce chances of litigation.

An effective job description need not be a long, detailed and legalistic document. One page is often enough. The job description should include at least a job title, a one or two-sentence overview of the job, a list of duties, percentage of time devoted to each duty, who the supervisor is and qualifications for a person to successfully do the job.

Some tips on writing your first job descriptions or improving the ones you have are:

1. Involve your employees. They best understand what they are now doing. You are not ready to write a job description until you clearly understand the job and what you expect the person in the job to accomplish. Avoid the impression that you don’t have job descriptions because you have not thought through each job.
2. Accept that writing job descriptions is time consuming in the short-run and timesaving in the long-run.
3. Get copies of job descriptions from other dairy farmers and from nonfarm employers in your community.
4. Write the duties first and then add a title and summary that fits the duties.
5. Limit the number of major duties to eight or fewer. Shoot for four or five major

duties. Expand on major duties by listing sub-duties.

6. State one duty as an elastic clause, e.g., assist with other duties for the good of coworkers and the business.

7. Begin each duty with an action verb, e.g., check, clean, move, help, repair and feed.

8. Avoid words that have many different meanings among dairy employees, e.g., milker, feeder and mechanic.

9. Match the job description to the actual job. Describe the job as it is. Avoid adding glamorous but unreal duties. A.I. work, selecting bulls and consulting with the veterinarian may be attractive to potential employees. Include these duties only if they are a real part of the job. Assistant herdsman may be an attractive title. Avoid using it to describe a position that is 90 per cent milking. If a job requires a person to be a generalist, e.g., dairy, crops and machinery, reflect the need for flexibility in the duties.

10. Take advantage of vacancies as a time to write new job descriptions.

11. Keep job descriptions current and accurate. Making review and update of job descriptions part of annual performance reviews avoids the job descriptions becoming useless paperwork.

In summary, job descriptions have great value for both employers and employees. A common sense approach best guides making them a valuable human resource management tool. David Sumrall, a Colorado dairy manager writing in the September 10, 1999 Hoard's Dairyman, wonderfully challenged other dairy managers, "We simply must do a better job of informing and training our workers. How can you expect an employee to do what you want, the way you want it done, and on your time schedule when you will not even take the time to tell them what it is you want done?"

## **Survey Results: Training, Information Transfer, Safety, Health, and Housing on Vermont Dairy Farms with Spanish Speaking Employees**

Between September and December 2010 the Farming Across Cultures Communication Project coordinator conducted interviews on 26 of the estimated 37 dairy farms in Franklin County with Latino employees. In all, 26 owners/managers and 53 Latino employees were interviewed. Responses have been compiled and analyzed to inform UVM Extensions' work in 4 main areas of interest: communication, work, health, and the home. Feedback from the producer/manager and employee allows us to better understand the population this project seeks to serve as well as support program development which meets the real needs dairy farmers and their Spanish speaking employees have identified. Here are some of the results that stood out to us.

**COMMUNICATION:** Producers/managers' report that **69%** of Spanish speaking employees do not speak any English or have limited to basic vocabulary. Workers report that **98%** of their bosses speak no Spanish or have limited to basic vocabulary. **62%** of producer/managers and **57%** of workers report using a mix of English, Spanish, and gestures to communicate. **89%** of producers/managers and **87%** of workers report communicating day to day information verbally.

**WORK:** **12%** of farms have monthly meetings with their employees and an interpreter. Of those who do not have monthly meetings, **44%** said they would have monthly meetings if an interpreter was provided at no cost, **44%** said they would not. **12%** said they might. **76%** of workers who currently do not have monthly meetings said that they would like to have monthly meetings with an interpreter. **87%** of workers said they would like their boss to train them more about their job. **78%** of employees report being trained at least partially by a Spanish speaking coworker. **52%** report they were trained only by a Spanish speaking coworker. **Less than 50%** of employers and employees reported that they cover farm safety, milk quality, housing safety, and housing expectations in training for workers. Some farms and employees reported they do not communicate work expectations, pay or hours with their employees as they expect a previous employee has shared this information.

**HEALTH:** **79%** of employees interviewed have not been to the doctor in the past year. **91%** have not been to the dentist. However, **47%** report they have been hurt on the job and **38%** have been sick on current farm. **83%** report language to be a barrier to health care access, **67.9%** report transportation, **60.4%** would have difficulty finding a doctor, **47.2%** would be afraid to go to the doctor, **45.3%** say they would have problems finding shift coverage, **39.6%** report money as a barrier

**HOME:** **85%** of producers/managers have at least one house maintenance concern: **77%** are concerned with cleanliness, **82%** grease build up on stove and **59%** food storage. **87%** of employees said they do not have difficulty with house maintenance and cleaning. **81%** of households reported having flies, **69%** mice or rats, **46%** cockroaches, **23%** of households

report bedbugs. **38.5%** of producers/managers report they discuss house maintenance guidelines with the workers to ensure the upkeep and safety of the house.

All of the 37 dairy farms that we have confirmed as hiring Latino workers were sent a letter that shared many of these results and were invited to participate in the pilot communication and training project. Farmers participating in the pilot project would receive support that included, among other things, holding monthly interpreted farm meetings between farm managers and workers, day to day interpretation support by phone, paperwork development and translation such as SOP's, support around health care coordination. Despite the identified need for communication support through the survey, only 4 Franklin County dairy farms have chosen to participate.

## **New Employee Orientation**

### **Importance of first day\***

First impression

Open communication

Your Job protocols

Your rules & guidelines (no cell phones at work, alcohol policy)

Clarity in responsibilities of employee and employer

### **Contents**

Farm Characteristics

Personnel Policies

Compensation & Benefits

Introductions

Job Duties

Safety

\* Orientation should be done in Spanish unless worker is proficient in English

# **The First 30 Days - Orienting New Employees**

Bernard Erven

Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics  
Ohio State University

## **Introduction**

You have only one opportunity to make a good first impression on new employees. The first day that a new person is on the job provides you many "teachable moments." Nearly all employees want to get off to a good start. The good start depends more on orientation than on how much work the person does the first few hours on the job.

Help every new person get off to a good start. Orientation is as important for the parttime high school worker as for the new full-time employee. Even a relative or nearby neighbor known to you for years will benefit from careful orientation.

Most every employer anticipates some obvious questions. "Where should I park?" "What time do you want me here tomorrow?" "What do you want me to do?" Orientation should go beyond answering these obvious questions. Here is the opportunity to convince each new person that he or she is important to you and to the farm.

## **Orientation as Socialization**

Orientation is the introduction of a new employee to the industry, the farm, the requirements of the job, the social situation in which he or she will be working and the farm's culture. The farm's culture includes its values (shared beliefs), history, tradition and norms of behavior expressed as dos and don'ts. Orientation is socialization. A new employee who is socialized understands the key points about a farm and its people and why things are done in particular ways.

Orientation should create an initial favorable impression. Key ingredients of the good first impression include sufficient information about when and where to report for work, paperwork handled efficiently and friendly people to guide new employees through the orientation.

Orientation actually starts with the advertisement of the position, the interview, and the job description given the new employee. Being businesslike in the hiring process is important. A written job description and written offer with the conditions of employment help set a positive tone.

Orientation should encourage acceptance by other employees. Introductions, informal interaction, a tour of the facilities with short stops to hear people talk about their jobs and history of employment at the farm, and opportunity for the new employees to ask questions all can help people gain acceptance.

## **Planning the Orientation**

After a person is hired and before the first day of work, you need to decide:

1. Who will be in charge of orienting the new person?
2. What will be the content of the orientation?
3. How will the orientation mesh with job training?

Charge one person with planning and conducting the orientation. Other people, including employees, can be involved even though responsibility rests with one person. Orientation should lead smoothly to the start of job training.

The person responsible for orientation should receive training and guidance from the top managers at the farm. Dumping orientation on an already overworked person with instructions to “show our new person around” rarely leads to accomplishment of orientation goals.

### **Content of Orientation**

The specific content of the orientation depends on the size and complexity of the farm. Following is a list of items for you to consider in planning the details of your orientation program:

#### **1. Farm Characteristics**

1. History of the farm
2. Mission statement and goals for the farm
3. Management team
4. Layout of facilities, buildings and land
5. Overview of what the farm produces and production processes
6. Key characteristics of the industry
7. Farm’s culture
8. Role of employees

Note → The owner of the business and the new employee’s immediate supervisor handling these topics together can make a lasting positive impression.

#### **2. Personnel Policies**

1. Policies and rules about such things as attendance, breaks, scheduling work, use of equipment and tools, and courtesy to other employees
2. Probationary period
3. Disciplinary practices
4. Safety procedures

Note → An employee handbook can cover many of these points. Employees can be asked to read the handbook and to discuss later with their immediate supervisor any questions they may have.

#### **3. Compensation and Benefits**

1. Pay and paydays
2. Vacation amount and scheduling
3. Sick leave
4. Insurance benefits
5. Retirement program

Note → The details of some of these benefits are best left for discussion at a later date.

#### **4. Introductions**

1. To owner/operator
2. To supervisor
3. To coworkers
4. To people who often visit the farm, e.g., neighbors, service people, close relatives, veterinarian

#### **5. Job Duties**

1. Where the work will be done
2. Specific tasks
3. Safety first principles and the importance of safety equipment

#### 4. Relationship of the job to other work on the farm

##### **Orientation Tips**

1. Have a detailed orientation plan, stick to the planned content, and start and end on time.
2. Put the new employee at ease before jumping into the heavy parts of the orientation.
3. Include the owner or one of the top managers of the farm to help impress on new employees that they are important to the business.
4. Encourage questions.
5. Keep first-day paperwork to a minimum. Postpone as much of the paperwork as possible until late in the first week of employment. A bored "paperwork sergeant" shoving pages and pages of forms at a new employee hardly creates a positive first impression of your farm. Too many new employees are asked the first morning on the job to sign numerous forms they don't understand.
6. Provide a glossary of farm terms. Include the everyday words that have special meaning on your farm.
7. Save a few minutes at the end of the first day to encourage the new employee, ask for questions and again emphasize his or her importance to the business.
8. Save at least 15 minutes at the end of the first week for the last phase of the orientation program. Encourage questions. Review progress made during the first week. Outline what will happen during the next few weeks. Send the person home feeling good about being part of your farm.

##### **Concluding Note**

Your reaction to these suggestions may be, "It would be nice but.... I don't have time for this stuff because we got work to do," or "Only big farms need to worry about these things", or "I hire people to work not learn the history of my farm."

You will do better with happy, positive and enthusiastic people than with people who are just there to do a job and go home. Well-planned and conducted orientation helps people get off to a good start. It increases their chances of being happy with their jobs and positive about you and your business. That opportunity to make a good first impression never can be repeated.

# New Employee Information Checklist and Guide

## New Employee Information

	Work Schedule
	Tasks/Responsibility
	Work guidelines/rules
	Lateness and attendance
	Illness/injury
	Time off
	Recording hours
	Pay
	Pay period
	Housing expectations
	Groceries/supplies/Western Union
	Giving notice
	Emergency contact

These topics are listed to encourage the employer to think about each individual item and to support communication between the employer and worker. Each farm has different expectations, policies, guidelines, and rules. This outlines some of the important information each new employee should receive from his/her employer upon beginning a new job.

<b>Work Schedule:</b>	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

**Tasks/Responsibilities (general overview)**

**Work Guidelines/rules:**

**Lateness and Attendance:**

**Illness/Injury: (Who to tell? Workers Comp?)**

**Time off:**

**Recording hours:**

**Pay (per hour/per week, cash/check):**

**Pay period (weekly/biweekly)**

**Giving Notice (preference):**

**Housing Information & Expectations :**

**Groceries/Supplies/Western Union: (when, how, payment)**

When:

How:

Payment for groceries:

**Emergency contact for: Problem in barn:**

**Housing issue (heating/appliances):**

**Cow health:**

**Personal injury/health problem:**

<b>Información Básica para el Nuevo Trabajador</b>	
	Horario de trabajo
	Tareas/Responsabilidades
	Orientacion de trabajo/Reglamentos
	Tardanza y ausencia de trabajo
	Enfermedad/Heridas o lesions
	Tiempo libre
	Como anotar horas
	Pago
	Periodo de pago
	Expectativas en la casa
	Comida/compras/Western Union
	Dando aviso al terminar el trabajo
	Contactos de emergencia

Estas temáticas están anotadas para animar al trabajador pedir información sobre cada tema anotada y para guiar la comunicación entre el patrón y el trabajador. Cada rancho tiene diferentes expectativas y reglamentos. Al comenzar el trabajo (o incluso antes) un trabajador debe saber la siguiente información. Si el patrón no se la da, el trabajador debe pedir la información.

<b>Horario de Trabajo:</b>	Domingo	Lunes	Martes	Miercoles	Jueves	Viernes	Sabado
<b>Tareas/Responsabilidades</b>							
<b>Reglamentos de trabajo</b>							
<b>Tardanza y Ausencia:</b>							
<b>Enfermedad o Herida/Lesión: (a quien decir, remuneración del trabajador)</b>							
<b>Tiempo Libre:</b>							
<b>Como anotar horas:</b>							
<b>Pago (por hora/por semana, en efectivo/cheque):</b>							
<b>Periodo de pago (semanal/quincenal)</b>							
<b>Dando aviso de salida</b>							
<b>Información de la vivienda y expectativas :</b>							
<b>Comida/compras/Western Union: (cuando, como, pago)</b>							
Cuándo:							
Como/Quién:							
Pago de comida?:							
<b>Contacto de emergencia para: Un Problema en el rancho:      Salud de la vaca:</b>							
<b>Asunto en la casa (Calefacción/aparato):      Si se lastima/se enferma:</b>							

## **Safety orientation and emergency plan**

Two main causes of workers' injuries (fatal and non-fatal) are incidents with machinery and animals

Injuries to Latino workers on Franklin County farms in past 2 years: broken wrist, cut fingers, strangulation, 5 teeth knocked out, broken ribs, dislocated shoulder, chemical burn

General safety guidelines & emergency contact information: 1st day of work

Safety training and emergency plan: within 1st week if new to dairy, within 1 month with more seasoned employees

There are many resources for bilingual safety information. Following are examples of bilingual signage and labeling as well as dairy safety guidelines in English and Spanish and an article on safety risks on a dairy farm. The Vermont Agency of Agriculture has bilingual safety videos for general farm safety and skid steer safety. You can request them directly from the Agency. There is also a very informative (and lengthy) dairy safety training guide found at this page:

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/chswc/WOSHTEP/Publications/DairyTrainingGuide.pdf>

<b>Dairy Farm Safety Checklist</b> <b>Lista de Verificación de Seguridad en un Rancho Lechero</b>	
	Safety Training - Entrenamiento en Seguridad
	Work Clothes/ Ropa de Trabajo
	Hygiene/Health – Higiene/Salud
	Personal Protective Equipment – Equipo Personal Protectora
	Motorcycles/ATV's – Motocicletas/VTT
	Animal Behavior – Comportamiento de Animales
	Milking – El Ordeño
	Chemicals – Químicos
	Operation and Equipment Maintenance – Operación y Mantenimiento de Equipo
	Emergency Plan – Plan de Emergencia
	Emergency Contact Information Card/Sheet - Tarjeta/Hoja de Información de Contactos para Emergencia
	Emergency Contact Information posted in by barn phone – Información de Contactos de Emergencia colgada cerca del teléfono en el rancho
	Barn phone in working order – Teléfono en el rancho en funcionamiento
	First Aid Kit in Barn – Botiquín de Primeros Auxilios en el Rancho
	Fire Extinguisher Overview – Resumen del Uso del Extintor de Incendios
	Workers Compensation Explanation of Coverage and Reporting – Explanación de cobertura y presentación de informes para la Compensación del Trabajador

# Employee Safety Training Documentation

El Lechero Dairy Basics – Management  
Written by Jary D. Winstead  
[www.worksafetyservices.com](http://www.worksafetyservices.com)

The importance of workplace safety around your operation is paramount, and most of you don't need to be reminded of the costs involved in having a workplace accident. According to statistics, agriculture has consistently ranked as one of the most hazardous industries in the US. Statistics show that there are over 700 fatalities in agriculture per year.

That equals up to nearly 2 per persons killed each day. If you have been around a farm, ranch, or dairy very long, you have most likely been witness to, or know someone that has been involved in a serious injury or death. Most accidents can be prevented through proper hiring practices, training, personnel management, safety policies, proper equipment maintenance, and safe equipment operation.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that all employers provide their employees with safety training relevant to their job tasks at their initial assignment, as well as annual refresher training thereafter. Employers frequently tell me that they have provided safety training for their employees, but when I ask for the documentation, they don't have any. In this day and age, if you didn't document it, you might as well not have not done it. Believe me, the first thing an OSHA inspector, attorney, worker compensation insurance carrier, or other enforcement agency will ask for is your documentation.

Employers need to document, and keep on file, all employee application forms, as well as the state and federally required forms. After the hire, you need to be documenting all employee safety training and information related to the safety program. I know, paperwork, paperwork, paperwork... Unfortunately, the cost of not documenting it can very well cost you the farm!

Start your documentation process by making a safety training file for each employee. At the employee's initial hire, each employee should have a New Employee Safety Orientation. I recommend that you make a form that has a list of all safety related items and check boxes next to them. Example: Accident reporting procedures, the location of your written programs, emergency action plans, first aid kits, material safety data sheets, fire extinguishers, personal protective equipment requirements, etc.. As these items are reviewed with the new employee, they can be checked off, and at that point the form is signed by the employee and the person providing the orientation. This training documentation covers the basic initial hire training. If the new employee will be operating any equipment, this training must be provided as well, and additional documentation completed.

Equipment training is a crucial part of your safety program. Equipment can include everything from a hay squeeze to a robotic milker. Most of this documentation can be completed by making an equipment safety training form. The form should include; a place for the employee's name, date, equipment type, what kind of training was provided, any equipment specifications such as maximum speed or pressures not to exceed, lockout / tag-out procedures, personal protective equipment requirements, and a place for the employee and the trainer to sign.

Equipment that has complex operational characteristics, or has inherent hazards related to the operation will require more in-depth training. I might add, as of recent law changes, all tractor

operators need to have annual documented safety and operational training. When it comes to this kind of equipment training, it is recommended that you include a written review for the employee to complete. Training should always include supervised observation of the employee operating the equipment, and when training materials are provided, it should be written in the language the employee understands.

New employees are often asked if they have ever operated a tractor before, and when the answer is yes, they're then taken to the tractor and set free. There are many different tractors in operation, and many have different operating controls and characteristics. Employees will often be embarrassed to tell their new boss that they don't know how to do something. They may know how to operate a tractor, but who taught them, and what kind of bad habits may they have picked up along the way. This is your opportunity to show them how you want your equipment operated. Safety training can pay off in more ways than just accident prevention, you can save money on equipment repairs too. And when providing this training, don't forget to document it. Stay safe. EL

[www.progressivedairy.com](http://www.progressivedairy.com)

# OSHA FactSheet

## Farm Safety

Contrary to the popular image of fresh air and peaceful surroundings, a farm is not a hazard-free work setting. Every year, thousands of farm workers are injured and hundreds more die in farming accidents. According to the National Safety Council, agriculture is the most hazardous industry in the nation.

### Health and Safety Hazards on Farms

Farm workers—including farm families and migrant workers—are exposed to hazards such as the following:

- Chemicals/Pesticides
- Cold
- Dust
- Electricity
- Grain bins
- Hand tools
- Highway traffic
- Lifting
- Livestock handling
- Machinery/Equipment
- Manure pits
- Mud
- Noise
- Ponds
- Silos
- Slips/Trips/Falls
- Sun/Heat
- Toxic gases
- Tractors
- Wells

### High Risk Factors on Farms

The following factors may increase risk of injury or illness for farm workers:

- **Age** – Injury rates are highest among children age 15 and under and adults over 65.
- **Equipment and Machinery** – Most farm accidents and fatalities involve machinery. Proper machine guarding and doing equipment maintenance according to manufacturers' recommendations can help prevent accidents.
- **Protective Equipment** – Using protective equipment, such as seat belts on tractors, and personal protective equipment (such as safety

gloves, coveralls, boots, hats, aprons, goggles, face shields) could significantly reduce farming injuries.

- **Medical Care** – Hospitals and emergency medical care are typically not readily accessible in rural areas near farms.

### How You Can Improve Farm Safety

You can start by increasing your awareness of farming hazards and making a conscious effort to prepare for emergency situations including fires, vehicle accidents, electrical shocks from equipment and wires, and chemical exposures. Be especially alert to hazards that may affect children and the elderly. Minimize hazards by carefully selecting the products you buy to ensure that you provide good tools and equipment. Always use seat belts when operating tractors, and establish and maintain good housekeeping practices. Here are some other steps you can take to reduce illnesses and injuries on the farm:

- Read and follow instructions in equipment operator's manuals and on product labels.
- Inspect equipment routinely for problems that may cause accidents.
- Discuss safety hazards and emergency procedures with your workers.
- Install approved rollover protective structures, protective enclosures, or protective frames on tractors.
- Make sure that guards on farm equipment are replaced after maintenance.
- Review and follow instructions in material safety data sheets (MSDSs) and on labels that come with chemical products and communicate information on these hazards to your workers.

