



University of Kentucky
UKnowledge

Theses and Dissertations--Public Health (M.P.H. &
Dr.P.H.)

College of Public Health

2015

Pulmonary Function Among Latino Thoroughbred Workers - A Pilot Study

John C. Flunker
University of Kentucky

[Click here to let us know how access to this document benefits you.](#)

Recommended Citation

Flunker, John C., "Pulmonary Function Among Latino Thoroughbred Workers - A Pilot Study" (2015). *Theses and Dissertations--Public Health (M.P.H. & Dr.P.H.)*. 48.
https://uknowledge.uky.edu/cph_etds/48

This Graduate Capstone Project is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Public Health at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations--Public Health (M.P.H. & Dr.P.H.) by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I represent that my thesis or dissertation and abstract are my original work. Proper attribution has been given to all outside sources. I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any needed copyright permissions. I have obtained and attached hereto needed written permission statements(s) from the owner(s) of each third-party copyrighted matter to be included in my work, allowing electronic distribution (if such use is not permitted by the fair use doctrine).

I hereby grant to The University of Kentucky and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive and make accessible my work in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I agree that the document mentioned above may be made available immediately for worldwide access unless a preapproved embargo applies.

I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of my work. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of my work. I understand that I am free to register the copyright to my work.

REVIEW, APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The document mentioned above has been reviewed and accepted by the student's advisor, on behalf of the advisory committee, and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), on behalf of the program; we verify that this is the final, approved version of the student's dissertation including all changes required by the advisory committee. The undersigned agree to abide by the statements above.

John C. Flunker, Student

David Mannino, MD, Major Professor

Linda Alexander, EdD, Director of Graduate Studies

**PULMONARY FUNCTION AMONG LATINO THOROUGHBRED WORKERS
- A PILOT STUDY**

CAPSTONE PROJECT PAPER

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Public Health
in the
University of Kentucky College of Public Health

By

John C. Flunker
MS

Lexington, Kentucky
21 April, 2015

David Maninno, MD, Chair

Wayne Sanderson, PhD

Steven Browning, PhD

Disclosure Statement

The author certifies that he will take public responsibility for the content and provide any relevant data upon request. The author also certifies that he has contributed substantially to conception, design or analysis, and interpretation of the data, drafting or revision of content, and approval of the final version. The author also confirms that the content has not been published elsewhere and does not overlap or duplicate their previously published work.

Abstract

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. Surveys and spirometry tests were administered to 80 participants by two trained health promoters (*Promotoras*) in July-September 2014. Pulmonary function (abnormal/normal) was classified by a pulmonologist. Demographic and occupational factors were assessed for associations with respiratory outcomes by multivariate logistic regression.

Results

Participants were primarily male (74%) and of Mexican nationality (76%), while 21% were current smokers, 18% were former smokers, and 61% had never smoked. On average, participants were 37 years old, had lived in the U.S. for 17 years, and were employed for 5 years at a current horse farm. Participants reported working in a barn an average of 21 hours/week and working in dusty conditions an average of 22 hours/week. Few participants reported wearing a dust mask in the barn (27%), and among all participants, 94% reported infrequent dust mask utilization. A large proportion (79%) of participants reported experiencing upper and/or lower respiratory symptoms in the past

12 months. The prevalence of physician or nurse diagnosed asthma was 18% and the prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function was 27%. Among those with abnormal pulmonary function, one participant had obstructed spirometry, while the remainder had restricted spirometry. Multivariate logistic regression indicates that a shorter duration of horse farm employment (≤ 5 versus > 5 years) and a shorter time living in the U.S. (≤ 10 versus > 10 years) increased the odds of abnormal pulmonary function (Years of current horse farm employment: OR = 6.3, 95% CI = 1.15-34.35; Years living in the U.S.: OR = 5.2, 95% CI = 1.3-20.6).

Conclusions

Latino thoroughbred workers may be at risk for adverse respiratory conditions due to chronic exposure to dusty barn environments and limited use of dust masks. Future research will further clarify the occupational and social factors affecting the respiratory health of this worker group. Promoting safety education regarding occupational respiratory risks and the use of dust masks may help to improve the respiratory health of this vulnerable worker group.

