

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

EXCITE team integrates farm safety and immunization education, access to vaccines

AT A GLANCE

UI Extension's EXCITE team provided immunization education, vaccines, health screenings and farm safety presentations at two large Idaho dairies, vaccinating 25% of employees in attendance.

The Situation

University of Idaho Extension team for the Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement (EXCITE) coordinated and facilitated 18 educational mobile vaccine clinics between December 2021 and June 2022. The resulting observations and experiences aligned with those of many health providers and vaccine educators across the state: direct education and conversations with trusted messengers are necessary. However, the urgency of the pandemic was waning, and Idahoans were tired of talking about COVID-19. Considering that the EXCITE initiative addresses all adult immunizations and aims to serve rural and other underserved communities, Idaho's team sought to adapt their approach to immunization education for Hispanic agricultural workers in the second half of the two-year project.

Our Response

While maintaining the original design of University of Idaho Extension's three-step educational mobile clinic, the team expanded and diversified the events. Agricultural businesses were offered a "menu" of options for the mobile clinic. The minimum components were a 30-minute presentation that integrated immunization



Mario de Haro-Marti shares a meal and visits with dairy employees following a presentation on farm safety and immunizations.

education and farm safety practices, and the availability of South Central Public Health District's mobile vaccine clinic. Additional options included blood pressure screenings, University of Idaho academic programs, a variety of Extension health resources and a taco truck to provide lunch for employees in attendance. Employees' families were also invited to attend the clinic.

In addition to integrating immunization education into other work-related topics, these second-year clinics included access to the Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) vaccine. Up-to-date protection against tetanus is highly relevant to agricultural workers, which increased both the personal and corporate value of the clinics.

Program Outcomes

The EXCITE team was invited to facilitate clinics at two of the largest dairies in the Magic Valley area: Si- Ellen Farms and Funk Dairy. This was EXCITE’s second vaccine clinic at Funk Dairy. Each site welcomed all available options: education, health screenings, Extension health resources, all vaccines (COVID-19, Flu, Tdap) and a taco truck.

A total of 203 employees attended the educational sessions prior to accessing the vaccine clinic on site. Of those attendees, 50 (25%) received at least one vaccine. This level of participation was surprising in consideration that one week prior to each event, supervisors asked employees to anonymously indicate their interest in receiving vaccines to assist the clinical team in their preparations. Five employees at Si- Ellen Farms indicated interest. There were no employees at Funk Dairy who gave advanced notice. This suggests a positive impact of reliable information being provided onsite by a trusted messenger.

Observations by UI Extension staff also indicated higher receptivity to immunization information when it was integrated with other relevant topics of interest and value. Mario de Haro-Marti, Extension educator, presented farm and occupational safety information in English and Spanish to the dairy workers. In addition to adult immunization as a safety strategy, topics included how to apply safety practices to machine operations, confined spaces, heavy lifting and animal handling. Following the presentation, participants expressed appreciation for the content they learned and said it was very useful. Some also suggested including this training in their new staff orientation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Table 1: TE Year 2 Dairy Clinics

	SI- Ellen Farms	Funk Dairy
Total employees	152	120
Prior vaccine interest	5	0
Direct education	129	74
Total individuals vaccinated	29	21
COVID-19 vaccines	18	11
Flu vaccines	26	9
Tdap vaccines	11	17
Blood pressure screenings	12	16
Extension staff	9	3
Clinical staff	6	6

The Future

The mobile vaccine clinic model and partnership between South Central Public Health District are expected to continue beyond the completion of the EXCITE Activity 2 project.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

The Cooperative Extension System is funded for the EXCITE initiative through an Interagency Agreement with the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.