- Take precautions to prevent entrapment and suffocation caused by unstable surfaces of grain storage bins, silos, or hoppers. Never "walk the grain."
- Be aware that methane gas, carbon dioxide, ammonia, and hydrogen sulfide can form in unventilated grain silos and manure pits and can suffocate or poison workers or explode.
- Take advantage of safety equipment, such as bypass starter covers, power take-off master shields, and slow-moving vehicle emblems.

## **The Benefits of Improved Safety and Health Practices**

Better safety and health practices reduce worker fatalities, injuries, and illnesses as well as associated costs such as workers' compensation insurance premiums, lost production, and medical expenses. A safer and more healthful workplace improves morale and productivity.

## **Additional Information on Safety and Health**

For more information about farm safety, visit OSHA's website at [www.osha.gov/SLTC/agriculturaloperations](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/agriculturaloperations).

This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements. For a comprehensive list of compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. The voice phone is (202) 693-1999; teletypewriter (TTY) number: (877) 889-5627.

For more information on other topics, contact OSHA's Office of Training and Education at (202) 693-1999, or visit OSHA's website at [www.osha.gov/pls/publications/pubindex.list](http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/pubindex.list). Other sources of information include the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health at [www.cdc.gov/nasd/menu/topic/topic.html](http://www.cdc.gov/nasd/menu/topic/topic.html), the American Society of Safety Engineers at [www.asse.org](http://www.asse.org), the National Safety Council at [www.nsc.org/farmsafe/facts.htm](http://www.nsc.org/farmsafe/facts.htm), the Environmental Protection Agency at [www.epa.gov/pesticides/safety/workers/workers.htm](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/safety/workers/workers.htm), and the Centers for Disease Control at [www.cdc.gov/nasd/menu/topic/topic.html](http://www.cdc.gov/nasd/menu/topic/topic.html). In addition, OSHA has a variety of materials and tools available elsewhere on its website at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

## **OSHA Publications**

OSHA has an extensive publications program. For a listing of free or sales items, visit OSHA's website at [www.osha.gov/pls/publications/pubindex.list](http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/pubindex.list) or contact the OSHA Publications Office, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, N-3101, Washington, DC 20210. Telephone (202) 693-1888 or fax to (202) 693-2498.

## **Contacting OSHA**

To report an emergency, file a complaint or seek OSHA advice, assistance or products, call (800) 321-OSHA or contact your nearest OSHA regional or area office.

**For more complete information:**

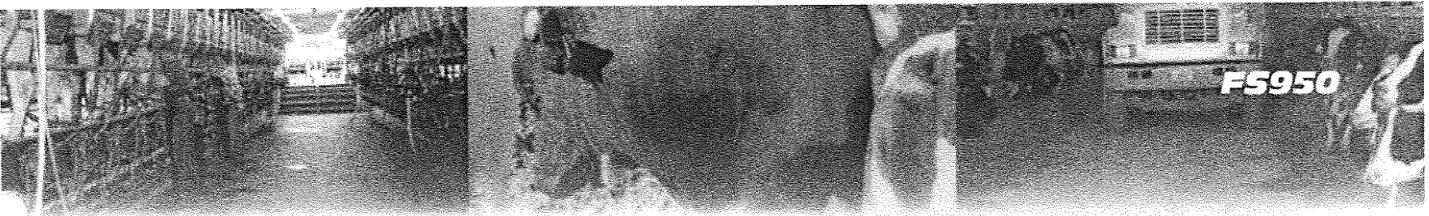


**U.S. Department of Labor**

[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

(800) 321-OSHA

**Occupational  
Safety and Health  
Administration**



# SAFETY RISK AREAS AT THE DAIRY FARM

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## CONTENTS

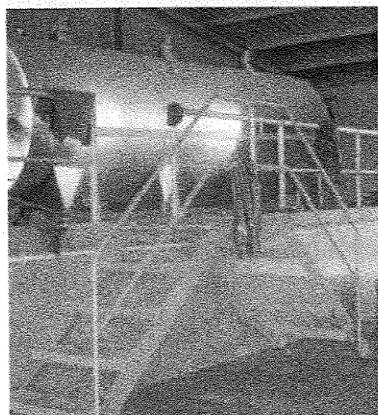
- Slips, trips, and falls
- The feeding alley
- The silage pile
- The hospital pen
- The bull pen
- High-traffic roads around facilities
- Hazards in the living facilities provided by the farm
- Manure decomposition and gas emissions
- Working with dairy machinery
- The milking parlor
- Working with dairy cows
- Power tools
- Chemicals and veterinary drugs
- First Aid and emergency response

## SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS (1)

These are the most common source of injuries in the workplace and make up the greatest number of workers' compensation claims. Serious injuries include sprains and strains.

Water or milk spills, algal build-up on concrete surfaces, oil spills in machine shop buildings, wet feed, and manure can all make a surface slippery. Tripping can be caused by different floor levels, broken concrete, and obstacles – including uneven walking surfaces, protruding pipes and hoses, uncovered

Figure 1.



Courtesy of University of Ballarat

drainage holes, and badly designed steps.

In addition, people working on roofs and platforms or climbing equipment such as silos and milk tanks are at risk for falls. Here are some prevention rules to avoid slips, trips, and falls:

1. Open drains or drainage holes should be covered with a firm, flush-fitting grate.
2. When spills occur during transport, handling, or decanting of chemicals, milk, or oils, clean them up immediately.
3. Updating lighting and ventilation in older facilities increases visibility, aids in floor drying, and inhibits algae growth.
4. Hoses and other obstacles must be secured to the walls and kept out of the way.
5. Discourage the practice of using the bucket of a front-end loader instead of a ladder.

Figure 2. A person working on a silage pile in a barn.



Courtesy of Hubbard Feeds, Inc.

## THE FEEDING ALLEY

Driving in and out of the feeding alley while employees are working with cows or while the maintenance crew is doing work along the mangers is always a challenge for the feeder. Poor visibility and noise make the feeder unable to see or hear other people. Feeding cows is a stressful job, and the feeder is always in a hurry in order to get the cows fed on schedule. Employees must be aware of the feeder and take positions in the feeding alley where the feeder can see them.



South Dakota  
Cooperative Extension Service

SDSU.



Figure 3.



Courtesy of Hubbard Feeds, Inc.

Here are some recommendations:

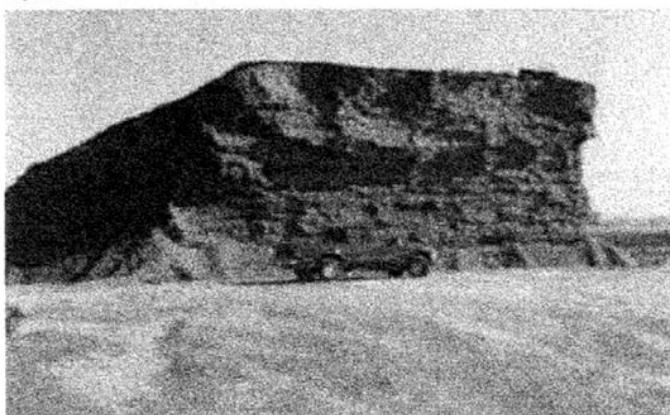
1. When the feed truck is feeding cows, all work in the feeding alley should come to a temporary stop.
2. Make sure when backing up that the workers in the alley stand back and stop working. A buzzer installed at the rear of the feeding truck is very useful to warn people when backing up.
3. Keep the windshield and rear windows clean at all times.
4. Keep all lights in working condition.
5. To avoid skating and slipping when the roads are icy, make sure that the tires are fitted with the proper attachment.

#### THE SILAGE PILE

The silage pile is a hazardous area, and those not working at or on the pile should stay away. Danger increases at packing time, when human and machine traffic come together in a relatively small area and there is a rush to get the job done on time.

People involved in preparing TMR should exercise caution when moving their machinery around.

Figure 4.



Courtesy of Hubbard Feeds, Inc.

Here are some recommendations to prevent accidents at silage and feed commodity piles:

1. Machinery tipping over while pushing and packing feed is always a concern at the silage pile. Exercise caution.

2. High bunker silage faces can collapse and kill you instantly. If a pile or bunker looks unstable, stay away.
3. Vertical silos are potential farm hazards because they may contain toxic gases such as nitrogen gas and carbon dioxide gas. Always make certain that there is adequate ventilation when working inside these structures.
4. When covering silage, make sure that you have extra help. If the day is hot, dehydration might occur. Bring drinking water.
5. Be aware of the danger of falling when covering bunker walls.
6. Do not hesitate to ask for help. When alone, do not work on top of or around bunker faces.

#### THE HOSPITAL PEN

Zoonotic diseases are diseases that are transferable from animals to humans. It's very important for those who treat cows on the farm both to take the necessary precautions when treating sick animals and to protect themselves and the animals from cross contamination.

Diseases in dairy cattle like salmonellosis, brucellosis, anthrax, and leptospirosis can be transmitted through contaminated milk or by contact with blood, saliva, and urine. Human tuberculosis can be transmitted from humans to cows via airborne particles.

The effects of these diseases vary. Leptospirosis can cause severe flu-like symptoms. Salmonellosis can cause gastroenteritis and diarrhea. Toxoplasmosis can be transmitted by contact with the urine and feces of cats and rats living on the farm and can affect human fetuses.

Figure 5.



Courtesy of Hubbard Feeds, Inc.

The hospital pen and the treated pen are highly contaminated areas that farm personnel must be aware of when working with cows.

1. Unless properly protected, avoid contact with animal waste, carcasses, excretions, and offal.
2. Promptly dispose of dead animals.
3. Immediately treat and disinfect cuts, abrasions, and animal bites. If bitten, be certain of the animal's rabies status.
4. Maintain tetanus boosters.
5. Always use the proper attire and wash and disinfect your boots and hands before and after treating cows.
6. Discard used gloves, syringes, needles, empty drug

- containers, and so on.
7. Hospital bedding pack should be cleaned out often.
  8. Farm personnel who do not have business in the hospital pen or treatment pen should avoid them.
  9. Avoid drinking raw milk from the farm at all times.
  10. Do not eat or smoke while working in these areas or performing these tasks.

Other diseases on the dairy farm that employees must be aware of are those caused by parasites and fungi (which could cause skin problems in humans): ringworm and lice are two examples. Deer ticks, often found near feed commodities, can transmit Lyme disease.

### THE BULL PEN

Dairy bulls are extremely dangerous and have killed farm employees and dairy producers. Learn how to read signs of aggression from bulls and report them to both the manager and everybody in the barn. Older bulls are more likely to be problematic to people, but no bull should be trusted in the barn.

- a) Bulls turning sideways and flexing are displaying aggression.
- b) Loud and guttural sounds showing anger are hard-to-miss indicators.
- c) Bulls are very fast animals. They can overtake a human in a short distance.
- d) The cow pusher must be particularly careful when pushing cows from the bullpen.

Figure 6.



Courtesy of Hubbard Feeds, Inc.

### HIGH-TRAFFIC ROADS AROUND FACILITIES

On-farm traffic is a safety issue that changes continually. In general, it is a larger safety issue during the day than at night. It also increases during seasonal work, such as when corn is chopped and packed for silage. Agricultural equipment is bigger, more powerful, and found in greater numbers than ever before. Here are some safety tips:

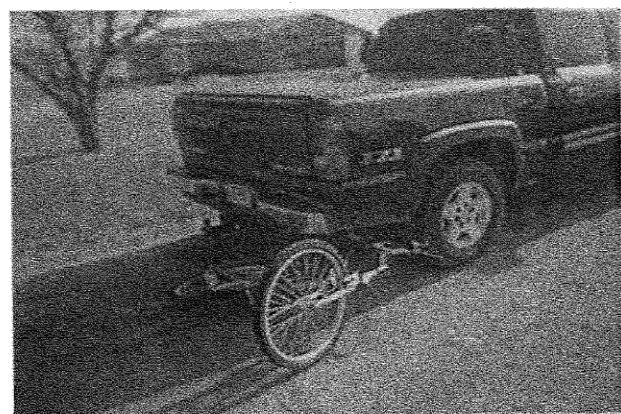
1. Pay attention to children.
2. Avoid backing up.
3. Maintain a clean and functioning vehicle.
4. Turn the headlights on so others can see you.
5. Remember that conditions and the environment are always changing.
6. Always yield or give way to large machinery.

### HAZARDS IN LIVING FACILITIES

Some safety issues can come with the housing that most farms provide to their employees. Some housing is under a scheduled maintenance program; however, there is always the risk that something might go wrong.

1. Faulty or non-existent smoke alarms.
2. Carbon monoxide inhalation.
3. Fire or explosions caused by propane gas.
4. Electric shock caused by exposed bare live wires.

Figure 7.

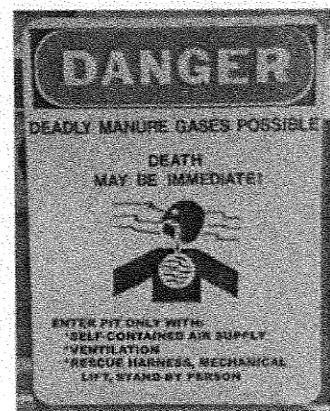


Courtesy of Hubbard Feeds, Inc.

### MANURE DECOMPOSITION AND GAS INHALATION

In those barns that have had either a partial or a complete failure of the ventilation system, there is a real risk of inhaling toxic gases created by the aerobic fermentation of organic matter. This situation is life threatening for people and animals in low-profile cross-ventilation (LPCV) systems – a ventilation failure could lead to a gas build up that can kill people and cattle within 1 hour.

Figure 8.



Courtesy of University of Ballarat

1. Have an emergency plan that deals specifically with this situation. Make sure that the plan is written in English and Spanish.
2. Carry out drills so that everybody learns how to respond during an actual situation.
3. The chance for a real disaster is high during weekends or at nights, when upper level management is absent.

4. Make sure either that the backup generator is ready to fire up automatically or that there is always someone with the proper training and knowhow to start the generator.
5. Make sure that the telephone numbers of the manager and/or the mechanic are in a visible area so that they can be called immediately.
6. **If the power is not back on within 5 minutes, open all doors, move outdoors, and wait for the manager to arrive.**

Figure 9.



Courtesy of Hubbard Feed Inc.

## **WORKING WITH BARN MACHINERY**

### *A. Barn Personnel*

For those farm workers who work with machinery inside the barn, there are additional safety concerns. These concerns should be addressed when training on machinery, particularly the skid steer and those attachments used to spread bedding, rake stalls, push manure, and so on.

Figure 10.



Courtesy of Hubbard Feed Inc.

To avoid accidents it is very important for the operator to have been trained properly. The operator needs to know not only how to operate the equipment safely but also how to perform basic maintenance and how to report when mechanical failure either has occurred or is about to occur.

1. Always make sure that the staff that will use the machinery receive proper training from someone who is dependable and experienced.

2. Follow standard operating procedures for machinery: check engine oil, hydrostatic oil, fuel, hoses, tires and tire pressure, and so on.
3. Have a regular maintenance schedule for machinery.
4. Have backup machinery available for use during break downs or routine maintenance or repair.
5. Skid steers can tip over very easily and can tip both frontwards and backwards. For example, attempting to lift a downer cow that is too heavy may lead to the machine tipping to the front (and crashing both the cow and anybody who is in the way), having the skid steer's bucket all the way up while moving uphill can lead to a backwards tip. Poor physical conditions (e.g., icy or muddy surfaces) or poor equipment conditions (e.g., tires that are worn down) may make skid steer accidents both more likely and worse.
6. Traction is very poor for skid steers in icy and muddy terrain, and the operator should be aware of people and cattle nearby when working under these conditions. Also, damage to property is always a concern – as the machine skids on these surfaces, gates, headlocks, stalls, and doors can be damaged.

### *B. Other Personnel*

The feeder is the other member of the dairy staff who works inside and outside the barn and faces considerable workplace safety risks. The feeder operates large and expensive machinery like the feed wagon and the pay loader. In addition, the feeder has to know basic computer skills in order to enter, withdraw, and print information referring to cow's group rations. This stressful job needs to be performed on a tight schedule in order to achieve the best possible feeding consistency.

1. To keep on schedule and avoid rushing to catch up for lost time, machinery must be in optimal operating condition.
2. The bunker area and the commodity buildings should have adequate illumination so the ration ingredients can be mixed properly.
3. Icy or muddy surfaces increase the chances of an accident.
4. Avoid being around a PTO when it is turning.
5. When on roadways, exercise caution when making left

Figure 11.

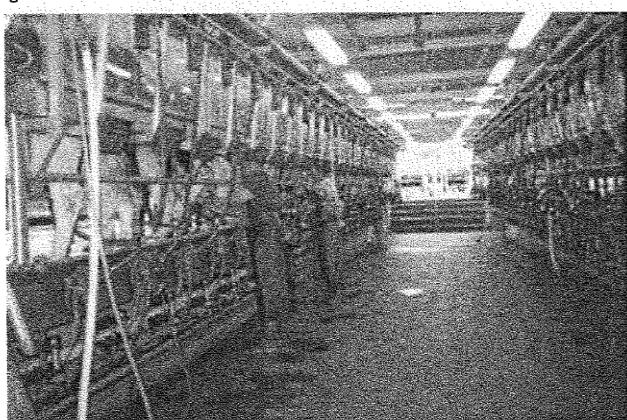


Courtesy of University of Ballarat

- turns. Be certain that there is no trailing traffic that is trying to pass you.
6. Wear eye, ear, and respiratory protection when working with dusty commodities.
  7. Avoid excessively high silage piles. And, to protect the operator from a silage face collapse, use equipment fitted with an approved roll-over protective structure (ROPS) roof cab.

## THE MILKING CENTER

The milking parlor is another place on the dairy where accidents could occur. Chemicals used for washing and cleaning the equipment are potential hazards for employees, animals, and the environment. In addition, it is common practice to have footbaths in some areas of the return alley, and the chemicals used in these should be handled with precaution. Figure 12.



Courtesy of University of Ballarat

1. When milking heifers for the first time, the milkers should be aware of the danger of being kicked. These animals are usually nervous and very agile with their rear feet. Before doing your prep-routine, make sure that the cow knows that you are behind her.
2. Avoid being loud in the milking parlor. Making unnecessary noise, yelling, whistling, and poking cows with sticks have no place in the milking parlor and must be avoided.
3. When dipping the teats, be careful not to be splashed in the eyes with the chemical.
4. When dipping teats with a high-pressure sprayer system, make sure that your milkers are not inhaling the chemicals. Inhalation of chemicals can occur when the fans in the milking parlor are running.
5. When filling footbaths, be careful with the chemicals used; some of them can cause skin and eye irritation. Formaldehyde is carcinogenic and should be used only in well-ventilated areas; handling it requires wearing gloves, a mask, and goggles.
6. Slips, trips, and falls can occur when surfaces are wet, icy, and muddy. Mishaps can be serious and care should be exercised at all times when working.

## WORKING WITH DAIRY COWS

Most of the dairy staff eventually has to move or help move cows around. Accidents can occur when moving cows. Cows

rarely charge against somebody when working with them; however, heifers could run over you if they are cornered.

1. The cow pusher has to be careful when bringing cows in and out; opening and closing gates can cause personal injuries. Look for pinch points, protruding objects, and gates that can swing back or come off the hinges.
2. When working with cows in the headlocks, make sure that they are aware that you are behind them; they cannot always see you and can react and kick very fast.
3. When releasing individual animals from the headlocks, one runs the risk of being crushed or having a finger pinched.
4. Another common hazard is the accidental inoculation of veterinary drugs during routine shots vaccines, such as hormones in the Ovsynch program. (Women should not administer the shots in the Ovsynch program, especially if they are pregnant.)

## POWER TOOLS

Accidents sometimes occur when employees decide to repair equipment themselves. While employees usually know how to use and maintain power tools, management should decide what to allow. If accidents involving power tools are a recurrent problem, a solution may be to keep power tools locked up and have only the necessary hand tools available for day-to-day repairs.

## CHEMICALS AND VETERINARY DRUGS (1)

### A. Chemicals

Safely using, storing, and disposing of dairy chemicals is essential for the safety of workers and animals, and can prevent contamination of the surrounding environment. Chemical use is dangerous at any time, but a particular hazard is being exposed to a chemical that is concentrated.