Introduction

Latino agriculture workers are a vulnerable population with a heightened risk for occupational illness and injury. The risk of a Latino agriculture worker being injured on the job is seven times that of non-Latino workers (BLS 2006). Accordingly, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) considers the Latino workforce a priority population for lessening occupational safety risks (NORA AgFF Sector Council, 2008). Livestock production is an especially dangerous segment of agriculture (Meyers and Chapman, 2001) and one livestock subgroup with little attention to date is the thoroughbred breeding industry. There are approximately 460,000 employees in the thoroughbred industry and nearly two-thirds of those workers are Latino or foreign born (AHC, 2005), thereby necessitating investigation of the factors impacting the occupational health of Latino thoroughbred workers.

Based on the limited number of studies investigating the occupation hazards of thoroughbred work, evidence suggests that Latinos may be more susceptible than non-Latinos to occupational hazards. For example, Swanberg et al. (2013) found Latinos working on horse farms in the southeast U.S. were more likely to be struck or kicked by horses than non-Latinos and that the most frequent injuries acquired by Latino workers were kicks from horses and musculoskeletal discomfort. Thus, it is likely that Latinos may also be at a heightened risk for other occupational injuries commonly associated with thoroughbred farm work, such as bites and falls from the horse (Doughrate et al., 2009; Langley and Morris, 2009; Lofqvist et al., 2009; Iba et al., 2001), and adverse pulmonary effects related to chronic occupational exposure to dust containing various

respiratory toxins found in or near the horse barn (Cho et al., 2010; Elfman et al., 2009, Samadi et al., 2009; Curtis et al., 1996; Mackiewicz et al., 1996).

The risk of respiratory exposures and subsequent adverse respiratory effects may be increased for Latino thoroughbred workers due to chronic occupational exposure to organic and inorganic dust. Work tasks that tend to be associated with high levels of dust exposure include those that increase airborne dust concentrations in the workers' breathing zone, such as mucking, sweeping, and feeding horses (Curtis et al., 1996; Samadi et al., 2009). Working near to livestock has also been shown to increase exposure to respiratory toxins (O'Shaughnessy et al., 2010). In addition, horse bedding type (e.g. straw versus paper), level of barn air ventilation, and time of year may also impact the concentration of respirable dust found in horse barns (Wålinder et al., 2011; Elfman et al., 2009; Curtis et al., 1996). Furthermore, in one of the few studies to conduct dust sampling on U.S. horse farms, Cho et al. (2010) found that potential exposures to high levels of dust may also occur in areas surrounding the horse barn.

Dust found in horse barns contains a variety of respiratory toxins, which may adversely impact worker health. For example, dust samples from horse barns have yielded high concentrations of organic dust containing endotoxins (Samadi et al., 2009; Mackiewicz et al., 1996), Beta 1-3 Glucans (Elfman et al., 2009; Samadi et al., 2009), horse hair and dander (Tutluoglu et al., 2002), ammonia (Curtis et al., 1996), hydrogen sulfide (Elfman et al., 2009), in addition to sawdust, metal, and silica particles (Mazan and Hoffman, 2006). Subsequently, respiratory conditions have been reported for horse worker populations including: high rates of asthma (Kimball-Dunn et al., 1999), bronchial obstruction (Elfman et al., 2009), dyspnea (Kimball-Dunn et al., 1999), chronic

bronchitis (Gallagher et al., 2007; Melbostad et al., 1997), upper and lower respiratory symptoms (Swanberg et al., 2015) and allergic reactions to horse dander and hair (Tutluoglu et al., 2002). Furthermore, Mazan et al. (2009) found New England equine workers reported significantly higher rates of self-reported respiratory symptoms relative to a reference population not exposed to barns or horses.

Spirometry is an important tool in assessing the impacts of occupational exposures upon pulmonary function. Objective measures of pulmonary function, such as spirometry, provide a less biased perspective on lung health than self-reported symptoms alone, as decreased pulmonary function may not always be accompanied by upper or lower respiratory symptoms (Iversen and Dahl, 2000) and self-reported symptoms may be subject to recall bias. In addition, spirometry may also be helpful in detecting early stages of respiratory disease prior to symptomology onset (Petty, 2000).

