

# Farm families ALIVE & Well

I-CASH | Iowa's Center for  
Agricultural Safety and Health  
The University of Iowa • Iowa State University  
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship  
Iowa Department of Public Health • Non-profits for Farm Health

News from Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (I-CASH)

## Agricultural Safety and Health in Argentina

Vol. 22, Issue 3 - June 2016

by Brandi Janssen, PhD

Although I-CASH's mission is to focus on Iowa farming, our model of collaborative programming could be implemented anywhere. This May, I-CASH director Brandi Janssen, along with advisory board member Diane Rohlman and I-CASH affiliated faculty Matt Nonnenmann, spent a week in Rosario, Argentina talking with farmers, grain co-op members, and extension agents. The trip was precipitated by an earlier visit from Dr. Marcos Grigioni, a surgeon, farmer and Agricultural Federation of Argentina (AFA) member who reached out to University of Iowa (UI) faculty about farm safety and health resources for Argentina. In 2015, Dr. Diane Rohlman, director of the Iowa Agricultural Medicine Course, secured funding for Dr. Grigioni to take the course and spend a week in Iowa learning about UI's farm safety and health outreach. The trip to Argentina was funded by a UI College of Public Health Global Health Grant, as the college looks to expand international research and outreach partnerships.



A gaucho moves beef cattle on a family farm, soybeans are harvested in the background. Photograph by Brandi Janssen.

Rosario, with a population of around 1,000,000 people, is in Santa Fe Province, northwest of Buenos Aires. Located in the incredibly productive Pampas region, this area grows most of Argentina's soybeans and is home

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## Director's Message

by Brandi Janssen, PhD

It's hard to believe that summer is upon us, but here we are. I-CASH has had a busy fall and winter as we, like many farmers, headed to farm conferences across the state. I spoke at the Iowa Farm Bureau Young Farmer conference participants and presented to Syngenta contract growers in central Iowa and to the Ag Co-op Safety Directors of Iowa during the month of January. In March, many of our advisory board members attended the Iowa Ag Leaders Dinner, hosted by Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey. The Board met in February and May, and made great progress on our ongoing projects.

Our seasonal campaigns continue to reach farmers across the state through radio PSAs, the ISU Extension and Outreach offices, FSA offices, and other partners. This winter we focused on preventing farm fires, especially in out-buildings. We distributed informational packets that included signage and marking materials and emergency planning resources to all of the regional ISU extension offices. In the spring, we focused on slips and trips—the leading cause of workplace injury in nearly all industries. We partnered with Gemplers for both the fall and winter campaigns, offering discounted fire safety and fall prevention merchandise. This summer, our campaign will address safety for young workers, emphasizing both employer and employee responsibilities to make farms as safe as possible. All of the campaign materials can be found at [www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash/programs/seasonal-campaigns](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash/programs/seasonal-campaigns)

We're working on our summer outreach schedule as well. I-CASH will be at the Iowa State Fair on August 20 as part of the University of Iowa's booth in the Varied Industries Building. We will also be at the Farm Progress Show as part of the Health and Safety Tent, along with our partners from the Iowa



Brandi Janssen  
PhD

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## The Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH) Agricultural Medicine Course

was held June 13-17 in Iowa City, IA. Founded by researchers at the University of Iowa, the course has grown to become a national and international resource on agricultural safety and health. The recently revised course presents current research with an emphasis on prevention. The course brings together participants from a range of backgrounds and utilizes case studies, field trips and hands on activities. Course information is available at [www.public-health.uiowa.edu/gpcab/education/training-opportunities](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/gpcab/education/training-opportunities). The 2017 course is scheduled for June 12-16.



The Iowa Department of Public Health is once again hosting the Health and Safety Tent (HST) at the **2016 Farm Progress Show** August 30-September 1 in Boone, IA. The HST has moved to Lot #1358 on the east edge of the exhibitor grounds. While participant plans are still being finalized, the Ag Centers from MN (UMASH), IA (GPCAH), and NE (CS-CASH) have all committed to the project. Purdue University is bringing their Agri-



Ability display and the Life Essentials pickup equipped with a lift to demonstrate options for keeping injured farmers working. Iowa Operation Lifesaver, the Hy-Vee Healthy You Mobile, the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS), the AgriSafe Network, and the Iowa DOT Zero Fatalities project are just some of the other groups partnering to offer farmers ideas and information.

New this year will be a Farmer's Coffee Corner where attendees can enjoy free refreshments and talk to health and safety professionals about the needs of farm families. Check for HST updates at [idph.iowa.gov/lpp/occupational-health](http://idph.iowa.gov/lpp/occupational-health) or contact Kathy at 515/281-4930.



Farm Families Alive & Well  
Published 4/yr  
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## Graduate Student Projects

Student Research Week and the first annual Occupational and Environmental Health Research Day at the University of Iowa College of Public Health, provided venues for two graduate students to present their findings from pilot studies.

### *Beginning Farmer's Health* - Maya Ramaswamy

The majority of farmers in the US are established farmers, people who are on average about 58 years old and have farmed for over 30 years. As these farmers age and retire, it is important to understand who will take their place. Beginning farmers, those who have 10 years or less experience operating a farm, face unique challenges in starting and sustaining their businesses. I am currently conducting an online survey to understand the health, activities, and demographics of beginning farmers around the country. Since I began the study, I have observed that beginning farmers in Iowa are younger than established farmers, although ages widely range from 19-70, they are more likely to be women, and the majority experience musculoskeletal pain.