Chemicals can be absorbed into the body through the following:

- direct ingestion
- exposure to skin
- breathing in fumes when applying, decanting, or mixing
- accidental ingestion due to poor hygiene

Everyday work in a dairy exposes farmers and employees to a variety of chemicals – e.g., acids, alkalis (caustic detergents), iodine based teat sprays, formalin, antibiotics, vaccines, drenches, lice treatment, veterinary chemicals like hormones.

Use caution when applying hydrated lime to free stalls. This compound is extremely caustic and reactive. When accidentally dusted into the eyes, flush thoroughly and quickly seek medical attention. All employees should wear protective eyewear and have their skin covered while working with hydrated lime.

The inappropriate use, storage, transport, or disposal of chemicals can lead to the following:

- a violent reaction
- the corrosion of materials
- burns – in the case of acids and alkalis
- serious illness – as in the case of formalin, a known carcinogen

### B. Inventory

Record all the chemicals you have on the farm, including type and quantity, and check that all chemical containers

are correctly labeled and stored adequately. Make sure that bottles are not refilled with dangerous chemicals. Remove all unwanted, out-of-date, and banned chemicals from the dairy and dispose of them according to federal regulations.

#### C. Working With Chemicals

When working with chemicals, personnel should take the time and protect themselves with the proper attire (e.g., coveralls, rubber gloves, goggles or face shields, respirators, appropriate footwear).

#### D. Transport & Storage

- When not in use, all chemicals should be stored in a locked chemical locker or shed. Chemical storage should provide spill containment and be well ventilated. Do not store chemicals in a work area such as the milk room.
- Chemicals used in the dairy should always be inaccessible to children, visitors, and inexperienced personnel. Preferably, keep chemicals behind a childproof barrier.
- Veterinary chemicals that require refrigeration should be kept in a separate refrigerator that is not used for drinks or food.
- Acids and alkalis should be clearly labeled and distinguished from each other. They should never be mixed together because mixing risks a violent reaction.
- Have chemicals delivered to the farm by a professional and as part of the service; they can unload, handle, and store the chemicals in the designated area, keeping farm personnel from being involved in this task.

#### E. Decanting, Mixing & Use

- Mix chemicals in a ventilated area on a non-porous surface that can be readily cleaned, and with close access to clean water for washing spills, personal cleaning, or first aid.
- Pouring chemicals from a drum risks spills and splashing. It is far safer to use pumps, siphons, or gravity taps. There are also closed automated delivery systems.
- Install hand-held soft water showers. Place them where detergents are decanted and use them for removing chemicals from the eyes.
- The employer is responsible for providing, maintaining, and replacing, when necessary, all protective equipment.
- The employees are responsible for wearing protective equipment when working with chemicals. They should exercise care with the equipment, maintain it, and return it to the place it is kept.

#### F. Emergency Calls

Every dairy farm should have a formal chemical management plan for dealing with chemical emergencies or spills. This plan should include emergency contacts and first aid.

Workplace rules for the use of chemicals should be enacted, and all workers should follow them. Those workers who need to use chemicals, particularly restricted chemicals, should be trained through a suitable program.

Always ask yourself if a particular chemical is necessary, or if it can be replaced with other safer and more environmentally friendly alternatives.

#### THE HIERARCHY OF CONTROL (1)

The hierarchy of control, from most effective to least effective, is an established process for identifying the most effective way of controlling chemical risks, including hazardous substances:

1. Elimination: Stop using and completely remove a hazardous substance (e.g., not using formaldehyde in footbaths).
2. Substitution: Use a less-hazardous substance, form or process (e.g., use high-pressure water to remove algae and other residues from concrete surfaces, rather than detergents).
3. Isolation: Separate hazardous substances from people by distance or barriers (e.g., keep chemicals in a lockable, well-ventilated storage area).
4. Engineering controls: Use machinery, equipment or processes to reduce possible contamination (e.g., use a closed chemical application system that removes the need to directly handle chemicals).
5. Administrative controls: Have procedures in place about handling chemicals safely (e.g., restrict access to areas that contain hazardous substances or where they are used, and provide adequate training and information about the chemicals in use).
6. Personal protection equipment (PPE): Wear protective equipment (e.g., respirators, coveralls, gloves, footwear, goggles or face shields). The PPE must be suitable for the type and volume of chemicals you are using, meet the relevant standard, and be regularly checked and maintained. PPE should be used when other control measures are not practicable or in conjunction with other controls.
7. Monitoring and health surveillance: Although not technically part of the Hierarchy of Control, monitoring the health of workers is an important way to ensure that the control of chemical risks is an ongoing process. As chemical-related health issues can develop over long periods of time, keep any monitoring or health surveillance records for 30 years. The MSDS will provide information about whether health monitoring is required.

#### FIRST AID and EMERGENCY RESPONSE (1)

Farming is a dangerous occupation. We not only need to reduce the risks of injury, we must also put in place a plan that will ensure an effective response to an incident.

Dairy farm employees should know both what to do and how to seek help in case of emergency or accident (e.g., fire, flooding, chemical spills, gas inhalation, drowning). Develop an emergency response procedure in conjunction with your family and staff. Program occasional drills and learn from them.

Here are some basic items that can be looked at when exploring emergency response procedure planning:

- clearly identify the locations of fire extinguishers suitable for different types of fires
- fire extinguishers should be regularly inspected
- names(s) of first-response person or persons
- working alone should be avoided when possible
- reliable communications systems should be available

- should have the ability to transmit clear and accurate information for locating injured personnel

Because many dairies are in isolated areas and it may take time for emergency medical assistance to arrive, it's vital that dairy workers be trained in first aid and that these skills be supported by equipment that meets the needs of the workplace.

The dairy farm should have at least one first-aid kit and a first-response person who has the training to assist someone who has been hurt. This person should be known to all and should be responsible for keeping the first-aid kit up to date.

For infection control, first-aid kits should contain disposable resuscitation face shields (mouth-to-mouth resuscitation masks) and plastic gloves. A *portable* first-aid kit is also handy to have in large dairies. A medical supply business should service the dairy's first-aid kit(s) on a regular basis.

Select and send employee(s) to a first-response/first-aid training course; there are several levels of training, and continuing education is available.

Not having someone on the dairy trained in first-aid response may have dire consequences. A worker who is seriously injured has the best chance for surviving if attended to immediately. While emergency medical assistance is en route, bleeding can be stopped or breathing can be assisted.

All workers on the farm must know how to contact the first-response person. This information must be taught upon hiring.

**Emergency contact lists** placed in locations by the first-aid kit(s) and near all of the farm's telephones can be handy in case of an incident. The phone number of the farm's first-response person should be on the list.

Make sure that all of the farm's workers know the following:

- a. first-aid kit location(s)
- b. first-response person(s) contact info

For serious incidents or risks (i.e., excavations, building collapse, fires and explosions, or spills and leaks of dangerous substances or chemicals), an employer should notify all people exposed to the incident or risk.

#### References:

- (1) <http://www.dairysafety.org.au>

This publication was made possible through the A Farm Safety Training Program on Human Risk Management for Dairy Producers Using a Labor Force Including Hispanic Workers project. This project is cofunded by the USDA North Central Risk Management Education Center and the Midwest Dairy Consortium.

# **Sample Dairy Safety Instructions for Employees\***

*\*This document is found below in Spanish, HOWEVER, it is strongly recommended that employers utilize an interpreter to review job safety requirements and recommendation.*

If, at any time, you feel you cannot do a job safely, stop and discuss it with us and we will work together to fix the problem. We will walk you through our safety guidelines, however read it carefully and make sure that you understand it, your needs are addressed and your responsibilities are understood. If you do not understand any section, ask for an explanation.

## **Work clothes**

You are expected to come to work dressed in suitable clothes that do not pose a safety risk.

Suitable clothes include:

- sturdy work boots with non-slip soles for general work on-farm;
- tough overalls or long, washable trousers;
- a comfortable long-sleeved shirt – the sleeves should be either buttoned at the wrist or rolled up so that no loose ends can be caught in machinery or on protruding materials, the shirt should also be tucked into your trousers for the same reason;
- a broad-brimmed hat and wet weather gear for outdoor work

You are expected to wash your work clothes daily, particularly after working with chemicals.

## **Hygiene/Health**

Attention to personal hygiene is essential. It is in the interests of your health and our business – our milk must be of the highest standard possible.

If you are a smoker, we will support your attempts to quit, as smoking in a rural environment poses a fire risk.

You must:

- ensure your skin, especially your hands, are kept clean and washed with soapy water after working, particularly after handling chemicals, manure/waste, detergents or animals;
- wash your work clothes daily;
- keep up to date with your tetanus vaccinations;
- not be in possession of, consume or be suffering the effects of alcohol or illicit drugs;
- promptly report skin infections to the owner/manager;
- not smoke in the dairy, vehicles or any other farm buildings; and
- advise the owner/manager of any prescription medicines you may need to take during working hours – this is particularly important if you use asthma medication.

## **Use of protective clothing and equipment (PPE)**

Protective clothing and equipment is provided for your personal protection while you work with us. All personal protection equipment (PPE) should be used as instructed, cleaned properly after use and kept in good order.

Let the owner/manager know if PPE is damaged or unavailable, or if you are having difficulty using the equipment provided.

The PPE includes:

- rubber boots and aprons for work in the dairy;
- protective gloves for handling cleaning agents;
- hearing protection when noise is a problem;
- helmets when riding a motorcycle/all-terrain vehicle (ATV);
- protective gloves, face masks, coveralls and respirators for handling chemicals;

- sunscreen when working in direct sunlight;
- goggles or safety glasses for eye protection; and
- dust masks for the feed shed.

### **Riding the motorcycle/ATV**

Motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are dangerous if not handled properly.

- Do not use the motorcycle/ATV unless authorised, and you have been provided with instruction and training. You may only use it on a public road:
  - for work activities; and
  - if the motorcycle/ATV is registered; and you have a valid driver's licence to use a motorcycle/ATV
- Wear suitable clothing, including tough trousers, boots and a helmet, when riding the motorcycle/ATV.
- Before setting out on the motorcycle/ATV, refuel and check that the tyres, guards, chains and brakes are in good working order. Undertake daily maintenance and report any problems immediately.
- No passengers are permitted on the ATV.
- Children under 16 years are not allowed to operate the ATV.
- Do not exceed the vehicle's front and rear load limits.

### **Moving cows to and from the dairy**

- When cows have to be moved across a public road, ensure that the stock crossing signs are in place, the gates opened and the cows moved as quickly as possible.

### **Milking**

- Report any hazards in the corrals, dairy, milk line, milk house, bulk tank, and feed shed to the manager immediately.
- Cows that have a habit of kicking or being hard to handle should be reported to the manager.
- The cows have been vaccinated against Leptospirosis, but you should avoid being sprayed or splashed with urine.
- Children are not allowed in the dairy unless they are in the company of an authorised adult.

### **Cleaning up after milking**

- Hot water burns can occur during the cleaning process.
- Report poor line joins, including leaking or broken fittings.
- Entering the milk tank is prohibited – only authorised people are allowed to enter the milk tank.
- Hoses are to be laid out along the wall after wash down.
- All chemicals are to be returned to the chemical storage area and the store area should be locked.

### **Handling chemicals**

The chemicals used on-farm include detergents and other chemicals used to clean the milk line and milk tanks, as well as veterinary chemicals and hormones used in breeding programs. Chemicals are also used to control insects, weeds, fungal diseases, mice and rats.

- Only use chemicals if you have been trained in their use and are authorised to do so.
- Anyone handling farm chemicals must comply with the instructions on the label
- If you cannot understand the label or have difficulty reading them, ask for help before continuing.

- The recommended personal protection equipment (PPE) should be worn during chemical mixing, application and clean up.
- Always have clean water available for washing down and cleaning clothes when using chemicals.
- When you have finished your job, the equipment should be washed down and the chemicals locked away in the chemical storage area.

### **Equipment operation and maintenance**

- Make sure you have received instruction and training, or have been assessed before you operate any equipment for the first time.
- Become familiar with the operator's manual for all the machinery you operate.
- Read, understand and comply with all the safety warnings on machinery and equipment, and in the operator's manual.
- Ensure the power has been turned off before removing the guards on any machinery for maintenance or testing.
- As soon as the job is finished, always replace a guard that has been removed for machine maintenance or to clear a blockage.
- Tell the owner/manager about guards that have been damaged or exposed moving parts on machinery that may present the risk of injury.
- Keys must be removed from machinery after use and placed in the key cupboard.

### **Being ready for emergencies**

- All accidents and near misses must be reported to the owner/manager.
- All injuries must be entered in the injury record book. \_\_\_\_\_
- Before setting out each day, ensure you have enough water to keep you well hydrated.
- Always let someone know where you plan to be on the farm, particularly if you are on your own. If no one is about, write it down and leave a note in a conspicuous place.
- Employees with First Aid training: \_\_\_\_\_
- First aid kits are located \_\_\_\_\_
- Emergency telephone numbers should be keyed into your mobile phone & listed in barn. They are \_\_\_\_\_
- Two way radio ? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

### **General**

- The law requires the owner/manager to provide a safe workplace and safe systems of work. To help us meet that obligation, tell us of any safety hazard you come across in the workplace.
- The same laws require you, as an employee, to take care to ensure that the health and safety of others on the farm – including other workers, family and visitors.
- The law also requires us to protect the safety of visitors and contractors who enter this workplace. Please look out for hazards to the health and safety of family members, tank drivers and others who enter the workplace.
- There are sometimes children on this farm. Their safety is a high priority. Please be careful when driving vehicles or machinery – never reverse without checking for children.
- Children and passengers are not permitted on tractors or other farm machinery when it is in operation.
- If leaving a machine when the engine is running, ensure that the working equipment is disengaged and the brake applied.

**The safety of the people on this farm is our top priority**

Declaration

I have read and understand the occupational health and safety instructions in this leaflet. I agree to do what is required to ensure that the health and safety of all people on this dairy farm is protected.

Signed/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from information supplied by the  
Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety  
[www.dairysafety.org.au](http://www.dairysafety.org.au)

# Instrucciones de Seguridad en Lecherías para Empleados

Si, en algún momento, no cree que pueda hacer un trabajo con seguridad, deténgase y discútalo con nosotros y juntos trabajaremos para arreglar el problema.

Vamos a repasar nuestra orientación de seguridad. Sin embargo, léalo cuidadosamente y asegúrese que la entiende, que toman en cuenta sus necesidades, y que entiende sus responsabilidades. Si no entiende cualquier parte, pida una explicación.

## Ropa de Trabajo

Se espera que llegue al trabajo con ropa adecuada que no corra un riesgo de seguridad. Ropa adecuada incluye:

- Botas dobles con suelas no resbalosas para trabajo general en la lechería
- Overol de material fuerte o pantalones largos y lavables
- Una camisa cómoda de manga larga – Se debe poder cerrar las mangas en la muñeca o remangarlas para que ropa suelta no pueda enredarse en máquinas o en materiales salientes, se debe remeter la camisa en el pantalón por la misma razón.
- Un sombrero y ropa para un clima lluvioso para trabajo afuera.

Se espera que llave la ropa diario, especialmente después de trabajar con químicos.

## Higiene

Poner atención al higiene personal es esencial. Está en el interés de su salud y de nuestro negocio – nuestra leche tiene que ser de la más alta calidad posible.

Si usted es fumador, ayudaremos a que deje de fumar ya que fumar en un ambiente rural trae un riesgo de un incendio.

Tiene que:

- Asegurar que la piel, más que todo las manos, se mantengan limpias y lavadas con agua enjabonada después de trabajar, especialmente después de tocar químicos, estercole/desechos, detergente o animales.
- Lavar la ropa diariamente
- Mantenerse hasta la fecha en la vacuna de tétano
- No estar en posesión de, consumir, o sufrir de los efectos de alcohol o drogas ilícitas
- Avisar de inmediato infecciones de la piel al mayordomo o patrón.
- No fumar en la lechería, vehículos, o cualquier otro edificio del rancho
- Avisar el mayordomo/patrón de cualquier medicina recetada que puede necesitar tomar durante horas de trabajo – de suma importancia si toma medicina para asma.

## Uso de Ropa Protectora y Equipo (PPE)

Ropa protectora y equipo es proveído para su protección personal mientras trabaja con nosotros. Se debe usar todo equipo personal protectora (PPE) como está indicada, lavar adecuadamente, y mantenerlo en buena condición.

Avise al mayordomo/dueño si el PPE esta dañado o no disponible, o si tiene dificultad en usar el equipo proveído.

El PPE incluye:

- Botas de hule y delantales para trabajo en la lechería
- Guantes proyectivos para manejar agentes de limpieza
- Tapones o protección de oído cuando hay problema de ruido
- Casco cuando monta motocicleta/ o un vehículo de todo-terreno (ATV)
- Guates protectores, mascara, overol y respiradores al manejar químicas.

- Bloqueador de sol al trabajar afuera en el sol
- Gafas protectoras para proteger los ojos;
- Mascara de polvo al entrar el almacén de alimentos

### **Montar la motocicleta/ATV**

Motocicletas y vehículos de todo terreno son peligrosos si no se usa de manera apropiada.

- No use la motocicleta/ATV sin autorización y sin que le hayan dado instrucciones y entrenamiento. Solo se puede usar en una calle publica,
- Para actividades de trabajo, y
- Si está registrada y usted tiene una licencia válida para usar una motocicleta/ATV
- Vístase con ropa adecuada que incluye pantalón de material fuerte, botas, y casco cuando se monta la motocicleta/ATV.
- Antes de salir en la motocicleta/ATV, rellene el tanque con gasolina y asegurar que las llantas, cadenas, y frenos están en buenas condiciones. Haga el necesario mantenimiento diario y avise cualquier problema de inmediato.
- No se permite pasajeros en el ATV.
- Niños menores de 16 años no se permite operar el ATV.
- No exceda los límites de peso de adelante ni detrás.

### **Entrar y Sacar Vacas de la Lechería**

- Cuando se tiene que cruzar vacas por una calle publica, asegúrese que los avisos han sido puestos, las puertas de las cercas abiertas y que las vacas cruzan lo más pronto posible. .

### **Ordeñar**

- Avisar sobre cualquier peligro en los corrales, lechería, líneas de leche, almacén de la leche, tanque de leche, y almacén de alimentos al mayordomo/patrón de inmediato
- Vacas que tienen maña de patear o son difíciles de manejar deben ser reportadas al mayordomo o patrón.
- Las vacas deben tener la vacuna contra Leptospirosis, pero usted debe evitar que le rocíe o salpique orina
- No se permite niños en la lechería a menos que estén en compañía de un adulto autorizado

### **Limpieza después de ordeñar**

- Quemaduras de agua caliente pueden ocurrir durante el proceso de hacer la limpieza.
- Reportar problemas con las conexiones de los tubos plásticos o metálicos, incluyendo problemas con gotera accesorios rotos
- Entrar el tanque de leche es prohibido – solo gente autorizada pueden entrar el tanque.
- Se debe regresar las mangueras a su lugar después de usarlas para la limpieza
- Todas químicas se tienen que regresar a su puesto adecuado que debe estar bajo llave

### **El manejo de químicas**

Los químicos usados en la lechería incluyen detergentes y otros químicos que su usan para limpiar las tuberías y tanques además de las químicas que usa el veterinario y hormonas usadas en el programa de crianza. También se usa químico para controlar insectos, las malas hierbas, enfermedades de hongos, ratones y ratas.

- Solo use químicos si ha sido capacitado en el uso y se lo han autorizado
- Toda persona que toca químicos de rancho tiene que cumplir con las indicaciones en la etiqueta.
- Si no puede comprender la etiqueta o tiene dificultad en leerla, pida ayuda antes de seguir.

- El equipo personal de protección recomendado debe ser puesto mientras se mezcla, aplica, y limpia el químico,
- Mantenga siempre agua limpia para limpiar el área y lavar la ropa al usar los químicos.
- Al terminar el trabajo, se debe limpiar el equipo y dejar bajo llave los químicos en el almacén de químicos.