Spirometry has been used previously to establish associations between acute and chronic agriculture respiratory exposures and pulmonary function. For example, Eastman et al. (2013) found that dairy workers experienced a within-worker cross-shift decrease in pulmonary function, while Donham et al. (2000) found poultry workers exhibited a within worker cross-shift decline in pulmonary function, both presumably due to respiratory exposures. Duration of employment may also impact pulmonary function, as Rodriguez et al. (2014) found evidence of restrictive lung function associated with a greater number of years in agriculture work among Latino workers and Donham et al. (1995) found swine workers exhibited decreased pulmonary function after six years of employment. Finally, associations have also been detected between decreased pulmonary function and exposure to endotoxins encountered in dairy work. For example, dairy

farmers may experience a decrease in pulmonary function associated with increasing shift duration and subsequent endotoxin exposure levels (Eastman et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2015). As endotoxins are likely one of the respiratory irritants frequently encountered by Latino thoroughbred workers in the horse barn, it is possible that reduced pulmonary function may be prevalent in this worker group.

The only study to date that has assessed the respiratory health of Latino thoroughbred workers suggests that there is a potential association between occupational exposures and adverse respiratory health outcomes in Latino thoroughbred workers. Swanberg et al. (2015) found that 62% of Latino thoroughbred workers reported respiratory symptoms and that 44% reported a cough in the last year. Furthermore, infrequent dust mask use was associated with increased odds of reporting upper respiratory symptoms. These results suggest that the horse barn contains respiratory toxins that may adversely impact worker respiratory health and that more frequent use of dust masks may decrease respiratory toxin exposures.

No studies to date have assessed pulmonary function among Latino thoroughbred workers. In this study we examined two questions regarding Latino thoroughbred workers: 1) What is the prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function and self-reported respiratory symptoms?; and 2) What occupational and demographic factors are associated with pulmonary function and self-reported respiratory symptoms? We hypothesized that Latino thoroughbred workers may experience a high prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function (and respiratory symptoms), potentially associated with high levels of chronic exposure to dust on the horse farm. Furthermore, we hypothesized that dust masks may provide protection from respiratory hazards such that high levels of self-reported dust

exposure and frequent use of dust masks may be associated with a lower prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function (and respiratory symptoms), whereas infrequent dust mask usage may be associated with a high prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function (and respiratory symptoms).

Methods

We conducted a cross-sectional study investigating self-reported respiratory symptoms and pulmonary function among 80 male and female Latino thoroughbred workers. Eligibility criteria required participants to be eighteen years or older and employed in the thoroughbred industry for at least nine of the past twelve months. Those with surgery in the past three months were excluded. Participants were recruited by two Spanish-speaking community health promoters (*Promotoras*) through a community-based purposive sampling approach (e.g, local parks, Latino cultural events, and via social connections). Surveys and pulmonary function tests were conducted between July and September of 2014. Approval for the study was granted by the University of Kentucky Institutional Review Board.

Training

Promotoras were trained in questionnaire administration, human subjects' protection, and research ethics by study personnel and spirometry training was conducted by a pulmonary physician. Quality control of survey administration and data occurred via weekly meetings between *Promotoras* and study personnel to obtain feedback on survey administration and recruitment methodologies as well as a review of data quality. The quality of spirometry tests were evaluated by the pulmonary physician (DM) to ensure

high quality spiromgrams and reproducible results. Those surveys with missing information and spirometry tests of low quality were re-administered to participants, when possible.

Participation and study results

Participants received a \$15.00 Wal-Mart gift card for participation in the study as well as information about various community resources. Results of the pulmonary function tests were reported in writing to participants in October 2014. The location and contact information for local clinics with Spanish-speaking health care providers were also included with participants' results in order to provide further review of the pulmonary function tests, if desired.

Measures

Participants were given a 40-item questionnaire that was administered in either Spanish or English. The questionnaire was developed through integrating items from National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS), the Burden of Lung Disease Survey (BOLD), clinical diagnostic questions used to ascertain the presence or absence of pulmonary disease, as well as questions used in previous studies with this population (Swanberg et al. 2013, 2015).

