



Bassett Healthcare Network
New York Center for Agricultural
Medicine and Health

NYCAMH Advisory Board Minutes
Meeting 6/13/24 11:00-2:30
The Otesaga, Cooperstown, NY

Attendees:

Susan Ackerman, Jim Bittner, Pauline Boyer, Liz Callahan, Keith Clark, Richard Engelbrecht, Alicia Fletcher, Lisa Ford, Jessica Garcia, Bruce Gibson, Conor Hammersley, Liane Hirabayashi, Christine Lalonde-Meade, Cindy Levene, John May, Dick Peterson, Mitzi Sackett, Erika Scott, James Shuford, Julie Sorensen, Renee St. Jacques, Rich Stup, Destiny Trombley, Elizabeth Wolters, Dan Zeh, Bill Zittel

Welcome and Introductions: Bill Zittel

Director's Report and Updates: Julie Sorensen/Erika Scott

Julie summarized key items in the Director's Report. She noted:

- NYCAMH worked with the State Education Department's Adult Career Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) to obtain the first farm vehicle modification for a disabled farmer in 20 years.
- The Hazard Abatement Grant was fully funded by DOL. This means \$180,000 in additional funds for training.
- We received a PERC (Pesticide Educational Resources Collaborative) grant to support safe pesticide use and implementation of the agricultural Worker Protection Standard (WPS) and the Certification of Pesticide Applicators (CPA) regulations. Overseen by Liane Hirabayashi, this project will develop pesticide safety training materials in Spanish and will improve communication materials and respiratory protection processes for workers.

Erika reported that NYCAMH received the full "plus up" from Ag & Market's and DOH:

- \$1 M for NYCAMH
- \$250 K for ROPS NY
- &100 K for JMFSS

She thanked the Advisory Board for their integral part in advocating for this funding. It is our plan to continue to stay in touch with legislators and share our grant work with them regularly. Julie thanked the staff, as well, for their hard work and "going above and beyond."

New Position Updates

Erika noted that as we create new projects, new staff positions need to be created, as well. New positions include:

- Mitzi Sackett, NYCAMH Service Coordinator
 - Game of Logging
 - PPE
 - Fit Testing Clinics
- Dahlia Sheehan-Yassin, Coordinator JMFSF
- Conor Hammersley, Research Scientist
 - Farmer Mental Health
 - Farm Services
- Christina Day, Farm Services Navigator
- Erica Gould, Outreach Research Assistant
- Destiny Trombley, Research Coordinator
- Sarah Welsh, Ag Safety Educator
- Brittany Houghton-Depietro, HealthWorks - Coordinator Dept. Operations and Scheduling
- Agricultural safety contract trainers around the state

Pauline Boyer noted that we are always looking for Spanish speaking trainers. We are also looking to increase our presence on Long Island. James Shuford and Rich Stup may be able to provide some guidance; Pauline will reach out to them.

Celebration Dinner

Julie shared details about the Celebration Dinner tonight at 5:30 at The Farmers' Museum.

Advisory Board Appointment Updates: Cindy Levene

Cindy reported that Travis Hall submitted his resignation. She shared a revised list of Board openings and the status of pending appointment requests. In follow-up, Becky Wiseman from FarmNet has been invited to the Advisory Board as a replacement and she has accepted the invitation. NYCAMH will begin her appointment process.

Board Feedback: What emerging health and safety issues are you concerned about?

There was group discussion regarding issues of concern NYCAMH may want to address in the future:

- Connection with FarmNet
- Greenhouse Industry
- Hemp Growers

- Worker health as related to cannabis production
 - Note: Jessica is on the Cannabis Control Board of the NY Office of Cannabis Management
- Grape Growers
- Aquaculture
- Manure and cropping
- Climate change
- Heat Illness Research
 - Legislation coming up next year, additional info would be helpful
 - Develop a risk assessment to help farmers pinpoint when they are at risk for heat
 - EdCore training module
 - Include on September's agenda for further discussion
- Need for training in Spanish regarding livestock handling. Most migrants have no experience in this.
- Poison ivy
- Ticks
 - Work with Mandy Roome on developing a training
 - Use of tick tubes
- Avian Flu (H5N1, HPAI)
 - Communication within NYS is good
 - County DOHs can provide employee testing
 - Vaccine for the flu may offer some protection

LUNCH

HPAI Videoconference Jeff Bender, Upper Midwest Ag Safety and Health Center, University of Minnesota

Dr. Bender reported findings on the Avian Flu epidemic and shared strategies for mitigation.

Respiratory Fit – Testing/PPE Program Mitzi Sackett

Fit-Testing, since 2015

- 2024 Season
 - 11 clinics in 9 counties across the state
 - DOH expectation for this year is 120; our current count is 328 and with two clinics still to count.
 - The 2025 expectation is 220. Based on this year's numbers, we should exceed that.
- Comprehensive education in the following areas:
 - Donning and doffing respirators
 - Respirator cleaning

- Respirator storage
- Personal hygiene which supports proper fit/protection
- Considerations for 2025
 - FIT test in each region of New York State?
 - Chose a fixed site to return to year after year, providing consistency farmers can count on?
 - Rotate locations from year to year providing location convenience to more farmers?

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Averaging \$23K in annual PPE sales since 2011 (PPE is sold at cost with a minimal mark-up to cover shipping and other sales costs)
- Goals include:
 - Make PPE convenient for farmers to use and purchase
 - Develop a process to better assess the needs of farmers who Fit-Test
- Considerations for 2025: Mizi would like AB members' opinions
 - Continue to understand social determinants relevant to using and purchasing PPE
 - Should we add 3M brand half-face respirators to our product line?
 - How do we want to evolve the PPE program? Drop ship directly to farms from our vendors?

Plans for Mental Health Research Conor Hammersley

Conor is interested in the impact of policy on mental health. He plans to look at farmers' mental health from a research perspective which can ultimately inform policy makers and lead to positive change in the "governance of agriculture." He will examine how we support mental health, ways to deal with occupational stress, work to improve access, and engage in community outreach to destigmatize mental health care.

Cornell Ag Workforce Development / NYCAMH Partnerships Julie, Rich Stup

Julie and Rich reported on the partnership between NYCAMH and Cornell's Ag Workforce Development. The collaboration is just beginning, but is already very productive:

- How have regulatory changes affected farmers?
 - NYCAMH assisted Cornell with interviews and surveys of both farm owners and farm workers
 - NYCAMH Nudging Project improved communication among workers; Cornell shared information on a cell phone app that tracks workers hours and could also be used to supplement worker communication.
 - Something's Gotta Give
 - Thinking in a systematic way about Safety
 - Safety should be a top priority, along with production and worker satisfaction

- Attempt to make safety more measurable
- Rather than just focusing on a specific problem, work to keep people healthy overall
- Strategic Approach to Dairy Farming/Lean 6 Sigma
 - Conducted on-site safety walkthroughs
 - Worked with three pilot farms to address problems using continuous improvement strategies – hopefully the approach will continue to be used going forward
 - Conducted Rapid Ethnographic Assessments and shared results with farms
 - NYFB workshop is planning to share the Strategic Approach to Dairy process. The proposal has since been accepted.

The NYCAMH/Cornell collaboration is off to a great start. In the future, we would hope to provide workforce training and safety training as one. We also want to consider culture: leaders who view safety as less important affect the culture, and that directly affects outcomes.

Adjournment:

Bill Zittel adjourned the meeting at 2:30.

Next meeting: Thursday, September 12 11:00 – 2:30 The Otesaga, Cooperstown, NY