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Meetings](#)
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Online Program 331973 Respiratory Health Among Latino Thoroughbred Workers

[Main Menu and Search](#)
[Browse by Day](#)
[Browse by Program](#)
[Author Index](#)
[Affiliation Index](#)
[Disclosure Index](#)
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Meeting Information

When:

October 31 - November 04, 2015

Where:

Chicago, IL

Monday, November 2, 2015

John Flunker, MS, MPH, College of Public Health - Epidemiology, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

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background/objectives: Evidence suggests working in horse barns is associated with adverse respiratory effects among Latino thoroughbred workers, yet no studies to date have measured pulmonary function. We examined the prevalence of self-reported respiratory symptoms, abnormal pulmonary function, and associated occupational factors among Latino thoroughbred farmworkers.

methods: Participants were recruited via a community-based, purposive sampling strategy and participated in an interview-administered survey and spirometer test. 80 surveys and spirometry tests were administered by two trained health promoters (*Promotoras*) in July-September 2014. Pulmonary function (abnormal/normal) was classified by a pulmonologist. Occupational factors—such as job type, hours of barn/dust exposure, and use of dust masks—were assessed for associations with respiratory outcomes.

results: Participants reported working in dusty barn conditions 22 hours/week, infrequently using dust masks (94%), and 79% experienced upper/lower respiratory symptoms. The prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function was 27%. Grooms worked in dusty barn conditions 2X longer per week than non-grooms (40 versus 20 hours) and, in addition to general farm workers, had the highest prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function (50% and 41%, respectively). Multivariate logistic regression indicates working as a general farm worker (versus all other jobs) and a shorter duration of farm employment (≤ 5 versus > 5 years) may increase the odds of abnormal pulmonary function.

conclusions: Latino thoroughbred workers may be at risk for developing adverse respiratory conditions due to chronic exposure to dusty barn environments and limited use of dust masks. Future research should further clarify occupational and social factors impacting the respiratory health of this worker group.

Learning Areas:

Environmental health sciences
Occupational health and safety
Public health or related research

Learning Objectives:

Describe the self-report respiratory symptoms and the lung function of Latino workers employed on horse breeding farms; Identify the possible causes for reduced lung function experienced by Latino horse farmworkers; Assess reasons workers may experience respiratory symptomatology in excess of the general population.

Keyword(s): Occupational Health and Safety, Public Health Research

Presenting author's disclosure statement:

Qualified on the content I am responsible for because: I research occupational and non-occupational factors that impact Latino thoroughbred worker health as part of a team that brings together over 50 years of combined research expertise in work organization and worker health, pulmonary health, and has been examining factors impacting Latino Thoroughbred worker health for the past 7 years. Specific to this abstract, I co-created the survey instrument, helped train Promotoras in spirometry and questionnaire administration, managed all study data, and conducted all analyses.

Any relevant financial relationships? No

I agree to comply with the American Public Health Association Conflict of Interest and Commercial Support Guidelines, and to disclose to the participants any off-label or experimental uses of a commercial product or service discussed in my presentation.

[Back to: 3310.0: OHS Topics - 1](#)



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