Demographics

Demographic questions were taken from the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS). Gender was recorded as male or female and age was measured as the number of years since birth. Age was later condensed to three levels (≤ 30 , 31-40, and >40) for statistical analysis. Nationality was measured as Mexican, Mexican American, Guatemalan, Honduran, or other. Length of time living in the U.S. was recorded in years and was collapsed to ≤ 10 years and > 10 years for statistical analysis. Participants'

smoking status was recorded as: current, former, or never smoker. Educational attainment was assessed on an ordinal scale, including grade school, high school/GED, some college, associate, bachelors, and master's degree or higher, with participants noting the highest level of education completed. Educational attainment was later condensed to low (high school or less) or high (greater than high school education) for statistical analysis.

Occupational Exposure Factors

Length of time working at the current horse farm was recorded in years. This was later collapsed to ≤ 5 years and > 5 years. Participants were asked if they worked in a barn and this response was recorded as “yes” or “no”. Length of time working in barns per week was measured in hours and was later condensed to ≤ 20 hours/week and > 20 hours/week. Length of time working in dusty environments per week was measured in hours and this was collapsed to ≤ 20 hours/week and > 20 hours/week for statistical analysis. The frequency of dust mask use in the barn was ascertained via a Likert scale comprised of never, seldom, sometimes, often, or always/almost always. This was later condensed to infrequent (never, seldom, and/or sometimes) and frequent (often, or always/almost always) dust mask usage. Presence or absence of dusk mask use was calculated with “never” coded as “absence” and “seldom, sometimes often, or always/almost always” coded as “presence”.

Respiratory Symptoms

Respiratory symptoms were assessed by examining self-reported upper and lower respiratory symptoms via questions taken from the Burden of Lung Disease Survey (BOLD). Upper respiratory symptoms included nasal irritation, throat irritation, and sinus trouble, while lower respiratory symptoms included cough, wheezing, chest tightness,

shortness of breath, and difficulty breathing. These symptoms were condensed to upper (any or all upper respiratory symptoms), lower (any or all lower respiratory symptoms), and any respiratory symptoms (any upper and/or lower respiratory symptoms).

Participants were also asked whether respiratory symptoms improved when away from the barn for greater than one day. Pre-existing respiratory conditions including physician or nurse-diagnosed asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) were assessed by asking whether a physician or nurse has told the participant they have the condition (yes/no). The presence of allergies to house dust and animal dander, as well as skin irritation and hay fever was determined with yes/no response options.

Pulmonary Function

Participant respiratory health was measured by *Promotoras* with the Easyone spirometer (nidd Medical Technologies, Zurich, Switzerland). Pulmonary function tests were reviewed for diagnostic quality by the pulmonary physician and those tests of low quality were re-administered at a later date. The highest quality trial among three or more trials was used for pulmonary function classification. Participant spirometers were reviewed by a pulmonary physician at the University of Kentucky and were recorded as normal or abnormal. Abnormal pulmonary function was further categorized as restrictive or obstructive lung function. Abnormal pulmonary function was defined based on predictive pulmonary function comparison values for Mexican-Americans regarding gender and age versus forced expiratory volume in one second (FEV1) and forced vital capacity (FVC) obtained from the National Health and Nutrition Exam Survey (NHANES III) by Hankinson et al. (1999). Abnormal pulmonary function was defined as $FEV1 / FVC < 0.70$ and $FEV1 < 0.80$, while normal pulmonary function was defined as

FEV1/FVC ≥ 0.70 and FEV1 ≥ 0.80 of predicted by NHANES III data. Restrictive lung function was defined as FEV1 < 0.80 and FVC < 0.80 , while obstructive lung function was defined as FEV1 / FVC < 0.70 as predicted by NHANES III.

Statistical Analyses

SPSS version 22 (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY) was used to calculate basic descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values), chi-square tests, and multivariate logistic regressions. Bi-variate analyses of association between demographic and occupational factors and respiratory symptoms were assessed for statistical significance via Chi-square with an alpha value of 0.05. Continuous variables to be used in statistical analyses as dichotomous variables were generated by condensing quartiles and investigating frequency histograms for break points in the distribution.

A multivariate logistic regression was calculated to ascertain the adjusted odds of respiratory symptoms and abnormal pulmonary function occurring as a function of specific occupational and non-occupational factors. Covariates included in the model were selected based on factors found to impact pulmonary function and respiratory symptoms in past studies as well as those factors with significant bi-variate associations with the presence abnormal pulmonary function and respiratory symptomology. Collinearity and multicollinearity of covariates were assessed via correlation matrices and variance inflation factor (VIF) values to ensure reliable regression coefficients. Collinearity and multicollinearity were considered present with a significant Pearson correlation coefficient greater than 0.4 and a VIF value greater than 10 (O'Brien 2007).

