

THE U. C. DAVIS AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CENTER: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND OUTREACH



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California is the leading agricultural state in the nation, with 16 percent of all U.S. crop production, as measured by farm cash receipts. Farm production in California is 60 percent greater than the second leading state. A review of agricultural production statistics documents the enormous size and importance of California commodities. For example, California produces 39 percent of all U.S. vegetables and melons, 53 percent of all fruits, nuts and berries, and 24 percent of all nursery and greenhouse products. More than 1,000,000 workers are employed annually in agriculture in California, and there are more than 20,000 disabling injuries per year in the state. The purpose of the new U.C. Davis Agricultural Health and Safety Center is to create a multidisciplinary organization for communication and coordination of research, education, and illness and injury prevention in the agricultural workplace. The Center will address occupational and environmental health issues affecting farmers, ranchers, agricultural employees, farm families, agricultural service employees and visitors and residents around agricultural work sites. The Center includes multiple academic units within the University of California, as well as participation by programs and state agencies from outside the University and interactions from neighboring states. As one of two national centers funded by NIOSH, the U.C. Davis Center will focus on agricultural health and safety issues most relevant to the western states. The Center is organized into an administrative core and a research and an outreach component. Participants from U.C. Davis, U.C. Berkeley, various state agencies and agriculture organizations are actively involved in both the research and outreach components. This mixture of the unique expertise of the participants, the diverse resources of the University and the State of California, and the contacts and involvement of state agricultural organizations provides an outstanding and unique environment for addressing the health and safety hazards in agriculture.



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