

# **DEATHS WITH FARMERS LUNG DISEASE AND DAIRY FARMING PRODUCTION: A CORRELATION USING NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS MULTIPLE CAUSE OF DEATH TAPES**



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Farmer's Lung Disease (FLD) is a form of hypersensitivity pneumonitis (HP) prevalent in agricultural workers. We hypothesize that extensive prolonged work in closed spaces exposes the dairy farm worker to various sensitizing agents associated with HP and FLD more than other types of farm workers. This report looks at data available from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) multiple cause of death data tapes from 1979 through 1986 concerning deaths with FLD. During this time period, 73 death certificates listed FLD as being present. Data from these death certificates were correlated with farming data from the 1982 agricultural survey and the 1986 *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, by state, using Spearman correlations.

## **TABLE OF CORRELATIONS**

Variables by State	
Whole Milk Sold	0.53*
Dairy Farms	0.54*
Farms with Cows	0.54*
Farmers	0.35*
Deaths	0.11*

$P < 0.05 - *$

In this ecological study, deaths with FLD were more related to dairy farming than farming in general, supporting our hypothesis. The NCHS multiple cause of death data tapes have thus provided a new way to evaluate the demographics of an occupational pulmonary disease, and help generate a hypothesis as to its occupational origin.

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