Results

Demographics

A total of 80 participants were recruited to participate in the study. Participants were primarily male (74%) and, on average, 37.7 years old (SD = 10.9, Range = 18-65). When condensed into age categories, 25% of participants were ≤ 30 , 40% were 31-40, and 35% were >40 . Participants were primarily of Mexican nationality (76%), while 16% were Mexican-American, 5% were Guatemalan, and 2.5% were Honduran. Among participants, 21% were current smokers, 18% were former smokers, and 61% had never smoked. Participants had lived in the U.S. for an average of 16.7 years (SD = 9.8, Range = 1.2-39). When condensed to two categories, 29% of the participants had resided in the U.S. for ≤ 10 years and 71% for >10 years. Approximately half of the participants had high educational attainment (57%), while 43% had low educational attainment. (Table 1)

Occupational Exposure Factors

Participants were employed on average for 5.4 years at the current horse farm (SD = 4.5, Range = 1-30). When time on current farm was condensed to two levels, 56% of participants had worked on the current horse farm for ≤ 5 years and 44% had worked on the current horse farm for >5 years. Most participants (96%) reported working in a barn with an average of 21 hours/week spent working in the barn (SD = 13.6, Range = 0-60). Participants reported working in dusty conditions an average of 22 hours/week (SD = 13.4, Range = 2-52). When condensed to two levels of dust exposure, 56% reported working in dusty conditions for ≤ 20 hours per week and 44% reported working in dusty conditions for > 20 hours per week. Among participants, 28% reported wearing a dust

mask when working in the barn and 94% of the total sample infrequently (never, seldom, and/or sometimes) wore dust masks in the barn. (Table 1)

Respiratory Symptoms

A large proportion of participants (79%) reported experiencing upper and/or lower respiratory symptoms in the past 12 months. Furthermore, among participants, 51% reported upper respiratory symptoms and 69% reported lower respiratory symptoms in the past 12 months. The prevalence of individual respiratory symptoms ranged from 19% to 56%: 56% reported a cough, 24% reported wheezing, 24% reported chest tightness, 30% reported shortness of breath, 19% reported difficulty breathing, 30% reported nasal irritation, 30% reported throat trouble, and 19% reported sinus trouble. A large proportion of participants (70%) reported that respiratory symptoms improved when they were away from the barn for greater than one day. The prevalence of physician or nurse diagnosed asthma was 18%. One participant reported COPD (1.3% prevalence), while the prevalence of allergy to house dust was 16.3% and the prevalence of allergy to animal hair or dander was 2.5%. Skin irritation was reported by 10% of participants and 3.8% reported having been told they that have hay fever by a doctor or nurse.

The number of years living in the U.S. was significantly associated with upper respiratory symptoms and was marginally correlated with lower or any respiratory symptoms. The number of years working on the current horse farms was significantly associated with lower and any respiratory symptoms. The proportion of those participants ≤ 30 years of age who reported lower respiratory symptoms (90%) was greater than the proportion in the 31-40 and >40 age groups. All other age categories, dust exposure, barn

work, and use of dust masks were not significantly associated with self-reported respiratory symptoms. (Table 2)

Pulmonary Function

We administered 80 spirometry tests and used 79 in our analyses. One participant's pulmonary function test was not used due to poor quality and an inability to re-contact the participant for re-testing. The prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function was 27%. Among those with abnormal pulmonary function, one participant showed signs of obstructive lung function, while the remaining twenty showed signs of restrictive lung function. Those workers with less time working on the current horse farm and those who lived in the U.S. for a shorter duration had significant bi-variate associations with abnormal pulmonary function. Gender, age, job type, dust exposure, barn work, and use of dust masks were not significantly associated with pulmonary function, although a general trend existed such that increased exposure to dust and the barn, never wearing a dust mask, and infrequent use of a dust mask were associated with an increased prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function. (Table 2)