### *Health Concerns Among Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in Iowa* - Ashlee Johannes

For this project, I surveyed migrant and seasonal farmworkers throughout Iowa about their injuries and illnesses, healthcare-seeking behavior, and use of prevention measures. This population, which is largely of Hispanic decent, is at an increased risk for several occupational and nonoccupational health problems due to multiple barriers and genetics. My study findings indicate more than 60% of the population did not receive information on any prevalent health problem from their doctor, employer, or other sources. However, more than 60% of the population sought healthcare for diabetes, high blood pressure, muscle and joint pain, or eye injury. I plan to disseminate the results of this study to employers of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and health providers to address the gaps in providing preventive education and care to the transient, migrant and seasonal farmworker population.

Both studies were funded by GPCAH Pilot Grants. For more information visit [www.public-health.uiowa.edu/gpcab/pilot-grant-program](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/gpcab/pilot-grant-program)

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to an expanding broiler and egg industry. The region also has many greenhouse and horticulture operations. Blueberries, peaches, oranges and sweet potatoes are particularly important products, grown for both export and domestic consumption.

Like many regions of the world, agricultural production has consolidated; farms are becoming larger and production is more specialized. As in the US, Argentine farmers use very large equipment and house livestock in confinements. As a result, they see many of the same health and safety concerns as US farmers, including entanglements with equipment, grain bin incidents, and injuries to youth.

One goal of the trip was for the researchers to better understand how the AFA, a large farmer cooperative, could develop agricultural safety and health programming. Cooperatives are required by law to provide educational outreach to their members and AFA employs an Educational Director, Florencia Doná, to oversee their efforts. As part of her work, she has regular meetings with a women's group of about 100 members. This energetic group provides an important link between the co-op and its member families. During the visit, the women's group evaluated materials developed in the US and translated into Spanish to begin to assess their value in a cross-cultural setting.

Another goal of the visit was to identify potential local partners for health and safety programming. While visiting the US, Dr. Grigioni was especially interested in the collaborative structure of I-CASH and hopes to create a similar model in Argentina. During meetings with extension agents, researchers, and agricultural educators, the UI faculty asked each about their perspectives on agricultural safety and health in Argentina, especially the barriers to health and safety education and programming.

Argentine farms are family operations, with immediate and extended family members providing most of the labor. As in the US, farmers are proud of their agricultural production, but concerned about the long-term stability of their farms and rural communities. This introductory trip will hopefully set the stage for more meaningful collaborations that will lead to improved health and safety of Argentine farmers.



UI faculty with the women's group of the Agricultural Federation of Argentina.

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Department of Public Health, the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health, the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center, and the Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health, among others.

Our summer plans also include some research activities with University of Iowa student DeAnn Scott-Harp and recent graduate Ashlee Johannes. They will be helping with projects related to volunteer safety in horticulture operations and health and safety programming for agricultural lenders. Here's to a safe and productive season!

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## calendar

July 12-15

### Agricultural Health and Safety Course

Omaha, NE

[www.unmc.edu/cce](http://www.unmc.edu/cce)

July 17-20

### American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers Annual Meeting (ASABE)

Orlando, FL

[www.asabemeetings.org](http://www.asabemeetings.org)

July 23-27

### 18th Annual Agricultural Media Summit

St. Louis, MO

<http://agmediasummit.com>

July 24-28

### National Association of County Agricultural Agents Conference

Little Rock, AR

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

August 24-26

### Nordic Meeting on Agricultural Occupational Health and Safety 2016

Billund, Denmark

<http://nmaohs2016.dk>

August 30 - September 1

### Farm Progress Show

Boone, IA

<http://farmprogressshow.com>

September 12-14

### Ag Innovation Showcase

St. Louis, MO

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

October 4-8

### World Dairy Expo

Madison, WI

<http://worlddairyexpo.com>

November 15-16

### Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety & Health Conference

Sioux Center, IA

[www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash/2016-mrash](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash/2016-mrash)

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## Research to Practice

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### 2016 MRASH Conference: Safeguarding Farm Livelihoods

by Gayle Olson, I-CASH Assistant to the Director

The Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference (MRASH) will be held on November 15-16 at the Terrace View Event Center in Sioux Center, IA. This conference brings together many different perspectives on agricultural safety and health; farmers, researchers, healthcare providers, educators, ag organizations and agribusiness are among the conference attendees and their healthy exchange of ideas helps to make solutions more effective. For the second year in a row a rural Iowa community will host the conference, allowing more participation from local farm families, agribusinesses, and health care providers, as well as supporting local food efforts and rural businesses.

*Safeguarding Farm Livelihoods* is the theme of the fifteenth annual conference. The first day will feature an in-depth look at the importance of design and planning as tools to prevent safety and health problems in agriculture. Break-out sessions will feature emerging research and evaluation of outreach projects from around the Midwest. In the evening, a poster reception will include displays from local projects as well as additional research and outreach efforts. Participation from farm families will be one of the key ingredients on the second day through panel presentations and small group discussions.

A new feature this year will be an Agricultural Health Fair scheduled for November 16th. Stations will address a variety of health and safety concerns on the farm with information, demonstrations and health screenings. Short presentations will also cycle during the afternoon.

We welcome your participation at the conference! Poster abstracts are still being accepted and sponsorships are available for either the conference or the health fair. For more information visit [www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash/2016-mrash](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash/2016-mrash) or contact Gayle Olson, Conference Coordinator at [gayle-olson@uiowa.edu](mailto:gayle-olson@uiowa.edu).