### **Operación y Mantenimiento del Equipo**

- Asegúrese que ha recibido instrucción y capacitación o que le han evaluado antes de operar cualquier equipo por primera vez
- Familiarícese con el manual del operador para cualquier maquinaria que usted maneja
- Lea, comprenda y cumpla con todos los avisos de seguridad en la maquinaria y equipo y en el manual del operador.
- Asegúrese de que se ha apagado la maquina/equipo antes de quitar las guardias en la maquinaria antes de realizar mantenimiento o pruebas
- Justo al terminar un trabajo, reponga cualquier guardia que haya sido quitado para realizar mantenimiento o desatascar la maquinaria.
- Avise el dueño/patrón sobre una guardia que haya sido dañada o que haya expuesto partes móviles en la maquinaria que presentan peligro o riesgo de accidentes
- Quite las llaves de la maquinaria después de uso y póngalas en el lugar indicado

### **Alistarse para cualquier accidente**

- Se debe reporter todos los accidentes y casi accidentes al mayordomo o patron.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Anote todas heridas y daños en la libreta de accidentes)
- Antes de empezar el día, asegúrese de tener suficiente agua para mantenerse hidratada.
- Siempre avise a alguien donde va a estar en el rancho, aun más si está trabajando solo. Si no hay nadie cerca, deje una nota y déjela en un lugar visible
- Empleados capacitados en primeros auxilios: \_\_\_\_\_
- Botiquín de primeros auxilios \_\_\_\_\_
- Usted debe tener los números de emergencia en su teléfono y también deben estar anotado en el rancho. Los números son: \_\_\_\_\_
- Radio de dos vías? S/N \_\_\_\_\_

### **General**

- La ley exige que el dueño/mayordomo provee un lugar de trabajo seguro y sistemas de trabajo seguros. Para ayudarnos cumplir con esto, avísenos de cualquier peligro de seguridad que encuentre en el lugar de trabajo.
- Las mismas leyes exigen que usted, como empleado, haga su propio para asegurar que la salud y seguridad de otros en el rancho – incluyendo otros trabajadores, familia, y visitas.
- La ley también exige que protejamos la seguridad de visitas y contratistas que entren este lugar de trabajo. Por favor, esté al tanto de peligros a la salud y seguridad de parientes, motoristas de camiones y otra gente que entre el lugar de trabajo.
- A veces hay niños en este rancho. Su seguridad es de suma importancia. Por favor tenga cuidado cuando maneje vehículos o maquinaria – nunca marcha atrás sin verificar que no hay niños.
- Niños y pasajeros no son permitidos montar tractores u otra maquinaria del rancho cuando están en uso.
- Si deja una maquina mientras sigue el motor asegúrese que las partes que trabajan no están puestas y que el freno esta en uso

**The safety of the people on this farm is our top priority**

**Declaración**

Yo he leído y entiendo las instrucciones de salud y seguridad en este folleto. Estoy de acuerdo hacer lo necesario para asegurar que la salud y seguridad de toda la gente en esta lechería es protegida.

Firma \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

Firma \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from information supplied by the  
Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety  
[www.dairysafety.org.au](http://www.dairysafety.org.au)

Name: _____	Nombre: _____
Address: _____	Dirección: _____
Birth date: _____	Fecha de Nacimiento: _____
Phone #: _____	Teléfono #: _____
Employer name _____	Nombre del patrón _____
Employer #: _____	Patrón #: _____
Emergency #: _____	Emergencia #: _____
Translator #: _____	Traductora #: _____
Mexican Cons.#: <u>617 426 4181 Ext. *812</u> #911 – emergency	Consulado Mexicano.: <u>617 426 4181 Ext. *812</u> #911 – emergencia
Name: _____	Nombre: _____
Address: _____	Dirección: _____
Birth date: _____	Fecha de Nacimiento: _____
Phone #: _____	Teléfono #: _____
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Mexican Cons.#: <u>617 426 4181 Ext. *812</u> #911 – emergency	Consulado Mexicano.: <u>617 426 4181 Ext. *812</u> #911 – emergencia

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dirección: \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha de Nacimiento: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teléfono #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nombre del patrón \_\_\_\_\_  
Patrón #: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Traductora #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Consulado Mexicano.: 617 426 4181 Ext. \*812  
#911 – emergencia

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Dirección: \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha de Nacimiento: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Nombre del Patrón \_\_\_\_\_  
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Nombre del Patrón \_\_\_\_\_  
Patrón #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergencia #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Traductora #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Consulado Mexicano.: 617 426 4181 Ext. \*812  
#911 – emergencia

# **COMMUNICATION PLAN**

## **1) Interpreter Contact**

- a. Choose one individual who can get to know you, your employees, your farm, systems used, general job responsibilities of Spanish speaking employees.
- b. Set up a contract/agreement with interpreter to ensure you and your employees can have access to interpretation as needed for day to day changes or issues, emergency situations, health care concerns, and issues relating to the home

## **2) Signage/Bilingual Materials**

- a. Signs
  - i. Make sure all chemicals and cleaning liquids used by employees are marked clearly and use is identified.
  - ii. Any area marked for safety concerns should be marked in English and Spanish (Do Not Enter, Danger etc)
- b. Standard Operating Procedures
  - i. Use bilingual Standard Operating Procedures to detail exactly how you want each farm system completed (Milking System Cleaning Protocols, Milking Routine Protocols, Calf feeding Protocols, Calving Protocols)
- c. Communication tools
  - i. Make sure a dictionary is on hand in office. A bilingual farm dictionary would be best
  - ii. Design farm specific bilingual day – to – day communication sheets in accordance with job and reporting responsibilities of the Spanish speaking employee(s). Mastitis detection and treatment, Dry cow treatment, Heat detection, and calving reports are examples of reporting that can be improved by communication tools.

## **3) Designated Meeting & Training**

- a. In order to encourage and ensure open and effective communication employers should meet with their Spanish speaking employees at a minimum for monthly interpreted meetings. (Weekly farm meetings are often suggested regardless of whether a language barrier exists)
- b. Employers or managers should have a training plan to identify and prioritize training topics that provide employees with not only the skills to perform their job well but also the knowledge about why protocols and guidelines are in place and the ability to more fully understand the work that they do. (Milking Procedures, Cleaning the Milking System, Farm safety, Mastitis detection, Mastitis treatment, Milk Quality, Skid steer use and safety, animal behavior, heat detection, Newborn calf care...)

# Job Safety and Health

## It's the law!

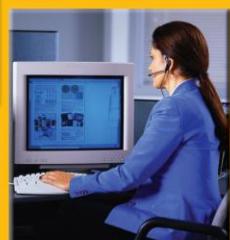
### EMPLOYEES:

- You have the right to notify your employer or OSHA about workplace hazards. You may ask OSHA to keep your name confidential.
- You have the right to request an OSHA inspection if you believe that there are unsafe and unhealthful conditions in your workplace. You or your representative may participate in that inspection.
- You can file a complaint with OSHA within 30 days of retaliation or discrimination by your employer for making safety and health complaints or for exercising your rights under the *OSH Act*.
- You have the right to see OSHA citations issued to your employer. Your employer must post the citations at or near the place of the alleged violations.
- Your employer must correct workplace hazards by the date indicated on the citation and must certify that these hazards have been reduced or eliminated.
- You have the right to copies of your medical records and records of your exposures to toxic and harmful substances or conditions.
- Your employer must post this notice in your workplace.
- You must comply with all occupational safety and health standards issued under the *OSH Act* that apply to your own actions and conduct on the job.

### EMPLOYERS:

- You must furnish your employees a place of employment free from recognized hazards.
- You must comply with the occupational safety and health standards issued under the *OSH Act*.

This free poster available from OSHA –  
*The Best Resource for Safety and Health*



Free assistance in identifying and correcting hazards or complying with standards is available to employers, without citation or penalty, through OSHA-supported consultation programs in each state.

1-800-321-OSHA  
[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

# Seguridad y Salud en el Trabajo ¡Es la Ley!

## EMPLEADOS:

- Usted tiene el derecho de notificar a su empleador o a la OSHA sobre peligros en el lugar de trabajo. Usted también puede pedir que la OSHA no revele su nombre.
- Usted tiene el derecho de pedir a la OSHA que realice una inspección si usted piensa que en su trabajo existen condiciones peligrosas o poco saludables. Usted o su representante pueden participar en esa inspección.
- Usted tiene 30 días para presentar una queja ante la OSHA si su empleador llega a tomar represalias o discriminar en su contra por haber denunciado la condición de seguridad o salud o por ejercer los derechos consagrados bajo la Ley OSH.
- Usted tiene el derecho de ver las citaciones enviadas por la OSHA a su empleador. Su empleador debe colocar las citaciones en el lugar donde se encontraron las supuestas infracciones o cerca del mismo.
- Su empleador debe corregir los peligros en el lugar de trabajo para la fecha indicada en la citación y debe certificar que dichos peligros se hayan reducido o desaparecido.
- Usted tiene derecho de recibir copias de su historial o registro médico y el registro de su exposición a sustancias o condiciones tóxicas o dañinas.
- Su empleador debe colocar este aviso en su lugar de trabajo.
- Usted debe cumplir con todas las normas de seguridad y salud ocupacionales expedidas conforme a la Ley OSH que sean aplicables a sus propias acciones y conducta en el trabajo.

## EMPLEADORES:

- Usted debe proporcionar a sus empleados un lugar de empleo libre de peligros conocidos.
- Usted debe cumplir con las normas de seguridad y salud ocupacionales expedidas conforme a la Ley OSH.

# OSHA

Administración de Seguridad  
y Salud Ocupacional

Departamento del Trabajo  
de los Estados Unidos



Los empleadores pueden obtener ayuda gratis para identificar y corregir las fuentes de peligro y para cumplir con las normas, sin citación ni multa, por medio de programas de consulta respaldados por la OSHA en cada estado del país.

**1-800-321-OSHA**

[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

OSHA 2187-01-07R

Acid - For use only in acid cycle container – take care, can burn skin

Acido – Únicamente para el recipiente del lavado con ácido, con cuidado puede quemarle la piel

Powdered Soap – To clean bulk tank and milking system parts

Jabón en Polvo – Para el lavado del tanque de leche y piezas del sistema de leche

Detergent – For use only in wash cycle container

Detergente – Únicamente para el recipiente del lavado con detergente

## Danger - Peligro

Do Not Enter – Prohibida la Entrada



# **Developing Effective Standard Operating Procedures**

David Grusenmeyer, Sr. Extension Associate  
PRO-DAIRY, Cornell University

## **Introduction**

TQM (Total Quality Management), HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points), ISO9000 (International Standards Organization), and Six Sigma are management programs designed to help companies maintain process and quality control, and remain competitive in a global business environment. At the heart of each of these programs, standard operating procedures (SOPs) drive the results. While business research and company performance continually demonstrate the power and effectiveness of these structured management control programs; you can benefit from the potential of SOPs without the added detail and development that these complete programs require.

## **Why Would I Want SOPs and What Will They Do For Me?**

In today's business environment, SOPs must make bottom-line economic sense, especially if you invest the time and energy to develop and implement effective SOPs. Below are some of the ways they can have a direct or indirect positive impact on business performance.

1. Animals thrive on consistency and perform much better when things are done correctly, on time, the same way, every time.
2. People need consistency to achieve top performance. Doing jobs the same way every time rather than wondering, "How does the boss want it done today?" improves productivity. We are talking about consistency in routines, not mind numbing boredom.
3. SOPs will reduce system variation, which is the enemy of production efficiency and quality control.
4. Well-written SOPs facilitate training. Having complete step-by-step instructions helps trainers ensure that nothing is missed and provides a reference resource for trainees.
5. Well-written SOPs facilitate cross training. A SOP can be an excellent reference document on how a task is done for employees filling in on jobs they do not perform on a regular basis.
6. People tend to be supportive of the things they help create. Involving employees in developing SOPs can help assure the final product is more complete, useful and accepted.
7. SOPs can help in conducting performance evaluations. They provide a common understanding for what needs to be done and shared expectations for how tasks are completed.
8. Employees can coach and support each other if there is documentation available on exactly how various tasks must be done and everyone knows what their co-workers are supposed to be doing. This can also help generate a more cooperative team

approach to getting all the daily tasks done correctly, everyday.

9. Having well defined SOPs, using them in training and insisting that they be followed can help keep employees safe at work and may provide some legal protection if an injury occurs.

10. Well thought out and implemented SOPs can greatly reduce biosecurity risks for your operation.

11. Developing and following SOPs for tasks where there is environmental risk, such as manure, chemical or waste handling, help to protect the environment and may provide some legal protection if an environmental mishap occurs.

12. Having SOPs can encourage regular evaluation of work activity and continuous improvement in how things are done.

### **Organizing the SOP Writing Effort**

Developing a complete set of SOPs for a business can be a time consuming process. But a little time spent in the beginning to organize the effort can help reduce frustration with the process and make the effort more efficient and effective. Using the following five steps will aid in your organizing efforts.

1. Identify the key areas of concern for your operation where SOPs might be useful. For example, feeding, animal moving and handling, manure handling, equipment cleaning and sanitation, vaccination, bedding, biosecurity, animal health, new animal arrival, etc.

2. Using the list from step one, identify the top one or two priority areas for attention. In which areas are more controls desired or required? In which areas will economic returns or impact on the operation be greatest? Which areas are likely to yield some good successes early in the process so you can build momentum and excitement for the effort?

3. Focusing on the selected top priority areas from step two, identify all the processes, functions or operations that occur within each of these areas.

4. Group together and combine or subdivide further (which ever makes sense for your operation) all the important processes, functions or operations within each area. Then prioritize them for SOP development.

5. Identify the best individual to lead the development effort for each SOP and assign a development team of employees, managers, agribusiness representatives, consultants and anyone else who can bring relevant expertise to the effort.

### **Six Steps to Developing a SOP**

A SOP for the same task will differ from farm to farm. There are also a number of different approaches to developing SOPs depending on the business, complexity of the SOP and the number of people involved in the development. The following six-step procedure will be useful and effective in most situations.

#### **1. Name the SOP using descriptive action words.**

*Examples:* Mixing Milk Replacer, Identifying and Handling New Calves, Moving Calves From One Group to Another.

**Tip:** If you are developing SOPs for several different areas of your operation, give each area an identifying code then number the SOPs within it, for example, in biosecurity, SOPs B-1, B-2, B-3... in the feeding area F-1, F-2, F-3... for health H-1, H-2... This will make it easier to file the SOPs, refer to them in related SOPs, and for an employee to find a specific SOP for reference later. Keep them filed in one or more notebooks accessible to the employees. Include the date the SOP took effect, any revision dates and the authors' names.

**2. Write a scope for the SOP.** To do this, answer these questions: Which specific operations or tasks within an operation will be covered? Which are not covered? Who is the SOP written for?

*Example:* This Milk Replacer Mixing SOP is for all regular and relief calf feeders. The SOP starts with having clean and sanitized equipment and covers procedures through delivery of the milk to the calves. It does not cover cleaning and sanitizing the equipment or collecting and returning empty milk pails. For procedures covering these areas, see the appropriate SOP. (This is where referencing codes and numbers for other SOPs comes in handy.)

**3. Develop an overall task description.**

Include the number of people required for the task, their skill levels, the equipment and supplies required, any personal protective or safety equipment required, and a description of how the finished product or result should look.

*Example:*

- ♦ Milk replacer mixing is done in the feed mixing room.
- ♦ One person thoroughly trained in calf feeding does task.
- ♦ Equipment and supplies include: large mixing tank, hose to facet, milk replacer storage barrel and measuring scoop, large wisk, thermometer, and individual calf milk pails.
- ♦ Clean coveralls and a rubber apron must be worn.
- ♦ The expectation is that every calf will be fed an adequate amount of warm milk twice each day.
- ♦ Milk replacer mixing includes the following tasks:
  - Gathering supplies and equipment
  - Inspecting supplies and equipment
  - Measuring and record keeping
  - Mixing
  - Filling individual pails
  - Delivering milk to the calves

**4. Describe each task in detail. In this section include the following:**

- Specific order in which activities are done
- Timing sequences and times allowed
- Materials or tools used and how they are used
- Safety or health considerations
- References to other associated SOPs

Define terms and concepts when needed. Place health and safety warnings prominently in the SOP.

**Tip:** People can't remember more than 10 or 12 steps, so they tend to have difficulty with long SOPs. If your SOP goes beyond 10 steps, either break it into logical sub-task SOPs, or write a second shortened form of the SOP for use at the job site listing only the main steps, not the detailed explanations of the steps. Use the highly detailed form of the SOP for training and reference. Developing abbreviated versions of SOPs for use at the work site make excellent reminder aids for employees and help ensure that important items are not missed.

*Example:* From step three:

- ♦ Combine gathering and inspecting supplies and equipment. Write one SOP dealing with assembling and inspecting a toolbox or bucket containing all necessary equipment.

**Tip:** Developing toolboxes or buckets for such activities as sick calf first aid, vaccination, tagging, dehorning, extra teat removal, foot care, breeding etc. and SOPs dealing with how those toolboxes are stocked, inspected and stored can be a great organizational aid and time saver. The toolboxes should contain all necessary tools, equipment and supplies as well as laminated SOP reminder cards.

- ♦ Write a second SOP for mixing, measuring and record keeping.
- ♦ Write a third SOP for filling milk pails, delivery to calves and pickup from calves after feeding.

## 5. Get everyone on board.

Successful SOP development and implementation typically requires that all people who are affected by a SOP be involved in a team-based SOP development and problem solving process. To achieve that:

- Ask several experienced employees to be involved in drafting the initial SOP.
- Have trained employees check the written procedures against actual practices before implementation. Make revisions if necessary.
- Talk with all employees to gain agreement that procedures and expectations are appropriate and achievable.
- Inform everyone about the written SOP.
- Train them on the SOPs' contents and tell them where they can find it for future reference. Be aware that all your employees may not be able to read the SOP.

## 6. Set up a system to monitor the SOP regularly.

The minute you write and implement a SOP it is time to evaluate and update it. Even new SOPs frequently need to be tweaked once or twice before they operate smoothly. Employees should report needed changes to their supervisor any time they see an opportunity, problem, or concern. Anytime something changes on the farm, each SOP within the areas affected by the change should be reviewed for accuracy and appropriateness. You, your experienced employees, your veterinarian, and other consultants should review each SOP annually. Take a team approach to modifying SOPs by including outside expertise along with employees and managers.

### Presenting the SOP

Different SOP formats include:

**Simple steps or a checklist.** These are easy to write and follow and work well for short, simple, straightforward tasks.

**Hierarchical steps.** An extension of the simple steps format, this format works better for tasks that require additional detail or sub-steps within each primary step.

**Linear flow chart.** Think of this as a graphic version of the two previous formats. It works well for tasks where activities must be done in a specific order and where an easy-to-follow reminder at the job site is useful.

**Annotated pictures.** This format works well for people who cannot read or where a language barrier exists. Since pictures can dramatically reduce the need for written explanations, this format helps to shorten complex and detailed SOPs. For some employees, SOP pictures can make excellent work site reminders. For example a photo illustrating how a work site should be set up or arranged, or the proper locations of shields, levers, switches and handles on a piece of equipment.

**Branching flowchart.** This format makes complex SOPs, especially those with a number of decisions that affect subsequent steps, easier to follow. Boxes within the flow chart can also be expanded to include checklists or sub steps.

The best SOP format is one that, given the situation, does the best job of accurately transmitting the necessary information and facilitating consistent implementation of the SOP. The primary considerations for choosing the best SOP formats are:

- **The SOP.**

Consider the SOPs' scope and complexity, the number of steps involved, the amount of detail necessary within each step, and how many decisions, if any, must be made that will influence subsequent steps.

- **The people who will use the SOP.**

How do they learn? If they are visual learners, perhaps a series of pictures or a flow chart will work best. If they are auditory learners, then a cassette tape of instructions may be more useful.

To get an idea of who learns best by seeing things and by hearing them, listen to the words they use. Someone who is visual might make comments like, "That looks good to me" or "I see what you mean." An auditory person might say, "I hear what you're saying." or "Sounds good to me."

Physical limitations, such as poor eyesight, may necessitate large clear print or big bright pictures and plenty of light. If an employee's hearing is poor, the person may not be able to hear instructions, especially if there is competing background noise.

Does an employee have a learning disability that interferes with his or her ability to comprehend and process information and instructions? Does the person have difficulty remembering instructions or details from one time to the next? Converting SOPs to brief reminder cards or pictures may be helpful. What are employee levels of English literacy? Can they read and understand it? Can they read and understand another language if the information were translated?

- **How the SOP will be used.**

The purpose of a SOP is to give detailed directions so that any individual can do a job

correctly, on time, every time. At the same time, any one SOP may have a number of different uses. Depending on the intended use at the time, the SOP may be written or presented differently to be more effective. A SOP that is part of a reference manual may contain large amounts of explanatory detail and even supporting background information so employees understand the biology and importance behind certain SOP steps.

When using the same SOP in basic training, less detail may be desirable. The amount of detail should be tailored to the level of the training. For example, new trainees might be overwhelmed by large amounts of detail, so give them only the details they need to get the job done correctly.

For in-depth follow-up training or retraining, you may want the SOP to contain more detail and background information explaining why certain things are done or the biology behind certain practices.

The same SOP used as an on-the-job reminder should be a bare bones overview that is readily accessible at the work site, easy to see, and quick to review and understand.

### **Summary**

To maximize the benefits derived from your investment in SOP development:

- Think first about the ways you intend to use the SOP after it is developed: Employee orientation and training, refresher training, advanced training, work site reminders, cross training, performance appraisal, employee safety and accident prevention, food safety and bio-security, process improvement, quality control, environmental protection, or job description development.
- Then decide who should be involved in its development.
- How can you best accomplish the development?
- Select a format, or formats, for the final product based on the SOP, the people who will be using it, and the uses to which they, or you, will put the SOP.