Multivariate Associations

A full multivariate model was analyzed for associations between occupational and demographic factors and the odds of abnormal pulmonary function and of upper, lower, or any respiratory symptoms (Table 3). Correlation matrices revealed years in U.S. and years on current farm were significantly correlated (Pearson correlation = 0.226, $p = 0.04$), yet this was below the level of 0.4 correlation for suggested multicollinearity and/or collinearity. Furthermore, collinearity diagnostics revealed no VIF levels that would suggest multicollinearity or collinearity among covariates ($VIF \geq 10$) in any of the

models, as all VIF values for covariates included in the model were <1.6. To further validate the rationale of inclusion, the elimination and inclusion of either years on current farm or years in the U.S. had no significant impact on overall model significance, adjusted odds ratios, or variance estimates. Thus, years on current farm and years in U.S. were included in the models to estimate the association of both occupational factors (years on current farm) and non-occupational factors associated (years in U.S.) with pulmonary function and symptomology.

The multivariate logistic regression model was significant for abnormal pulmonary function (Omnibus Chi-square test of model coefficients = 18.222, 9 df, $p=0.030$, Magelkerke $R^2=0.312$). The model indicates that a shorter duration of current horse farm employment (≤ 5 versus >5 years) increased the adjusted odds of abnormal pulmonary function (OR = 6.3, 95% CI = 1.15-34.35) and a shorter duration of time living in the U.S. (≤ 10 versus >10 years) increased the adjusted odds of abnormal pulmonary function (OR = 5.2, 95% CI = 1.3-20.6). The model also demonstrated that participants ≤ 30 of age years had a decreased odds of abnormal pulmonary function relative to those >40 years of age (OR=0.12, 95% CI = 0.02-0.80) and that those participants aged 31 – 40 years also had a decreased odds of abnormal pulmonary function relative to those participants greater than 40 years of age (OR=0.10, 95% CI =0.02-0.56). All other covariates in the model were non-significant for predicting abnormal pulmonary function.

The multivariate logistic regression model was not significant for self-reported upper respiratory symptoms (Omnibus Chi-square test of model coefficients = 12.02, 9 df, $P=0.212$, Magelkerke $R^2=0.20$). The only significant covariate in the model was years

living in the U.S.: A shorter duration of time living in the U.S. (≤ 10 versus > 10 years) increased the adjusted odds of participants reporting upper respiratory symptoms (OR = 4.0, 95% CI = 1.17-13.3).

The multivariate logistic regression model was significant for self-reported lower respiratory symptoms (Omnibus Chi-square test of model coefficients = 19.93, 9 df, $P=0.018$, Magelkerke $R^2=0.321$). The model indicates that a shorter duration of current horse farm employment (≤ 5 versus > 5 years) increased the adjusted odds of self-reported lower respiratory symptoms (OR = 4.5, 95% CI = 1.2-16.8). All other covariates were not significant in the model for predicting lower respiratory symptoms.

The multivariate logistic regression model was not significant for upper and/or lower self-reported respiratory symptoms (Omnibus Chi-square test of model coefficients = 14.4, 9 df, $P=0.11$, Magelkerke $R^2=0.262$). No covariates were found to be significant in the model for predicting the presence of any upper and/or lower respiratory symptoms.

Discussion

This is the first study to measure pulmonary function among Latino thoroughbred workers. We found that Latino thoroughbred workers experience a prevalence of abnormal and restrictive pulmonary function that is much higher than the general Mexican-American population, suggesting differing exposures may be present for Latino thoroughbred workers than the general Mexican-American population. For example, NHANES III data (2007-2010) showed that Mexican-Americans had an overall 12.5% prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function, with 6.2% showing signs of restrictive lung function and 6.3% showing signs of obstructive lung function (Ford et al. 2013). By

comparison, participants in this study had an overall prevalence of 27% for abnormal lung function with 25% showing signs of restrictive lung function and 2% showing signs of obstructive lung function. These comparisons raise concern about the potential for the thoroughbred farm work environment to adversely impact Latino thoroughbred worker respiratory health.

Decreased pulmonary function, specifically restrictive patterns, related to occupational exposures have been described among grape workers (Gamsky et al., 1992), dairy workers (Eastman et al., 2013), poultry workers (Donham et al., 2000), and swine workers (Donham et al., 1995; Rodriguez et al., 2014), yet this is the first of reported restrictive lung function in Latino thoroughbred workers. We found the majority (20/21 cases) of those participants with abnormal pulmonary function had evidence of restrictive lung function, which is consistent with exposure to respiratory toxins found in organic dust, such as endotoxins and mold. Similar restrictive lung function results have been found among compost workers (Bünger et al., 2007) and pig farmers (Vogelzang et al., 1998) exposed to organic dust and related respiratory toxins. Thus, in conjunction with past agriculture studies with similar respiratory exposures, our results suggest that the thoroughbred farm occupational environment may adversely impact the pulmonary function of Latino thoroughbred workers.

Our results also demonstrate a high prevalence of self-reported respiratory symptoms (79%) in Latino thoroughbred workers, which may be associated with occupational exposure to respiratory toxins. For example, 56% of participants in this study reported a cough, which is relatively consistent with the prevalence of cough (44%) found in this study population previously by Swanberg et al. (2015) and is suggestive of

lower respiratory irritation generated, in part, by occupational exposure. Furthermore, our detected prevalence of cough is much greater than the 5% prevalence of chronic cough found for Mexican-Americans in the NHANES III study (Arif et al. 2003). Although we did not measure chronic cough in this study, in conjunction with a high prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function and respiratory symptoms, these results further suggest Latino thoroughbred workers may be exposed to respiratory toxins in the occupational environment, which may result in respiratory irritation.

Occupational respiratory exposures, including organic dust, are believed to contribute significantly to the prevalence of asthma in adults (Sigsgaard and Schlünssen, 2004). The development of occupational asthma may be a risk for Latino thoroughbred workers due to the potential for chronic exposure to organic dust and associated respiratory toxins encountered on thoroughbred farms. Although we did not diagnose occupational asthma, we found an 18% prevalence of professionally diagnosed asthma in our sample of Latino thoroughbred workers. This prevalence is higher than the 10% prevalence found in Latino poultry workers (Mirabelli et al. 2010), as well as the 12% prevalence reported for Hispanic non-white livestock workers (Schenker et al., 2005), and also the 3% prevalence reported for Mexican-Americans in NHANES III (Arif et al. 2003). These results suggest that the thoroughbred farm occupational environment may be associated with the development of asthma in this worker group.

A large proportion (70%) of participants in our study reported an improvement in respiratory symptoms when they were away from the work environment for more than one day. This improvement of respiratory symptoms when removed from the occupational environment is a clinical diagnostic indicator for the presence of

occupational lung disease (Hughson, 2005). Thus, in conjunction with a high prevalence of self-reported respiratory symptoms and abnormal pulmonary function, these results further point towards the presence of occupational respiratory irritants associated with the thoroughbred work environment.

Our results highlight the importance of evaluating previous respiratory exposures that may contribute to occupational-related pulmonary function. We found that recent arrival in the U.S. increased the odds of abnormal pulmonary function by 5 times. Although not an explicit measure of prior exposure, one plausible explanation for our findings is that those new to the U.S. may have previous respiratory exposures, in their country of origin, which may have adversely impacted their pulmonary function prior to horse farm exposures. For example, exposure to air pollutants have been documented to reduce lung growth in children from southern California and Mexico City, and such pollutants may also accelerate lung aging in adults (Götschi et al., 2007). However, among children, relocation to an area of lower air pollution levels may help to improve pulmonary function (Avol et al., 2001), yet it is not known whether such improved function also occurs for adults when relocated. It is also possible that exposures to respiratory toxins, such as endotoxins and Beta 1-3 Glucans, found in low quality housing in participant's country of origin, may also contribute to lower pulmonary function in those newer to the U.S. than those who have lived in the U.S. for a longer duration.

Counter to our hypotheses, we did not find a significant association between self-reported respiratory symptoms and infrequent use of dust masks, as was previously detected in this worker group by Swanberg et al. (2015). One plausible explanation for

this difference is the fact that few of the workers in our study used dust masks in the barn (29%), and 94% of our sample population used them infrequently (never, seldom, and/or sometimes), making any protective benefit of dust mask usage difficult to detect in our relatively small sample size and subsequent limited statistical power. In addition, despite a similarly low frequency of dust mask utilization to our study, Swanberg et al. (2015) collected data during the winter months, whereas our study collected data during warmer months. