

# Safer Farms Safer Families

## Pesticide Education in Rural Eastern North Carolina

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### Project

Anna Laughman and Emily Cunningham worked with the North Carolina AgroMedicine Institute to implement a pesticide education program. Their initiative educated migrant farm workers about pesticide safety and trained health care providers how to seek proper medical clearance for farm workers working with pesticides.

### Services Provided

**The on site training provided to farm workers in eastern North Carolina included:**

- Instructing proper use of personal protective equipment and the importance of hand washing to prevent pesticide poisoning.
- Educating workers on how to avoid cross- contaminating their homes after working with pesticides.
- Providing workers with pesticide-safe gloves and masks.

**Training sessions were offered to health care providers on the following:**

- How to administer and provide medical clearance for the mandatory OSHA Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire to all farm workers mixing, handling, and loading pesticides.
- How to identify and seek proper medical care for someone experiencing pesticide poisoning.



Photograph by East Carolina University



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### Results

- Approximately 70 migrant farm workers were trained on how to prevent pesticide exposure. Many of whom were also given secondary health care such as blood pressure and blood glucose screenings through the Greene County Medical Center.
- 25 health care providers from various counties and health centers were trained on how to properly administer and provide medical clearance for the OSHA Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire.

### Sustainability

With the continued assistance of the NC Albert Schweitzer Fellowship and in partnership with East Carolina University, Anna and Emily were able to create the AgroMedicine Interest Group at the Brody School of Medicine. This student organization will allow students to continue working with migrant farm workers and healthcare providers in rural eastern North Carolina.

They are also working to continue training medical students about the importance of diagnosing and properly treating a patient with pesticide poisoning by creating a problem based learning module that may be implemented into future educational curriculum.