It is important to realize that developing useful and effective SOPs requires time and commitment from all management and employee levels. Once the development task is complete three important steps still remain.

1. Educate employees about the new SOP.
2. Control “procedural drift” by ensuring that the SOP is followed consistently over time.
3. Establish an evaluation and review system to be certain that over time all the steps of an SOP are still correct and appropriate for the production system.

# **Basic SOP**

## **Clarity Farms Parlor SOP #1: Basic Milking Procedure**

1. Dry-wipe dirt and debris from the first cow's udder.
2. Predip all four teats with the green dip cup.
3. Strip two squirts of milk from each teat and observe for abnormal milk. If any abnormal milk is found, refer to Parlor SOP #2 "Dealing With Cows Showing Abnormal Milk"
4. Repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 with the second and third cows on the same side.
5. Return to the first cow and thoroughly wipe with a clean towel.
6. Attach unit to first cow and adjust.
7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 with the second and third cows in the side.
8. Begin at step 1 with the fourth cow on the side and repeat procedure with each group of 3 cows until all 12 units are attached.
9. When all units have detached, postdip all cows and release.

# Hierarchical Procedure SOP

## *Milking Procedure*

*Effective date: 6/2/06*

*Developed by: Parlor Staff*

### **Key Objectives:**

- Provide a comfortable and stress-free environment for the cows.
- Provide a comfortable, consistent, and efficient procedure for workers.
- Apply the milker within 60 seconds of stripping to clean, dry teats.
- Begin milking at 5 AM, and 5 PM. Be prepared to start at these times.

1. Make sure cows are in place in milking stalls.

1. Check cow ID system

2. Wipe soil and manure, if excessive, off the first cow's udder, proceed to do same to udders of cows 2, 3, 4, and 5.

3. Apply predip (1.0% iodine) solution, using the wand, to each teat on cows 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

1. Make sure that iodine is applied to at least 75% of the teat
2. Pay attention to teats on the far side (away from the pit).
3. Predip should contact cow for 40 seconds prior to drying with a towel

4. Using a fresh cloth towel for each cow, dry each teat on cow 1, then hand-milk 2 squirts of milk from each teat on cow 1.

1. Squirt onto concrete to see the milk. If abnormal follow protocol for "**If Mastitis is Detected.**"

2. Assuming milk is clean, move to step 5.

5. Apply four teat cups to the udder.

1. Adjust the milking unit and automatic detacher.

6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 for cow 2, then cow 3, cow 4, and cow 5.

7. Start protocol (steps 1 through 6) with cows 6 through 10.

8. When detachers are off, check to see that cows are milked out.

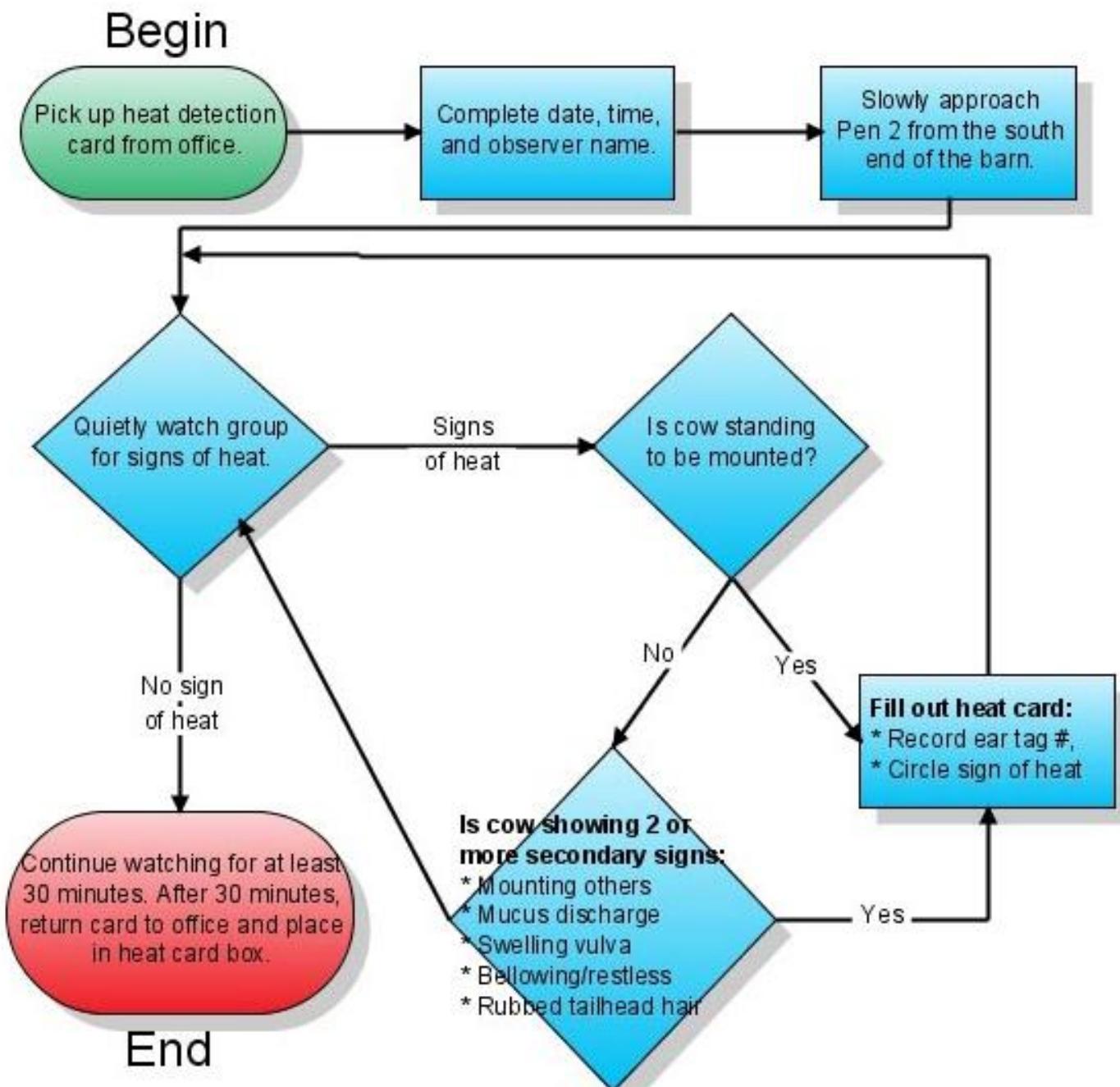
1. If not done milking, then attach unit again.
2. If they are done, then apply post dip to all cows with complete coverage of each teat.

9. Release cows from parlor.

## Flowchart SOP

# Heat Detection Flowchart

February 24, 2007



## Calving Record



Date	Time am/pm	Cow #	Mounted	Clear mucous	Rubbing/ licking	Muddy flanks/ hair loss on tail	Bellowing/ rebellious/ nervousness	Low milk production / off feed	Bloody mucus
Fecha	Hora am/pm	# de vaca							
15	9:24	382	Montada	Moco claro	Soba/ lame	Lodo en flancos/ perdida de pelo en cola	Balidos/ rebelde	Baja producción de leche, perdida de apetito	Moco sangriente
12-Mar	7:30 AM	547	X	X	X				



Date	Cow #	Time am/pm	No milk let down	Off Feed	Lame Cow	Sunken eyes	Difficulty getting up	Droopy or Cold Ears	Mastitis
Fecha	Numero de Vaca	Hora am/pm	No bajo la leche	No esta comiendo	Vaca coja	Ojos hundidos	Dificultad en levantarse	Orejas caidas o frias	Mastitis
15	382	9:24							
June 20	849	7:40 PM	X						

# Excerpt from Hiring and Managing Spanish Speaking Employees

Alvaro Garcia  
Dairy Science Department  
South Dakota State University

[www.ProgressiveDairy.com](http://www.ProgressiveDairy.com)

## **Hold regular meetings**

It is always useful to have at least one monthly meeting. Even if everything is going great and there's nothing new to report, you still want to hold a meeting, if just for a few minutes. Do this during working hours. Don't ask your employees to attend a meeting during their days off or during resting hours. When they attend, pay them their normal hourly wage. This will ensure that none will be in a hurry to leave early and that all issues will be thoroughly addressed. The same goes for any training sessions out of normal work hours; after all, training will only benefit the dairy.

Creating a meeting routine avoids the stress of an "urgent" meeting that's called because of a recent problem. Even if the problem is urgent, always start on a positive, light note. If there's a topic to be addressed, ask questions and encourage participation. Make it very clear that when the team has a problem, it will be solved as a team.

Initially, it might be difficult to get your employees to open up and offer input. For them, the manager is the boss, and he is always right. The last thing they want to do is create trouble or upset him in any way. So when starting with a training session, explain to the employees not only what they are supposed to do but also the consequences (for the dairy) of not doing so.

Get a discussion going on why they think the incorrect way of doing things will not work. Show the right way and give a brief explanation on why it should be done that way. The last thing we want is a passive audience that nods at every recommendation, only to leave and continue to perform as usual. If that is the case, try another approach.

It is very important to consider the literacy of the group and use as many visual aids as possible. Make comparisons to real-life situations they can relate to.

# Practical concepts for employee training and dairy performance

Dairy basics - Management

Written by Fabian Bernal

Our society is facing fundamental changes in its dynamics, influenced by an economical downturn, change in markets and new demands in family life. Dairy workers have new aspirations – both personal and economical – but most do not have an educational level that allows placing themselves within a larger economic segment.

All these changes in the dynamics of the global economy represent a great opportunity to improve and reach our objectives. Such an achievement is attainable with a full understanding of the vital role of human resources in businesses. However, we should have our priorities straight: first, cows; second; human resources; and third, management. If we are successful in the first two, we will be successful managers in an ever-changing and more challenging market.

Dairy managers and dairy workers face substantial challenges in adapting to new technologies and new farm business needs. In response to this development in agribusiness today, we need to create strategies that emphasize a greater access to technical support and training in order to assist agricultural employers and farm workers.

These training sessions and technical services should be customized, addressing the unique integrated production system at each farm. It is all about education and performance.

The question is: Have you and your dairy adviser really observed what is happening on your farm? Likewise, have you addressed those issues correctly and promptly?

While farm owners and managers place all responsibility on human resources available to achieve higher productivity and performance of the dairy farm, the main thrust of the dairy business – animal handling, milk quality and milking efficiency – is held by a staff that has received little or no training to perform the various tasks within their job. Information gets lost due to language barriers and production gets sloppier – a positive response does not always mean that your employees understand why we do a specific task and the importance of it.

While training programs focus on workforce development and best production practices, we need to also look at other areas that will challenge your employees, such as:

## *Livestock management*

- From calf to cow
- Animal welfare

## *Reproduction*

- Heat detection

## *Barn and parlor management*

- Best practices in the milking parlor
- Cow traffic
- Milk quality and productivity

### *Production systems*

- Feed management
- Food and feed safety

### *Safe work environment*

One of the most important managerial distinctions to reflect on is the quality of human resources and their training. The achievement of long-term goals depends on the proper use of production inputs.

The lack of a strategic work plan that includes performance evaluations has created a need for unique technology transfer programs that can be applied to both the producer and the employee. In many cases, the only time that employees receive any feedback is when the work is poorly done. In turn, this generates negative feelings, often leading to a lack of motivation and consequently reduced performance.

Staff members need a positive motivational plan that builds their morale and helps achieve the overall farm goals. Creating an active learning environment that explains why we do what we do just makes sense. We have identified that when employees cannot do what is asked of them or what is expected, it is usually because:

- They do not know how to do the job properly because they have not been given training for effective implementation.
- They do not understand why they have to do certain tasks.
- They think they are doing well, but receive no feedback to confirm this.
- They face obstacles beyond their means.
- They do not think that new standard procedures work and have no explanation for change.

Most workers believe that completing a job faster and cutting corners is better, that their familiarity with the equipment and everyday activities is unbeatable, and that as long as they are always in agreement, their boss will be happy. Meanwhile, employees are not motivated and change becomes a frightening challenge.

Remember that many of the negative behaviors are rapidly acquired and transmitted within the farm relatively fast. What I often hear is, “If he doesn’t do his job, why do I have to do it?”

In order to share knowledge and experiences and to promote good communication with employees in the dairy, consider the following ideas:

1. Once you have hired a new employee, offer them induction: show the property, introduce them to other employees and answer any questions about the rules at the farm. Review the responsibilities verbally and in writing. Have them translated if necessary.
2. Use different forms of communication. Remember that reading abilities can be a challenge, too. Include messages, photos, posters, videos, etc. Be creative.
3. Have SOPs written down and standardized.
4. Before you communicate, have a clear message you want to convey in your mind.
5. Be willing to listen. Give them the opportunity to be heard and understood.

6. Be firm on your expectations.
7. Have regular meetings with your employees. Make them feel like they are part of the business and its future.
8. When possible, show them the impact of the proper performance on the overall productivity (milk production, SCC, PI, animal health, etc).
9. Ask their opinion. Nobody wants to be the last to know about a plan or idea. Include employees. Give them a sense of value.
10. Say “thank you.” You expect a good job from your employees, but when they go that extra mile, show them your appreciation.

Most milk producers are good leaders that understand the importance of human resources. For others, this is one of the most difficult tasks when managing their dairy business. Anyone who wants to improve in this aspect can, as long as their priorities are right (cows, human resources and management).

The benefits are enormous. Good employees do even better when they are recognized openly, which makes them feel like they are part of the team. Everyone becomes a winner, creating positive feelings and good communication. Employee performance improves, and in the end, managers and cows are happy. **PD**

Fabian Bernal  
Dairy Management Adviser  
Alltech

# **TRAINING DAIRY FARM WORKERS**

Bernie Erven, Professor

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## **Introduction**

What do you like to do that you don't do well? Easy question for most people! Nothing! Now imagine having your first job on a dairy farm and not knowing how to do what you have been hired to do. Most people gain more satisfaction from doing a job well than stumbling along on their own trying to learn. New employees need and want training.

The importance of training programs has increased dramatically. Margins for acceptable error have decreased. Equipment has become more complicated. Farm work is complex. People with all the necessary skills and experience for success cannot be hired. Many new employees were not raised on a farm. New employees who have worked for another dairy farmer are likely to bring habits that need to be changed. Training is essential!

## **Getting Ready to Train**

Dairy farmers should separate getting ready to train from doing the actual training. Trainers are often so experienced in what they are teaching that taking time to prepare for training seems like a waste of time. "I don't have time to prepare" or "I know this job so well I don't need to think about how to teach it" are usually foolish attitudes. Muddled instructions increase the time spent on training.

Confusion causes frustration for both trainer and employee.

Two important questions guide preparation for training. First, what is the objective of the training? Define specifically what the workers are to know or be able to do at the conclusion of the training. Does the new milker need to know how to do preventive maintenance on the milking equipment? Does the tractor driver need to know how to determine when a field is too wet to work? An acceptable level of performance and timetable for the training should also be established. What is excellent work? Is anything less than excellent acceptable? What is the difference between good enough and excellent? Who will notice or care about how well a job is done?

Second, what are the principal steps in the task and in what sequence should they be done? Analyzing each task can be helpful. Develop tips to make the job easier to do, to do more quickly and to do with less frustration. Keep in mind that a new worker needs help that builds on what he or she now can or cannot do.

Having determined the objectives of the training and the principal steps in the job, the trainer is ready to prepare equipment, materials, learning aids and the work place for the actual training. Stopping training to look for equipment or supplies leaves the learner suspicious that the trainer is careless or incompetent or both.

The actual training of a new employee can be aided by a five-step teaching method:

- 1. PREPARE the learner.** Learners are prepared when they are at ease, understand why they need to learn the task, are interested in learning, have the confidence that they can learn and the trainer can teach. The most important part of learner preparation is creating a need to know or desire to learn. Each of the following is helpful in preparing the learner: show enthusiasm for the task, relate the task to what the learner already knows and help the learner

envision being an expert in the task. It also helps to add fun and prestige to the task and to associate the task with respected co-workers.

**2. TELL** the learner about each step or part of the task.

**3. SHOW** the learner how to do each step. In demonstrating the task, explain each step emphasizing the key points and more difficult steps. Remember the little and seemingly simple parts of the task. Get the learner involved by asking questions about what is being shown.

4. Have the learner **DO** each step of the task while being observed by the trainer. Ask the learner to explain each step as it is performed. If steps or parts of the task are omitted, reexplain the steps and have the learner repeat them. Then have the learner do the steps without the trainer observing.

**5. REVIEW** each step or part of the task with the learner, offering encouragement, constructive criticism and additional pointers on how to do the job. Be frank and honest in the appraisal. Encourage the learner toward self-appraisal.

These five steps work! They help create an ideal learning situation based on the following guidelines and assumptions:

- All employees can learn.
- Trainers should make learning an active process.
- Learners need and want guidance and direction.
- Learning should be step-by-step.
- Learners need time to practice.
- Learning should be varied to avoid boredom.
- Learners gain satisfaction from their learning.
- Trainers should encourage and reinforce learner progress.
- Learning does not occur at a steady rate, i.e., plateaus follow spurts of progress.
- Getting Started

Improved training offers dairy farm managers a way to increase employee job satisfaction and progress. Deciding what can be accomplished through better training is a good starting point. Creating a positive environment for learning helps both the trainer and the employees.

Preparing before jumping in avoids confusion and frustration. Using a five-step method, **Prepare-Tell- Show-Do-Review**, steers both trainers and employees toward greater success.

## Oversight of Employee Housing

- Before a new employee arrives at employee housing make sure house is in the condition you expect the employee to upkeep during his/her employment. A new employee that arrives to a house with dishes piled up in the sink, chicken bones on the floor, and stacks of garbage in the entry way will think that this is acceptable for him.
- Make sure cleaning supplies are available and in good condition for use (broom, pan, vacuum, cleaning agents). In order to ensure cleaning gets done you need to make sure the supplies are available to do the cleaning.
- Complete a housing inspection with new employee highlighting house cleanliness and maintenance expectations (clean surfaces, rugs, fridge, trash routine, heating levels). Explain that cleanliness is a safety and health issue and that you expect that the house is cleaned on a regular basis.
- Ensure employee knows how to use appliances and cleaning supplies provided with the house. Remember that many of the Latino employees are coming from different living standards and cultural norms. Appliances and cleaning supplies in the U.S. are different and even those employees living in the U.S. for some time may not ever receive instruction on their uses. Young men generally do not participate in cleaning or cooking in Mexico and Central America.
- Review housing safety issues (smoke detector, unblocked exits, safety hazards (leaving burner on)
- Post and review emergency numbers in an obvious place near the phone. Explain who to call in the case of an emergency or housing concern.
- Schedule regular inspections to ensure house is being maintained properly. If cockroaches have been a problem in the past make sure they are gone when a new employee arrives. Explain expectations of who pays for house upkeep costs such as an exterminator coming in.

## **House Sanitation and Upkeep**

The sanitation and maintenance of a house greatly impacts the health and safety of all individuals living in that house. Understanding how appliances are used and maintained correctly better enables an individual to care for an appliance and detect problems should they arise. The proper use of cleaning products and natural alternatives will improve house cleanliness as well as avoid contact with or poor use of products potentially harmful to an individual's health. Discussions around rodents and insects can improve methods for preventing and combatting infestations. General information about food safety and storage increases the likelihood that food is being handled properly and thus reducing the possibility of health complications.

This informational booklet has been put together to serve as a conversation starter around house sanitation and upkeep. Information has been kept as simple as possible to allow for a general overview of housing issues. The checklist is meant to be used in an initial visit to evaluate current house sanitation and upkeep and then again in a subsequent visit to evaluate any changes that have taken place. Items that are a concern in a particular house should be discussed as the checklist is being used, to not only identify a problem but to offer practical solutions. Additionally, this checklist can help employers understand current house sanitation and upkeep problems exist and what they can do as employers to facilitate a safer and cleaner living environment for their employees.

## **Checklist: House Sanitation and Upkeep**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Food refrigerated appropriately
Refrigerator and freezer closed tightly
Appropriate meat thawing technique
Food covered and in its place
No crumbs or food particles
Properly discarded leftovers
Clean sink
Sink strainer in place
Clean refrigerator
Clean toilet
Clean lavatory sink
Clean shower/bathtub
Empty lint filter
Toilet paper in toilet bowl (unless the boss has said otherwise)
No dust on tables, shelves, and other surfaces in the house
Clean stove top and surrounding area (no grease buildup)
No accumulation of trash in the house
Clean floor
No mice or rats
No roaches
No bedbugs
No flies
No mosquitos
No dust mites
No fleas
Bottom sheets on mattress
Sufficient light bulbs
Sufficient trash cans
Recycling system in place
Curtains or blinds (instead of blankets or cardboard)
Screen doors without tears or holes
Screen Windows without tears or holes
Ability to open and close Windows
Sufficient fans
Appropriate use of heating and cooling systems
Entrances and exits unblocked
Electrical wires unexposed
Electrical wires not near water or under things
Electrical wires do not overheat
Outlets and extension cords not overloaded
Electrical wires not under rugs
Smoke detector
Carbon monoxide detector
Fire extinguisher

## **Food refrigerated appropriately**

Refrigerators should be kept at a temperature of 40°F or less. A refrigerator that is at a temperature higher than 40°F could result in rapid growth of bacteria and harm food safety. Even only 20 minutes of a temperature greater than 40°F can cause bacteria growth. Food that needs refrigeration should not be eaten after it has been at a temperature of higher than 40°F for more than 2 hours. Food that should be refrigerated are:

- All cooked foods
- Raw meat
- Meat sandwiches
- Salads with meat
- Tuna and egg salads
- Milk, cheese, and yogurt
- Open cans of fruit or pudding
- Cut fruits and vegetables

Bacteria cannot be seen so food that has been left outside the refrigerator can seem fine but could cause a person to become sick upon eating it.

Alternately, if the food is refrigerated for a long time, in general, it won't cause harm to anyone though it can lose its quality or smell bad.

Refrigerated or frozen food should be covered or wrapped to avoid it from dehydrating or ending up with bad smells.

Raw meat and seafood should be in a well-sealed container or wrapped safely to prevent any of the juice from contaminating other food.

In general, leftover cooked food can be kept for 4 days. On the other hand, raw ground beef, poultry, or seafood should only be stored for 1-2 days. Roasted meat, fillets, and chops can be stored for 3 to 5 days.

## **Refrigerator and freezer closed tightly**

It is important to make sure the refrigerator and freezer doors are shut tightly. Only open the doors as necessary and close them as soon as possible. This will prevent thaw or increased temperatures in the refrigerator as well as save energy.

### **Appropriate meat thawing technique**

Food is safe for an indefinite time while it is frozen. As soon as it begins to thaw and reaches a temperature higher than 40 °F it is possible that bacteria can start growing on the food.

Meat should never be thawed by leaving it out on the table. It should also not be thawed in hot water. It is dangerous to eat food that needs refrigeration after it has been outside of the refrigerator at temperatures higher than 40 °F.

There are three safe methods to thaw food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave.

- Thawing meat in the refrigerator requires planning since it is a slow process. For every 5 pounds of a large amount of food you need at least 24 hours. One pound of meat can take a day to thaw completely.
- Thawing meat in cold water requires a package or plastic bag without holes. (Holes let in bacteria or water). Put the bag in a bowl or container of cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes so that the food continues thawing. Once it is thawed completely food should be cooked right away.
- Thawing meat in the microwave can leave the food warm and therefore it is necessary to cook food thawed this way immediately. As soon as the temperature of the food in the microwave has increased there is the possibility of bacteria growth. All meat thawed this way should be cooked before refreezing.

**Information adapted from: [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En\\_Espanol/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En_Espanol/index.asp)**

### **Food covered and in its place**

All food should be stored in glass, plastic, or metal containers. Food should not be stored on the floor and care should be taken to not store food where insects or rodents can enter.

### **No crumbs or food particles**

Keep furniture free of crumbs and food particles (tables, shelves). Don't feed the rodents and insects!

### **Properly discarded leftovers**

Get rid of leftover food appropriately. Store left-overs that can be eaten later in the refrigerator. Put left-overs that will not be eaten in the compost or trash.

### **Clean sink and strainer in place**

Keep the sink clean to avoid bacteria, mold, and germs. Use a strainer to avoid clogging the drain.

### **Clean Refrigerator**

The refrigerator should be turned off and unplugged before cleaning it. Take out all the food, shelves, and anything else that can be removed. Clean the surface to remove crumbs and food particles. To remove mold from the interior of the refrigerator a mix of half white vinegar and half water can be applied and then rinsed off. Also, a basic mix of warm water with a few tablespoons of baking soda can be used. Make sure the refrigerator is rinsed and dry before returning the food. The outside of the refrigerator should be cleaned as well. A little dish detergent with warm water can be used to clean with a soft cloth. Rinse and dry.

To eliminate odors leave an open box of baking soda in the refrigerator.

Once the refrigerator is cleaned it should be maintained by cleaning spills immediately and throwing out food (already cooked or opened) that has been there for more than 1 week.

Information adapted from: [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En\\_Espanol/Refrigeracion/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En_Espanol/Refrigeracion/index.asp)

### **Clean Toilet**

Leave a cup of distilled white vinegar for a few hours (or overnight). Scrub with a brush or rough cloth and flush.

### **Clean lavatory sink**

Mix 3 tablespoons of baking soda with 1 tablespoon of water. Apply to the surface, leave for a few minutes, scrub with a brush or a rough cloth and rinse.

### **Clean shower/bathtub**

Wet with a sponge of white distilled vinegar. Apply to all surfaces of the tub or shower. Leave for 5 minutes. Scrub with a brush. Rinse with clean water.

### **Lint filter**

Before using the dryer, empty the lint filter. Also, make sure the escape valve lets air escape to the outside of the house. Clothes should not be left on top of the drier. Products to clean clothes should not be left on top of the drier because they can damage the surface.

### **Toilet paper in the toilet.**

The septic system in the United States is designed for the use of toilet paper in the toilet bowl. (Unless the boss has said otherwise)

## **Dust on tables, shelves, and other surfaces**

It is difficult to keep a house without dust but it is important to try. Surfaces can be cleaned with a moist cloth.

## **The stove**

It is very important to keep the stove clean since with an accumulation of grease it is possible that the grease catches fire. To begin, surfaces can be cleaned with a mix of dish detergent and warm water. If there are still stains a mix of 1 tablespoon of water and 3 tablespoons of baking soda can be applied with a soft cloth. Rinse and dry. If the grease is not removed try to clean the surface with a product called lestiol, a product that can be found in the supermarket. To clean the inside, take out all the racks and bottom tray. So that it is easier, let the racks and bottom tray soak in warm water with dish detergent.

The flame of the stove, when lit, should be blue. If it is yellow an expert should be called to make sure there is not a problem with the gas.

## **Trash accumulation**

Keeping a lot of trash in the house can result in bad odors and proliferation of insects and rats. If trash is collected only once a week, a large trash can with a lid should be kept outside where trash can be taken regularly.

## **Clean floor**

If there is a vacuum, vacuum the floor regardless of whether it is wood covered with a carpet, or tile. If there is not a vacuum, a broom and dust pan can be used to clean the surface although it is very difficult to clean a rug that way. To clean parts of the floor where there are stains or bits of food will take a little more work. To clean a part of the floor or mop a wood or tile floor mix a half gallon of hot water with 2 tablespoons of a natural cleaning product like citrasolv. Hot water and with a little dish detergent works as well. Wet the mop but make sure to wring out the majority of the water before using it. After mopping the floor cleaning and wringing out the mop regularly, let the floor dry before walking on it. To clean stains in the carpet mix warm water with detergent or Citra Solve and apply it to the stain with a spray bottle or with little drops. With a brush (an old tooth brush works) or cloth, scrub the carpet. Clean the brush or cloth with warm water. Clean and wet the stain removing all the soap or cleaning product.

## **Eliminate infestations**

- Cover all infestation entrances so that they can't get in the house
- Do not feed the rodents and insects! Don't leave food out, eliminate crumbs, don't leave dirty plates in the sink, take out the trash!
- Put traps and use appropriate pesticides
- How to know if there are infestations and where
  - Look, listen, and observe
  - In dark places (any closet, cabinet, inside the walls)
  - Where there are entrances and holes
  - In warm places (any electrical appliance where there is a place to get in)
  - Where there is food (kitchens, trash cans)
  - Excrement
  - Nests

## Mice and Rats

- Mouse traps- put a few against the wall so that the mice have to pass on top. Set them with something that mice like: peanut butter, raisin bread, bacon, or caramels.
- Get a cat as a pet
- Poison – there are a variety of poisons including warfarin, chlorophacinone y pival. Great care must be taken with any type of poison chosen because it is poisonous for people too. Put the poison in a place where mice go but never where there is human or pet food. Poison should be used for 6-10 days until there are no more signs of mice.

Adapted from: <http://www.health.state.ny.us/environmental/pests/ratsspan.htm>

## Roaches

- Do not store boxes, piled paper, or trash inside the house when it is not necessary. Eliminate places where roaches can hide.
- Don't leave food or crumbs. Store it in containers with a cover or in the refrigerator.
- Don't leave crumbs or food particles anywhere
- Cover trash cans and don't let trash accumulate
- Wash bottles, cans, and food containers before throwing them in the trash.
- Eliminate leaks in the sinks and shower (eliminate liquid so that the roaches don't have anything to drink)
- Pesticides are effective but harmful to health
  - Sticky traps – can be purchased in stores
  - Empty traps – clean well a container/bottle with a neck (like the mayonnaise bottle). Put Vaseline on the neck. Put a piece of banana peel at the bottom of the bottle. Leave it overnight where roaches have been seen. In the morning, put on the bottle lid and put it in the freezer for a few hours to kill the roaches.
  - Use the vacuum – make sure the vacuum bag is well closed when it is thrown away.
  - Insect bait – This can be found in supermarkets, pharmacies, and hardware shops. Use bait that contains hydramethylnon, fipronil, boric acid or sulfuramid as its active ingredient. Put it in places where the roaches walk. Change the bait frequently because when there is no more insecticide the roaches will return.
  - Dusts – Boric Acid dust also kills roaches. Put thin layers in places where the roaches usually live. Be careful to not put it near human or animal food

Adapted from: <http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/resources/Roach120Spanish.shtml>

## Bed bugs

- Remove everything washable from the bed and all clothes of the people who sleep in the bed. Wash in hot water to kill the bed bugs. If there are things that cannot be washed put them in the dryer to kill the bed bugs.
- Examine the mattress looking for holes where the bed bugs can enter and exit. Cover holes if they are found (Duct tape!)
- Put the mattress outside in the sun for a few hours.
- It is almost always necessary to use insecticides to kill bed bugs that live inside the mattress. Many times even applying purchased insecticides do not solve the problem in which case it is necessary to call a professional. A product purchased in the supermarket can be used but make sure the directions are read carefully before using.
- If there are bed bugs in the bed it is possible they are in the sofa and other furniture too. All furniture should be inspected for bed bugs and their eggs.

Adapted from: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/bedbugs/>

## **Flies**

Put screens on the doors and windows to be able to ventilate the house without letting in flies. Purchase fly swatters to kill flies that enter the house. Don't leave food out. Clean crumbs and food particles. Take out the trash.

## **Mosquitos**

Put screens on the doors and windows to be able to ventilate the house without letting in mosquitos. Eliminate stagnant water where it is found outside the house: receptacles, old tires, bottles, empty buckets, gutters, trash cans, and plumbing.

## **Dust mites**

- Remove everything washable from the bed and all clothes of the people who sleep in the bed. Wash in hot water to kill the bed bugs. If there are things that cannot be washed put them in the dryer to kill the bed bugs.
- Put the mattress in the sun for a few hours
- Clean surfaces in the house regularly with a moist cloth
- Vacuum the rug and all furniture.

Adapted from: [http://www.epa.gov/asthma/dustmites\\_sp.html](http://www.epa.gov/asthma/dustmites_sp.html)

## **Fleas**

- Wash with hot water all sheets from the bed, pet beds, and clothes of all who live in the house.
- Take out everything stored under tables, beds etc.
- Store or cover pet food.
- Vacuum every part of the house paying close attention to the corners, rugs, and underneath furniture.
- Make sure the vacuum bag is shut well before throwing it in the trash outside.
- If it is necessary to apply an insecticide make sure to purchase one that is to eliminate fleas. Furthermore, read and follow the directions carefully. Stay outside the house for the time indicated on the instructions.

Adapted from: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/flea-tick.html>

## **Sheets**

Putting sheets on the mattress makes it easier to keep clean the place where a person sleeps. Wash the sheets with hot water at least once a week. This helps kill flees, bed bugs, and dust mites.

## **Light bulbs**

Keep a few extra light bulbs in the house. They can be requested on a grocery list since they are found in most any supermarket.

## **Trash Cans**

It is important to have trash cans in various places throughout the house. At least one should be in the kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom. Take out the trash at least once a week unless there is a lot in which case it should be taken out every few days.

## **Recycling**

In the United States it is possible to recycle many things. It is important to do this to protect our environment. The following things can be recycled:

- Cardboard boxes
- Newspaper

- Tin cans
- Aluminum cans and glass beer bottles
- Plastic soda bottles
- Magazines
- Plastic milk bottles and water bottles
- Glass jars and containers

\*There is a 5 cent refund per piece for returning soda and beer bottle and aluminum cans  
Food can be put in a compost pile or the farm owner might have a suggestion as food left overs are sometimes thrown in the manure pit.

### **Curtains and blinds**

In order to have good air ventilation in the house it is best to have curtains or blinds to cover the windows if the occupants don't want other people to see in the house. Thick things like blankets and cardboard don't let air in. Curtains or blinds can be purchased or curtains are easily made with pieces of cloth.

### **Screen doors**

Putting a screen on the door allows one to keep the door open for good ventilation without letting in flies, other insects, and rodents.

### **Screen Windows**

Putting screens on the windows allows one to keep the windows open for good ventilation without letting in flies, other insects, and rodents.

### **Windows**

Windows should easily open and shut to control ventilation and the temperature of the house. Additionally, in case of a fire or other emergency, it is important to have a window as an alternate exit.

### **Fans**

Fans are important in keeping the house at an adequate temperature. They also are important in reducing air contaminants, humidity, and bad odors.

### **Heat and cooling systems**

Know how to use the heating and cooling systems. This way the temperature of the house can be regulated well. Additionally, knowing how to use the system will eliminate over use which contributes to poor use of energy, financial and environmental costs.

### **Entrances and exits**

All entrances and exits of the house should not be blocked since in an emergency such as a fire it is necessary to leave the house as quickly as possible.

### **Electric Wires**

- Pay attention to the electric wires to make sure they are not exposed to avoid an electric shock or fire.
- The risk of a fire increases by having electric wire under things (like furniture or rug) and increased risk of electric shock if a wire gets wet or falls in water.
- Every once in a while pay attention to the electric wires to make sure they are not hot.
- Overloaded extension cords and outlets increase the risk of a house fire.

### **Smoke detector**

A smoke detector should always be present between the bedrooms and other parts of the house. It should not be put in the kitchen or the garage to avoid it going off frequently when there is no danger. Always keep batteries in the smoke detector.

### **Carbon Monoxide detectors**

Carbon monoxide detectors help detect odorless gas that sometimes is in a house due to car emissions, small gasoline motors, stoves, and heating systems. Breathing a lot of this gas could result in sickness or death.

### **Fire Extinguisher**

Keep a fire extinguisher in the house and know how to use it. This can help put out a small fire.

### **Instructions for the boss or notes about the sanitation and maintenance of the house.**

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## **Saneamiento y Mantenimiento del Hogar**

El saneamiento y mantenimiento del hogar afecta de gran manera la salud y seguridad de todos individuos que viven en esa casa. El entender cómo se usan y se mantienen los aparatos domésticos permita que el individuo cuide mejor un aparato y detecte un problema cuando se presente. El uso adecuado de productos de limpieza y productos naturales mejorara la limpieza de la casa además de evitar contacto con o mal uso de productos con potencial de ser dañinos a la salud de una persona. Conversaciones sobre roedores e insectos pueden mejorar métodos de prevención y combatir infestaciones. Información general sobre la seguridad alimentaria y almacenamiento aumenta la probabilidad que alimentos sean usados apropiadamente y de este modo se reduce la posibilidad de complicaciones de salud.

Este folleto información ha sido creado para empezar una conversación sobre el saneamiento y mantenimiento de la casa. Se ha escrito la información en una forma sencilla para tocar temas generales relacionados con mantener un hogar. El propósito de la lista de control es para usarla en la primera visita para evaluar la situación actual del saneamiento y mantenimiento de la casa y después en una visita posterior para evaluar cambios que se hayan hecho. Puntos de preocupación en una casa específica deben ser discutido mientras se vaya repasando la lista de control no solo para identificar un problema sino para ofrecerle una solución práctica. Además, la lista de control puede ayudar los empleadores ver los problemas actuales del saneamiento y mantenimiento de la casa y lo que pueden hacer como empleadores para facilitar hogares más sanos y seguros para sus empleados.

## Lista de Control: Saneamiento y Mantenimiento del Hogar

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comida refrigerada apropiadamente
La refrigeradora y congeladora bien cerradas
Carne, ave y pescado descongelado apropiadamente
Comida cubierta y puesta en su lugar
Sin migas y partículas de alimentos a la vista
Sobras de comida descartadas apropiadamente
Lavatrastes limpio
Colador de lavatrastes colocado
Refrigeradora limpia
Taza de baño limpia
Lavamanos limpia
Ducha/ tina limpia
Filtro de pelusa limpio
Papel higiénico en la taza (a menos que el patrón haya dicho que no)
Sin polvo encima de las mesas, los estantes, las superficies de la casa
Superficie y alrededor de la estufa libre de acumulación de grasa
No acumulación de basura dentro de la casa
Piso limpio
Sin ratas y ratones
Sin cucarachas
Sin chinches
Sin moscas domésticas
Sin mosquitos
Sin ácaros del polvo
Sin pulgas
Sábana bajera en colchón
Bombillas suficientes
Basureros suficientes
Sistema de reciclaje
Cortinas o persianas (en vez de cobijas o cartón)
Tela metálica mosquitero en puerta sin rajitas y agujeros
Tela metálica mosquitero en ventanas sin rajitas y agujeros
Se puede abrir y cerrar ventanas
Ventiladores suficientes
Uso apropiado de sistema de calefacción y acondicionador de aire
Entradas y salidas no bloqueadas
Cables de aparatos eléctricos protegidos (no pelados)
Cables de aparatos eléctricos lejos de agua y libre de cosas encima
Cables eléctricos no se calientan
No están sobrecargados los enchufes ni cables de extensión
Los cables eléctricos no pasan por debajo de las alfombras
Detector de humo
Detector de monóxido de carbono
Extintor de fuego

## **Comida refrigerada apropiadamente**

Refrigeradores deben mantener una temperatura de 40 °F o menos. Un refrigerador que mantiene una temperatura de más de 40 °F puede resultar en un crecimiento rápido de bacteria y perjudicar la seguridad de la comida. Aunque solo sean 20 minutos en que esta subida la temperatura se puede causar el crecimiento de bacteria. No se debe comer una comida que necesita refrigeración que ha estado a temperaturas más de 40 °F por más de 2 horas. Comidas que se deben refrigerar son:

- Todas comidas cocidas
- Carne y ave cruda
- Sándwiches de carnes y de aves
- Ensaladas de carnes y de aves
- Ensaladas de atún y de huevo
- Leche, queso, y yogur
- Latas abiertas de fruta o de budín
- Frutas y verduras peladas o cortadas

No se ve bacteria así que los alimentos que se han dejado por mucho tiempo afuera del refrigerador pueden verse bien PERO pueden hacer que se enferme una persona a comérselos

En cambio, si los alimentos están refrigerados aunque por mucho tiempo, por lo general, no le hacen daño a nadie aunque pueden perder la calidad u olerse mal.

Comida refrigerada o congelada debe estar cubierta o envuelta para evitar que se deshidraten o resulten con olores feos.

Las carnes crudas, aves, pescados y mariscos deben estar en un envase bien sellado o envuelto seguramente para prevenir que los jugos crudos contaminen los otros alimentos.

Por lo general, sobras de comida cocida se puede almacenar por 4 días. En cambio carne molida, ave, y mariscos crudo solo se debe almacenar por 1 a 2 días. Carne asada, filetes, y chuletas se puede almacenar por 3 a 5 días.

## **Refrigerador y congelador cerrados**

Es importante asegurar que estén bien cerradas las puertas del refrigerador y congelador. Solo abre las puertas cuando es necesario y ciérrelas tan pronto como posible. Esto prevendrá deshielo y temperaturas aumentadas y a la vez ahorrar energía.

## **Carne, ave, pescado descongelada apropiadamente**

Comida es segura por un tiempo indeterminado mientras está congelada. Tan pronto como empiece a descongelar y suba a una temperatura más de 40 °F es posible que bacteria empiece a crecer en la comida.

Nunca se debe descongelar carne, ave, ni pescado por dejarla encima de la mesa. Tampoco se debe descongelar en agua caliente. Es peligroso comer comida que necesita refrigeración después de que ha estado fuera del refrigerador a temperaturas más de 40 °F

Existen 3 métodos seguros para descongelar comida: en el refrigerador, en agua fría, y en el microondas.

- Descongelar carne, ave, o pescado en el refrigerador requiere planificación ya que el proceso es lento. Por cada 5 libras de peso de un alimento muy grande se requieren por lo menos 24 horas. Una libra de carne puede tardar un día en descongelarse completamente.
- Descongelar carne, ave, o pescado con agua fría requiere un paquete o bolsa plástica sin goteras. (Goteras dejan que entren bacteria o agua). Ponga la bolsa en una olla o

cubeta de agua fría. Cambie el agua cada 30 minutos para que siga descongelándose la comida. Ya descongelada completamente se debe cocinar la comida de inmediato.

- Descongelar carne, ave, o pescado en un microondas puede resultar en comida tibia y por eso es necesario cocinar alimentos descongelados con este método de inmediato. Ya que ha subido la temperatura del alimento en el microondas es posible que crezcan bacterias. Se debe cocinar cualquier carne, ave, o pescado descongelada con este método antes de re congelar.

Información adaptada de: [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En\\_Espanol/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En_Espanol/index.asp)

### **Comida cubierta y puesta en su lugar**

Todos los alimentos deben estar guardados en recipientes de vidrio, plástico, o metal. No se debe guardar alimentos en el piso y tenga cuidado en guardar la comida donde no se pueden entrar roedores ni insectos.

### **Sin migas y partículas de alimentos a la vista**

Mantener libre de migas o partículas de comida todos los superficies de muebles (mesas, estantes...) No de de comer a las plagas!

### **Sobras descartadas apropiadamente**

Deshacerse apropiadamente de sobras de comida. Guarde sobras que se pueden comer más tarde en el refrigerador. Ponga sobras que ya no se van a comer en el compostaje o basura.

### **Lavatrastes limpio y colador colocado**

Mantener limpio el lavatrastes para eliminar el crecimiento de bacteria, moho, y microbios. Utilice un colador para evitar que se tape el drenaje del lavatrastes.

### **Refrigerador limpio**

Para limpiar el refrigerador se debe apagarlo y desconectarlo. Saque todos los alimentos, parillas y lo demás que se pueda. Limpie la superficie para quitar migas y partículas de comida. Para quitar moho del interior del refrigerador se puede hacer una solución de mitad vinagre blanco destilado y mitad agua y aplicarlo con un trapo suave. Enjuagar. También se puede hacer una solución básica de agua tibia mezclada con unas cucharadas de bicarbonato de sodio.

Asegurarse de enjuagar y secar el refrigerador antes de regresarse la comida. Se debe limpiar el exterior del refrigerador también. Se puede mezclar un poco de detergente de trastes con agua tibia y limpiarlo con un trapo suave. Enjuagar y secar después.

Para eliminar olores deje una caja abierta de bicarbonato de sodio en el refrigerador.

Ya limpio el refrigerador debe mantenerlo así por limpiar derrames de inmediato y tirar comida (ya cocida o abierta) que tiene más de una semana almacenada.

Información adaptada de : [http://origin-www.fsis.usda.gov/En\\_Espanol/Refrigeracion/index.asp](http://origin-www.fsis.usda.gov/En_Espanol/Refrigeracion/index.asp)

### **Taza de baño limpio**

Deje una taza de vinagre blanco destilado por unas horas (o por una noche). Friegue con una escobilla o trapo áspero y tire la cadena.

### **Lavamanos limpio**

Combine 3 cucharadas de bicarbonato de sodio con 1 cucharada de agua. Aplique a la superficie, deje unos minutos, friegue con una escobilla o trapo áspero, y enjuagar.

### **Ducha/tina limpia**

Remoje una esponja con vinagre blanco destilado. Aplíquelo a toda superficie de la tina o ducha. Déjelo por 5 minutos. Friegue con una escobilla. Enjuague con agua limpia.

## **Filtro de Pelusa**

Antes de usar la secadora vacíe el filtro de pelusa. Además asegure que la válvula de escape deja salir el aire hacia el exterior de la casa. No se debe dejar ropa encima de la secadora.

Tampoco deje productos para el lavado de ropa encima de la secadora porque pueden dañar a las superficies.

## **Papel higiénico en la taza de baño**

El sistema séptico en los Estados Unidos está diseñado para el uso de papel higiénico en la taza de baño. (A menos que el patrón haya dicho que no se puede)

## **Polvo encima de mesas, estantes, y superficies**

Es muy difícil mantener el hogar sin polvo sin embargo es importante intentarlo. Se puede limpiar superficies con un trapo húmedo.

## **La estufa**

Es muy importante mantener limpia la estufa ya que con acumular grasa es posible que la grasa se encienda. Para empezar se puede limpiar las superficies con una mezcla de detergente y agua tibia. Si quedan muchas manchas mescle 1 cucharada de agua y 3 cucharadas de bicarbonato de soda y aplicarlo con un trapo suave. Enjuague y seque. Si no se quita la grasa intente limpiar la superficie de la estufa con lestiol, un producto que se puede encontrar en el supermercado. Para limpiar el interior saque las parrillas y la bandeja que queda abajo. Para que sea más fácil, deje las parillas y la bandeja remojar con agua tibia y detergente.

La llama de la estufa al encenderla debe ser el color azul. Si es de color amarillo debes pedir que un experto vea que no haya problema con el gas.

## **Acumulación de basura**

Mantener mucha basura en la casa puede resultar con malos olores, proliferación de insectos, y ratones. Si solo pasan a recoger la basura una vez a la semana se debe tener afuera un basurero grande con tapadera donde puede llevar la basura a menudo.

## **Piso limpio**

Si tiene aspirador, aspire el piso que sea de madera, cubierta con alfombra, o con loseta (baldosa). Si no tiene aspirador se puede usar una escoba y recogedor para limpiar la superficie aunque es muy difícil limpiar una alfombra así. Para limpiar partes del piso donde hay manchas o sobras de comida requiere un poco más trabajo. Para limpiar una parte del piso o trapear el piso de madera o loseta por completo se puede mezclar medio gallón de agua caliente con 2 cucharadas de un producto de limpieza natural como Citra Solv. También, se puede mezclar un poco de detergente de lavatrastes con agua caliente. Remoje el trapeador pero asegúrese de exprimir la mayoría del agua antes de usarlo. Después de trapear el piso limpiando y exprimiendo el trapeador a cada rato, deje que se seque el piso antes de caminar encima. Para limpiar manchas en una alfombra mescle agua tibia con detergente o Citra Solve y aplíquese a la mancha con un rociador o por gotas. Con un cepillo (se puede usar un cepillo de dientes viejo) o trapo friegue la alfombra. Limpie el cepillo o trapo con agua tibia. Limpie y remoje la mancha quitándole todo el jabón u otro producto de limpieza.

## **Elimine plagas!**

- Tape todas entradas de plagas para evitar que entren la casa
- No de comer a las plagas! No deje comida afuera, elimine migas, no deje platos sucios el fregadero, saque la basura!
- Ponga trampas y utilice pesticidas apropiadas

- Como saber si tiene plagas y donde
  - Mire, escuche, observe
  - En lugares oscuros (cualquier armario/gabinete, adentro de la pared)
  - Donde hay entradas/huecos
  - Lugares calientes (cualquier aparato eléctrico que tenga donde meterse)
  - Donde hay comida (cocinas, recipientes para la basura)
  - Excremento
  - Nidos

### Ratas y ratones

- Trampas que se cierran de golpe. Ponga varias contra la pared para que las ratas tengan que pasar encima. Póngalas con algo que le gusten a las ratas como: mantequilla de maní, pan de pasas, tocino o caramelos de goma
- Tenga un gato de mascota
- Veneno – Existen varios venenos incluyendo warfarin, chlorophacinone y pival. Hay que tener mucho cuidado con cualquier veneno que escoja porque es venenoso para personas también. Ponga el veneno en lugares donde pisan las ratas pero nunca donde haya comida humana o de mascota. Se debe poner veneno por 6 a 10 días hasta que ya no haya señas de ratas.

Adaptada de: <http://www.health.state.ny.us/environmental/pests/ratsspan.htm>

### Cucarachas

- No guarde cajas, papel amontonado ni basura dentro de la casa cuando no sea necesario. Elimine lugares donde se pueden esconder las cucarachas.
- No deje comida ni migas afuera sino guárdela en recipientes con tapadera o en la refrigerador
- No deje migas ni partículas de comida en ninguna parte
- Tape basureros y no deje que se acumule la basura
- Lave botellas, latas, y recipientes de comida antes de tirarles en la basura
- No deje que haya goteras en lavamanos, fregadero, y ducha (elimine líquido para que las cucarachas no tengan que tomar)
- Pesticidas son efectivas pero dañinos para la salud
  - Trampas pegajosas – se puede comprar en tiendas
  - Trampas vacías – Limpie bien un bote con cuello (como el recipiente de mayonesa). eche vaselina a todo el cuello. Ponga un pedazo de cascara de guineo al fondo del frasco. Deje el frasco donde se ha visto las cucarachas toda la noche. En la mañana ponga la tapadera al frasco y póngalo en el congelador unas horas para matar las cucarachas.
  - Aspireles con un aspirador – asegúrese que este sellada bien la bolsa del aspirador al tirarla en la basura
  - Carnadas de insecticida – Se encuentran en el supermercado, farmacias, y ferreterías. Use carnadas que contienen hydramethylnon, fipronil, ácido bórico o sulfluramid como su ingrediente activo. Póngalas en lugares donde andan las cucarachas. Cámbielas a menudo porque ya que no haya insecticida regresan a vivir en los frascitos.
  - Polvos – El polvo de ácido bórico mata cucarachas también. Eche capas delgadas en lugares donde suelen vivir las cucarachas. Tenga cuidado no ponerlo cerca de comida.

Adaptada de: <http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/resources/Roach120Spanish.shtml>

## **Chinches**

- Quite toda cosa lavable de la cama y toda la ropa de las personas que duermen en esta cama. Lave la ropa de cama y ropa personal en agua muy caliente para matar las chinches. Si tiene cosas que no se puede lavar, échelas en la secadora para matar las chinches.
- Examine el colchón buscando agujeros donde pueden entrar y salir las chinches. Tapelos si los encuentra (Duct tape)
- Saque el colchón al sol por unas horas
- Casi siempre es necesario usar insecticidas para matar las chinches que viven adentro del colchón. Muchas veces aun aplicando insecticidas comprados no soluciona el problema sino es necesario llamar a un profesional. Puede intentar usar un producto comprado en el supermercado pero TENGA MUCHO CUIDADO en leer las direcciones antes de usarlo.
- Si tiene chinches en la cama es posible que están en el sofá y otros muebles también. Debe inspeccionar los demás muebles buscando las chinches y sus huevos.

Adaptada de: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/bedbugs/>

## **Moscas**

Ponga tela metálica en puertas y ventanas para poder tener ventilación de la casa sin que entren moscas. Compre matamoscas para matar las que entran la casa. No deje comida afuera. Limpie migas y partículas de comida. Saque la basura.

## **Zancudos/mosquitos**

Ponga tela metálica en puertas y ventanas para poder tener ventilación de la casa sin que entren mosquitos. Elimine agua estancada donde se encuentre afuera de la casa: recipientes, llantas viejas, botes, cubetas vacíos, canaletas, basureros, y plomería.

## **Acaros de Polvo**

- Quite toda cosa lavable de la cama y toda la ropa de las personas que duermen en esta cama. Lave la ropa de cama y ropa personal en agua muy caliente para matar los ácaros de polvo. Si tiene cosas que no se puede lavar, échelas en la secadora para matar los ácaros.
- Saque el colchón al sol por unas horas
- Limpie las superficies de la casa a menudo con un trapo húmedo.
- Aspire las alfombras y muebles.

Adaptada de: [http://www.epa.gov/asthma/dustmites\\_sp.html](http://www.epa.gov/asthma/dustmites_sp.html)

## **Pulgas**

- Lave toda ropa de cama y camitas de mascotas, y ropa de las personas que viven en la casa en agua caliente.
- Quite todas las cosas guardadas abajo de mesas, camas etc
- Guarde o cubrir toda comida de persona o mascota.
- Aspire todita de la casa poniendo atención especial a los rincones, alfombras y debajo de los muebles.
- Asegure que este bien cerrada la bolsa del aspirador antes de tirarla en un basurero de afuera.
- Si es necesario aplicar una insecticida asegurarse de comprar una que sea para eliminar pulgas. Además, lea y siga las instrucciones cuidadosamente. Manténgase afuera de la casa por el tiempo que indique en las instrucciones.

Adaptada de: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/flea-tick.htm>

### **Sabanas**

Poner sabanas en el colchón hace que sea más fácil mantener limpio donde uno duerme. Lave la sabana con agua caliente por lo menos cada semana. Así se mata pulgas, chinches, y ácaros del polvo.

### **Bombillas**

Mantenga unas bombillas demás en la casa. Puede pedirlas con la lista de comida ya que se encuentran en cualquier supermercado.

### **Basureros**

Es importante tener basureros en varios lugares de la casa. Por lo menos uno en la cocina, dormitorio, y baño. Saque la basura para afuera una vez a la semana a menos que haya mucho en cuyo caso hay que hacerlo cada unos días.

### **Reciclaje**

En los Estados Unidos se puede reciclar muchas cosas. Es importante hacerlo para proteger nuestro medio ambiente. Las siguientes cosas se pueden reciclar:

- Cajas de papel corrugado
- Periódicos
- Latas de acero
- Latas de aluminios de refrescos y cerveza
- Botellas plásticas de refrescos
- Revistas
- Botellas plásticas de leche y agua
- Envases de cristal

\* Al regresar botellas y latas de aluminio de refresco y cerveza se devuelven 5 centavos por cada recipiente

Se puede echar sobras de comida en un lugar de compostaje o preguntar qué hace la familia del patrón ya que a veces tiran sobras de comida en el relleno de estiércol.

### **Cortinas y persianas**

Para poder tener una buena ventilación de aire en la casa lo mejor es tener cortinas o persianas para cubrir las ventanas por si no quieren que personas vean lo de adentro de la casa. Cosas gruesas como cobijas y pedazos de cartón no dejen que entre aire. Se puede comprar cortinas o persianas pero también cortinas son fáciles de hacer con unas piezas de tela.

### **Puertas de tela metálica**

Ponga tela metálica mosquitero en la puerta permite que mantenga abierta la puerta para buena ventilación pero evita que entren moscas, otros insectos y roedores por la puerta.

### **Ventanas de tela metálica**

Ponga tela metálica mosquitero en las ventanas permite que mantenga abiertas las ventanas para buena ventilación pero evita que entren moscas, otros insectos y roedores por las ventanas.

### **Ventanas**

Se debe poder abrir y cerrar las ventanas para controlar ventilación y temperatura en la casa. Además, en caso de un fuego u otra emergencia es importante tener una ventana como ruta de salida.

## **Ventiladores**

Ventiladores ayudan a que mantenga la casa a una temperatura adecuada. También son importantes para reducir contaminantes del aire, humedad, y olores malos.

## **Calefacción y Aire condicionado**

Sepa usar la calefacción y aire acondicionado. Así, se puede regular bien la temperatura de la casa. Además, evita el sobre uso lo cual contribuye al mal gasto de energía, y es costoso económicamente y para el medio ambiente

## **Entradas y salidas**

Todas entradas y salidas de la casa deben de estar libre de cosas ya que en una emergencia como un incendio es necesario salir lo más rápido posible de la casa.

## **Alambres electricos**

- Fíjese en alambres eléctricos para asegurar que no estén pelados para evitar un choque eléctrico o un incendio
- Corre más riesgo de incendio al tener el alambre eléctrico debajo de cosas (como muebles y la alfombra) y más riesgo de choque eléctrico si un alambre se moja o se cae en el agua.
- De vez en cuando fíjese en los alambres eléctricos para asegurar que no estén calientes.
- Cables de extensión y enchufes sobrecargados aumentan el riesgo de un incendio del hogar.
- Alambres abajo de alfombras aumentan el riesgo de incendios

## **Detector de humo**

Siempre se debe tener un detector de humo entre los dormitorios y otras partes de la casa. No se debe poner en la cocina o el garaje para evitar que suene frecuentemente sin que haya peligro. Manténgalo con bacteria siempre.

## **Detector de Monóxido de carbón**

Detectores de monóxido de carbón sirven para detectar el gas inodoro que a veces está en una casa por emanaciones de carros, los motores pequeños de gasolina, cocinas, cocinas de gas y sistemas de calefacción. Por respirar mucho de este gas una persona se puede enfermar o morir.

## **Extintor de incendios**

Mantenga en la casa y sepa usar un extintor de incendios. Este aparato puede eliminar un incendio leve.

## **Indicaciones del Patrón o notas a cerca del saneamiento y mantenimiento de la casa**

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Basurero	Trash can
Tapadera	Lid
Colador	Strainer
Trapo	Rag
Trapo áspero	Rough cloth
Cepillo	Brush
Bolsas de basura	Trash bags
Esponja	Sponge
Toallas de papel	Paper towels
Cepillo para limpiar taza de baño	Toilet bowl brush
Aspirador	Vacuum
Trapeador	Mop
Escoba	Broom
Recogedor de basura	Dustpan
Trampas de golpe para ratas	Mice traps
Mantequilla de maní	Peanut butter
Guantes	Gloves
Cubeta	Pail
Detergente para lavar platos	Dish detergent
Jabón para lavar las manos	Hand soap
Espray desinfectante	Disinfectant spray
Limpificador/desengrasante (pine-sol)	Cleaner/degreaser (Pine-sol)
Limpificador de estufa (Cinch)	Stove cleaner (Cinch)
Bicarbonato de sodio	Baking soda
Vinagre	Vinegar
Limpificador de vidrio	Glass cleaner
Jabón de lavandería	Laundry soap
Bombillas	Light Bulbs
Ventilador	Fan

## Inspection Checklist

### *Lista de Verificación de Inspección*

Employer Name <i>Nombre del Empleador</i>		Amount of Security Deposit <i>Cantidad del Depósito de Seguridad</i>	
Employee Name <i>Nombre del Empleado</i>		Date Paid <i>Fecha pagado</i>	

<b>Move-In Condition</b> <i>Condiciones al Llegar</i>		<b>Move-Out Condition</b> <i>Condiciones al Salir</i>	
<b>Kitchen</b> <i>Cocina</i>	OK	If not, describe problem <i>Si no, describir problema</i>	OK
General Cleanliness <i>Aseo/Limpieza general</i>			
Sink <i>Lavatrastes</i>			
Counters <i>Superficies</i>			
Light Fixtures <i>Artefacto de iluminación (luz)</i>			
Cabinets <i>Armarios</i>			
Oven/Stove <i>Horno/Estufa</i>			
Refrigerator <i>Refrigeradora</i>			
Microwave <i>Microondas</i>			
Outlets <i>Enchufes</i>			
Walls & Ceilings <i>Paredes &amp; Techo</i>			
Floor <i>Piso</i>			
Windows <i>Ventanas</i>			
Screens <i>Tela metálica</i>			
Other (Describe) Otro (Describir)			
<b>Bathroom</b> <i>Baño</i>	OK	If not, describe problem <i>Si no, describir problema</i>	OK
General Cleanliness <i>Aseo/Limpieza general</i>			
Toilet <i>Taza de baño</i>			
Sink <i>Lavamanos</i>			

Tub/Shower				
<i>Tina/Ducha</i>				
Mirror				
<i>Espejo</i>				
Waterproof floor				
<i>Piso Impermeable</i>				
Walls & Ceilings				
<i>Paredes y Techo</i>				
Outlets				
<i>Enchufes</i>				
Window or Fan				
<i>Ventana o Ventilador/abanco</i>				
Other (describe)				
<i>Otro (describir)</i>				
<b>Living Room</b>	OK	If not, describe problem	OK	If not, describe problem
<i>Sala</i>	OK	<i>Si no, describir problema</i>	OK	<i>Si no, describir problema</i>
General Cleanliness				
<i>Aseo/Limpieza general</i>				
Walls & Ceilings				
<i>Paredes y Techo</i>				
Floor/carpet				
<i>Piso/Alfombra</i>				
Light Fixtures				
<i>Artefactos de iluminación (luz)</i>				
Outlets				
<i>Enchufes</i>				
Windows				
<i>Ventanas</i>				
Screens				
<i>Tela Metálica</i>				
Other (describe)				
<i>Otro (describir)</i>				
<b>Bedroom</b>	OK	If not, describe problem – make sure to identify which bedroom	OK	If not, describe problem – make sure to identify which bedroom
<b>Dormitorio</b>	OK	<i>Si no, describir problema – asegurar de identifica cual dormitorio</i>		<i>Si no, describir problema – asegurar de identifica cual dormitorio</i>
General Cleanliness				
<i>Aseo/Limpieza general</i>				
Walls & Ceiling				
<i>Paredes y Techo</i>				
Mattress				
<i>Colchón</i>				
Bed frame				
<i>Armazón</i>				
Sheets & Blankets				
<i>Sabanas y</i>				

<i>Mantas/Cobijas</i>				
<i>Floor/Carpet</i>				
<i>Piso/Alfombra</i>				
<i>Light Fixtures</i>				
<i>Artefactos de Iluminación (luz)</i>				
<i>Outlets</i>				
<i>Enchufes</i>				
<i>Windows</i>				
<i>Ventanas</i>				
<i>Screens</i>				
<i>Tela Metalica</i>				
<i>Other (describe)</i>				
<i>Otro (describir)</i>				
<b>Other Room</b>	OK	If not, please describe	OK	If not, please describe
<b>Otro Cuarto</b>	OK	<i>Si no, describir por favor</i>	OK	<i>Si no, Describir por favor</i>
General cleanliness				
<i>Aseo/limpieza general</i>				
Walls & Ceilings				
<i>Pared y Techo</i>				
Floor/Carpet				
<i>Piso/Alfombra</i>				
<i>Light Fixtures</i>				
<i>Artefactos de Iluminación (luz)</i>				
Windows				
<i>Ventanas</i>				
<i>Screens</i>				
<i>Tela Metalica</i>				
<i>Other (describe)</i>				
<i>Otro (describir)</i>				
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Ok	If not, please describe		If not, please describe
<b>Miscelánea</b>	OK	<i>Si no, describir por favor</i>	OK	<i>Si no, describir por favor</i>
Washer				
<i>Lavadora</i>				
Dryer				
<i>Secadora</i>				
Heating system				
<i>Sistema de Calefacción</i>				
Ventilation				
<i>Ventilación</i>				
Water pressure				
<i>Presión de Agua</i>				
Entry doors				
<i>Puertas de Entrada</i>				
Screen on doors				
<i>Tela metalica en puerta</i>				
Lock				
<i>Cerradura</i>				
Smoke detector				

<i>Detector de humo</i>			
<i>Fire Extinguisher</i>			
<i>Extintor de Incendios</i>			
<i>Vacuum</i>			
<i>Aspirador</i>			
<i>Light bulbs</i>			
<i>Focos</i>			
<i>Broom &amp; dustpan</i>			
<i>Escoba y recogedor</i>			
<i>Cleaning supplies</i>			
<i>Productos de limpieza</i>			
<i>Other (describe)</i>			
<i>Otro (describir)</i>			

I was present at the time of the inspection and agree with the checklist. I understand that should I be responsible for changes in the conditions of the house, I may not receive all or any of the security deposit upon leaving.

*Yo estuve presente al hacer la inspección y estoy de acuerdo con la lista. Yo entiendo que si soy responsable para los cambios de condiciones de la casa, puede ser que no reciba todo o nada del depósito de seguridad al salir.*

	Move In	Move Out
	<i>Llegar</i>	<i>Salir</i>
<i>Date</i>		
<i>Fecha</i>		
<i>Employer Signature</i>		
<i>Firma del Empleador</i>		
<i>Employee Signature</i>		
<i>Firma del Empleado</i>		

## **Extra Commitments When Hiring a Population with no/low English level and No Transportation**

**Food Purchases:** 45% of workers surveyed in Franklin County said that they did not know what foods were available at the nearest grocery store. That means your employees may not be asking for what they would really like but rather the things that they know for sure are available or the things they know how to say or write in English. Each new employee should be provided with a comprehensive food and household goods list. Once you find a good one, keep a copy so that you can always make extra copies as turn over happens on the farm. It may be easier to just get the same list of food every week or every two weeks but try to always add any new purchases that are requested. Nutrition is really important for your employees as they put in long physical hours. The more food options they have the better chance they have of maintaining a balanced diet. Other than the food list, bring back a food flyer every week with grocery purchases. That way, the employees can choose new foods by looking at the pictures.

**Clothes, Phone, Phone Cards, Other purchases:** From time to time, employees will need new or used clothes for work or for the occasional get-together. New employees will often want a cell phone to communicate with and will ask for phone cards (both international and local) to be able to talk to family and friends. Encourage employees to add these purchases to your weekly or bi weekly list. If you are going to a clothing store or to do other purchases ask your employees if they need anything. Even if they don't, they will appreciate your consideration in asking. Using the internet, catalogs, and flyers are all good tools if there is a communication barrier.

**Health Care:** Your employees will often wait a few days after an illness or injury to seek care. They might ask for medicine from you or they may buy it from a door to door salesman. Very often, when the employee asks to go to the doctor it is because he or she has been injured or sick for some time. When hiring an immobile population, take into consideration that when they are sick or injured, as their employer it is in your best interest to help them seek care, both to show your appreciation for their working for you and to get them well again so that they can return to work. The majority of people they know who will offer transportation charge from \$20-\$40 per hour. It is recommended that your employees have a primary care physician so as to have access to care when it is necessary. Depending on the region, there are sliding fee clinics that gladly serve the Latino migrant farmworker population but they need to be enrolled to access their services. Having a primary care physician can save a lot of money as many workers who go to the hospital could have been served in a clinic. If it is a true emergency, never doubt bringing your employee to the hospital.

## Food List

<b>Meat</b>	<b>Carne</b>
Beef	carne/bistec
Ground Beef	Carne Molida
Pork	carne de cerdo
Lamb	carne de cordero/borrego
Ham	Jamón
Chicken	Pollo
chicken breast	pechuga de pollo
chicken wings	alas de pollo
Boneless with bone	sin hueso con hueso
Steak	Filete
Salami	Chorizo
Sausage cured ham	Salchicha jamón serrano
Turkey	Pavo
<b>Fish and Seafood</b>	
Sardine	Sardina
Prawns	Gambas
Squid	Calamar
Tuna	Atún
Cod	Bacalao
Trout	Trucha
Shrimp	Camarones
Whole fish with head	Pescado entero con la cabeza
Tilapia (head and all)	Moharrá
paella (seafood dish)	Paella
<b>Fruit</b>	
Apple	Manzana
Orange	Naranja
Plantain	Plátano
Banana	Guíneo
Grapes	Uvas
Pear	Pera
Peach	Melocotón
Lemon	Limón
Melon	Melón
Pineapple	Piña
Strawberry	Fresa
Raspberry	Frambuesa
Apricot	Albaricoque
Cherry	Cereza
Coconut	Coco
Mango	Mango
Raisins	Pasas
Papaya	Papaya
Watermelon	Sandía
Plum	Ciruela

<b>Vegetables</b>		<b>Las Verduras</b>
Garlic		Ajo
Onion		Cebolla
Potato		Papa
Tomato		Tomate
Carrot		Zanahoria
Broccoli		Brócoli
Cauliflower		Coliflor
Peas		Guisantes/chicharos
Lettuce		Lechuga
Cucumber		Pepino
Artichoke		Alcachofa
Avocado		Aguacate
Radish		Rábano
Cabbage		Repollo
sweet pepper		chile dulce
Corn		Elote
green beans		Ejote
Hot pepper		Chile picante (jalapeños)
Celery		Apio
<b>Further Foods &amp; Condiments</b>		<b>Más Comida y Condimentos</b>
sugar		Azúcar
salt		Sal
vinegar		Vinagre
olive oil		Aceite
Flour		Harina
Brand of Corn Flour		Maseca
Baking Soda		Royal
Baking Powder		Bicarbonato
Yeast		Levadura
pepper		Pimienta
Hot sauce		Salsa picante
Green sauce		Salsa verde
Mole (popular brand Doña Maria)		Mole
bread		Pan
wheat bread		pan integral
sweet bread (banana, cinnamon sugar)		pan dulce
butter		Mantequilla
cake		Pastel
cookies		Galletas
crackers		galletas saladas
oatmeal		Avena
eggs		Huevos
Noodles/pasta		Fideo
black beans		frijoles negros
Chickpeas		Garbanzos
in a can		en lata



## Legal Compliance Issues

**I-9** – All employers are required to verify the eligibility of each employee hired to work in the United States. You can download an I-9 form from this page

<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-9.pdf> You can download the I-9 form in Spanish here  
[http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-9\\_spanish.pdf](http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-9_spanish.pdf)

**Taxes** - Cash wages that you pay to employees for farm work are generally subject to social security and Medicare taxes. If the wages are subject to social security and Medicare taxes, they are also subject to federal income tax withholding. More information about taxes can be found here: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p51.pdf> You can download the W-4 on this page: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw4.pdf>. You can download the W-4 in Spanish on this page: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw4sp.pdf>

**Workers Compensation** - If you hire one or more full or part-time employees in Vermont, or hire employees outside of Vermont and they work for you in Vermont, you are required to carry Workers Compensation. The Vermont Department of Labor pursues all valid claims regardless of an individual's documentation status. <http://www.labor.vermont.gov>

**Wages\*** – An employer cannot remove wages from an employee's paycheck unless the employee has signed an authorization allowing employer to do so or the employer sufficiently documents the employee's intention to repay. An employer cannot withhold a week of pay, pay for "damages", or food without the signed authorization. Employers who make purchases for an employee should provide employees with a receipt at which point the employee can pay the employer the amount due. "An employee who voluntarily leaves employment shall be paid on the last regular pay day, or if there is no regular pay day, on the following Friday. An employee who is discharged from employment shall be paid within 72 hours of the discharge." "Employers must pay employees on a weekly basis. However, after providing written notice to its employees, an employer may issue paychecks on a bi-weekly or semi-monthly basis. Payday shall be within six (6) days of the last day of the pay period." Employers must provide a wage statement to its employees with each payment of wages. This statement must set forth, at a minimum, the total hours worked, the hourly rate, gross pay and each deduction fully itemized." The Vermont Department of Labor pursues claims regardless of an individual's documentation status. <http://www.labor.vermont.gov>

\*The Vermont Department of Labor takes wage and workers compensation claims very seriously. All workers in Vermont, regardless of documentation status, have the same rights to full payment for time worked. In the past year, up to 10 wage claims by migrant farmworkers have been settled by the Department of Labor. Despite farm hardship due to low milk/feed price ratios, debts or other issues, payment to the workers on your farm needs to be a priority. Set a regular pay schedule either weekly or bi-weekly and stick. Failure to do so could result in an investigation by the Department of Labor.

# Community Resources

## STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS:

**Vermont Migrant Education Program:** The Vermont Migrant Education Identification and Recruitment Program finds and enrolls every migratory child and youth in the state who is under the age of 22 and who has moved with a family member, a guardian or independently on their own in order to seek or obtain temporary or seasonal work in qualifying agricultural or logging activities. All staff are bilingual and the program serves as a bridge connecting farm workers to various educational, community and health services. Eligible farm workers or children of farm workers may receive educational resources. If you have a new worker under the age of 22 who has recently arrived at your farm or a new worker with a child under the age of 22 who has recently moved to your farm contact the VTMEP at 802-223-2389.

<http://www.uvm.edu/extension/family/?Page=migrant.html>

**WIC:** Nutritional education and food for pregnant women, infants, and young children in VT meeting low income guidelines. 802-863-7200

[http://healthvermont.gov/local/district/district\\_office.aspx](http://healthvermont.gov/local/district/district_office.aspx)

**Early Head start:** Head Start and Early Head Start are national child development programs which provide comprehensive development services for low-income children and social services for their families. Head Start serves children ages 3-5 and their families. Early Head Start serves pregnant women and children birth to age 3 and their families.

<http://www.vermontheadstart.org/index.html> jryan@vermontheadstart.org

802/456-8967

**Mexican Consulate:** The Mexican Consulate comes from Boston to Vermont 2-3 times per year. In the past year, they came to Middlebury and Plainfield on two separate days. The Mexican consulate provides Mexican Passports and Matricula Consular cards to those who have the proper documentation (generally original birth certificate and a Mexican government document with a picture of individual). The Matricula Consular cards are id cards with the individuals personal information and the current farm address and can be used in many cases to wire money, open a bank account or receive other services requiring identification. (617)-426-4181. <http://portal.sre.gob.mx/boston/index.php?option=contact&Itemid=6>

**Guatemalan Consulate** The Guatemalan Consulate usually comes once a year. They will visit farms where there are Guatemalans to help them process the paperwork for a passport as well as other documentation support. The farm visits need to be scheduled in advance of the Consulate coming. (401) 270-6345/6364

**Vermont Farmworker Solidarity Project:** The Vermont Migrant Farmworker Solidarity Project organizes with migrant farm workers and engages Vermonters to build more socially and economically just farming communities and food systems. We engage, educate and support Vermont communities to effectively challenge US immigration, economic, and trade policies and practices that adversely affect farm workers and family farmers on both sides of the border. <http://www.vtmigrantfarmworkersolidarity.org/> (802) 825-1609

**New Neighbors Victim Outreach Project:** To inform and empower Vermont's refugee and immigrant populations regarding their rights as victims of crime Barbara Whitchurch, Project Director 802-241-1250 ext. 112 or 800-750-1213 [bwhitchurch@ccvs.state.vt.us](mailto:bwhitchurch@ccvs.state.vt.us)

**Planned Parenthood:** The health centers in Vermont provide the quality care through a wide range of reproductive health services for women and men, including cancer screening, emergency contraception (morning-after pill) and other birth control, and STD testing and treatment. Planned Parenthood has a sliding fee for uninsured or underinsured individuals within a certain income bracket. Locations are: Barre, Bennington, Brattleboro, Burlington, Hyde Park, Middlebury, Newport, Rutland, St. Albans and Williston. *1-800-230-PLAN*

### **FRANKLIN COUNTY RESOURCES:**

**NOTCH Health Clinics:** Northern Tier Center for Health is a Federally Qualified Health Center that has 5 clinics in Franklin and Grand Isle County. Patients can apply for a sliding fee. All NOTCH clinics have access to a phone interpreter for Non-English speaking patients. The majority of their registration packet is available in Spanish. Alburg: (802) 796-4414, Enosburg: (802) 933-5831, Richford: (802) 255-5500, St. Albans: (802) 524-4554, Swanton: (802) 868-2454

**Franklin County Health Access Group:** Representatives from Franklin County Organizations and Communities providing services or support to Latino farm workers meet every other month. The group shares the following goals: learn about current roles of various partner agencies in this work, begin to develop a more formal process by which to convene stakeholders, identify people and agencies to assume leadership roles and establishment of a more formal network going forward. Judy Ashley-McLaughlin [judy.ashley@ahs.state.vt.us](mailto:judy.ashley@ahs.state.vt.us)

**Farming Across Cultures Communication Project:** A two year grant that started in May of 2009 to provide communication and training support to Franklin County dairy producers and their Spanish speaking employees. (802) 524-6501 ext 447 [nwolcott@uvm.edu](mailto:nwolcott@uvm.edu)

### **ADDISON COUNTY RESOURCES:**

**Middlebury Open Door Clinic:** A free clinic in Middlebury, VT that provides health care for uninsured and underinsured adults. The clinics operate every Tuesday evening in Middlebury and every other Thursday evening in Vergennes. They also offer occasional Friday morning appointments in Middlebury. The open door clinics work with community volunteers to provide Spanish speaking patients with an interpreter. Appointments are needed for all clinics. Call for an appointment/Para una cita: 802.388.0137. 100 Porter Drive Middlebury, VT 05753.

**Addison County Farmworker Coalition:** A community based all-volunteer group whose mission is to help farm workers access education, health, and social services and to celebrate the growing diversity of Addison County. [addison.coalition@gmail.com](mailto:addison.coalition@gmail.com)

**Amistad:** A project of the Addison County Farmworker Coalition: Amistad Project provides transportation assistance to farm workers and their families. For more information or to volunteer, please call Louise Giovanella at 802-759-2529 (email; louiseg@gmavt.net). For transportation assistance call Chela Andreu-Sprigg (Spanish-speaking) at 802-247-9399 (email; andreu@middlebury.edu).

**Juntos:** is a student volunteer organization that strives to meet the needs of the Latin American migrant worker population of Addison County, VT. The organization fosters

relationships at both the individual and community level through social and educational programs. <http://www.middjuntos.blogspot.com/> Contact: [MiddJuntos@gmail.com](mailto:MiddJuntos@gmail.com)

#### **NORTH EAST and CENTRAL VERMONT RESOURCES:**

**Northern Counties Health Care:** Northern Counties Health Care clinics have a sliding fee that patients can apply for. Clinics are located in Hardwick: (802) 472-3300, Island Pond: (802) 723-4300, Danville: (802) 684-2275, St. Johnsbury: (802) 748-5041, and Concord: (802) 695-2512. There is a Spanish speaking doctor at the Hardwick clinic.

**Little Rivers Health Care:** A group of 3 health clinics in Bradford: (802) 222-9317, Wells River: (802) 757-2325, and East Corinth (802) 439-5321. They are a Federally Qualified Health Center and as such offer a sliding fee to those who qualify. They provide health services for Spanish speaking farmworkers with support from Dartmouth Medical School.

**Central Vermont Farmworker Coalition:** The Central Vermont Farmworkers Coalition is a non-profit group, flexibly organized to help overcome the challenges encountered by migrant farmworkers in our community and to address the related concerns of the farmers who employ them. [CV-FWC@googlegroups.com](mailto:CV-FWC@googlegroups.com)

Labor Management Checklist				
	In Place Now	Working on it	Not done - Need it	Don't Need it
I know some basic personal information about each of my employees (Name, where he/she is from, general family information)				
I have read, listened to, or seen media that gives me insight into the lifestyle and culture of my employees				
I know at least three cultural and/or lifestyle differences between American and Latino workers that might impact how each group might respond in certain situations				
I have made at least three changes in how I interact with my Latino employees based on this knowledge				
I clearly define coworker/boss/supervisor roles				
Changes on the farm are communicated by myself and/or the manager or an interpreter directly to the workers impacted by the changes				
I pay attention to the body language of my employees				
Once I have asked an employee to do a task or make a change I ask the worker to explain back what I have said or demonstrate that he/she understands				

	In Place Now	Working on it	Not done - Need it	Don't Need it
If I notice that an employee is not performing a task as I had requested I explain the task again and/or demonstrate what I want done. If I feel he/she does not understand I contact an interpreter to ensure understanding				
When possible, I or other family members help arrange visits between my employees and nearby relatives and friends				
I get to know my employees by trying to converse about things unrelated to the employment.				
When possible upon hiring a new employee that will be living with other employees I communicate with the current employees to try to take into consideration their opinions or requests for hiring				
I give my employee time off to attend special events such as Spanish mass, birthday parties, soccer games, Mexican Consulate visit.				
I gather basic information from potential employees (name, previous work experience, work experience related to job, knowledge or training related to job)				
I provide all potential employees with basic information about the job such as a general job description, farm policies, hours, time off, pay, and other benefits				
I speak to at least one former employer of a potential employee to gauge work experience, skill level, and ability to work with others				

	In Place Now	Working on it	Not done - Need it	Don't Need it
I have job descriptions for all hired positions on the farm				
I have a job description in English and Spanish for all positions that are filled by or may be filled by a native Spanish speaker				
I have a plan in place for providing new employee orientation to each new employee as he/she begins their job				
I complete a new employee orientation to each new employee within 2 days of his/her beginning the job.				
If the employees native language is Spanish I have an interpreter present to complete new employee orientation with me				
I post appropriate signs alerting employees of work site hazards. These are in English and Spanish.				
I provide OSHA approved safety training to all farm workers. This is provided in Spanish to those workers who speak Spanish as their native language				
I utilize OSHA training checklists for each job to ensure farm workers receive appropriate training.				

	In Place Now	Working on it	Not done - Need it	Don't Need it
I have set goals for safety and track success.				
I reward my employees when safety goals are met.				
I have posted Emergency contact numbers in the barn by the phone				
I have reviewed an emergency plan with my employees. I have done this with the help of an interpreter for my Spanish speaking employees.				
I have an interpreter that I have an agreement with to assist me in communication matters regarding the job, the home, health and other general needs of my Spanish speaking employees				
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are readily available, and in many cases posted, in the native languages of employees assigned animal care responsibilities.				
I have identified and prioritized trainings important for the various positions on the farm				
Documentation exists of employee training for new and existing employees at least on an annual basis.				
I hold monthly interpreted meetings with non-English speaking employees to ensure good communication and allow for detailed conversations about job performance, cow health and other job related issues				

	In Place Now	Working on it	Not done - Need it	Don't Need it
I have written house maintenance guidelines and expectations in English and Spanish				
When there is a transition with employees I ensure the housing is up to the cleanliness and maintenance standards I expect a new employee to uphold				
I review house maintenance guidelines and expectations with each new employee within a week of his/her start date				
I conduct a housing inspection with each new employee when they begin their employment				
I conduct monthly housing inspections				
Emergency numbers are listed in a prominent place in the house				
I provide each new Latino employee with a comprehensive bilingual food list				
I, or my family, has a health care plan in place in the case of a sick or injured employee				
I have a shift coverage plan in the event of an injury or illness of one of the employees				