

ERGONOMICS ASSESSMENT OF TASKS IN COLORADO VEGETABLE PRODUCTION (BOULDER, ADAMS, WELD, MONTROSE AND PUEBLO COUNTY)

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PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Vegetable production is an important aspect to production, that we should all care about. Each year, Colorado farms grow nearly \$300 million of fresh produce. The people that pick our fruits and vegetables are as important as our food. We conducted research on the stooped posture, body temperature, pulse and breathing rate of workers. We did this to know how hard the body works and what we can do to make the workday safer. Also, to develop ways so that workers aren't in a stooped position for most of the day.



INTERNSHIP GOALS

- Conduct research on farm workers as they work, to collect data about their posture, pulse, body temperature and breathing rate.
- Understand how these individuals work and show how much stress their body goes through on the job.
- Show them different ways they can also work and stretch so they can keep themselves safe.

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO MY EDUCATION

I was able to learn so much about where I come from by meeting all these amazing and hard-working people. I was also learning about where the food we eat comes from and what it takes to be ready. I also learned that I really like working with people and helping them find better alternatives to live a better life. I am excited to continue working with people as much as I can. I will in some way in the future since I want to work at an Animal Rehabilitation Center, not exactly sure for what type of animal. I have learned many new skills about working with people.

WHAT I DID

- Conducted interviews with the workers asking them about work history and if they have had any previous back pain or body pain due to work prior from the interview.
- Assisted during the workday to be able to get a better understanding of what it takes to be a farm worker.
- Assisted fellow researchers at putting on the belts on workers and calibrating the sensors.
- Assisted with the data collection and putting data into our system.
- Spoke to workers prior to doing the research project, for them to get an idea of what we would be doing.
- Watched workers while they worked and wrote down notes about how often they drank water, took a break, or stretched.
- Filmed a heat illness video that will be shared with employers and employees



WHAT YOU LEARNED

I learned so many new things about agriculture and the body. I learned about how Ergonomics works, since it is not my direct field of study. I was able to also learn about the body and the way we should be taking care of it during work. I learned more about the Agriculture business. How employers get workers and the laws that are set to protect those workers while out on the field. I also learned about how the H2A program works.

NEXT STEPS

The next steps for me would be to graduate this coming Spring. In the meantime, I have been offered a job with my internship mentor John. I have accepted the job and will be working along side them throughout the academic year until graduation time. While I work along side my mentors, I will be analyzing the interview data; communicating research outcomes to research participants and stakeholders. After graduation, I plan to work at a local Zoo to be able to work with many different animals. I plan to move out of state at some point and be able to work at a Marine Rehabilitation Center. I inspire to work at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, I went a couple years ago and have liked it ever since.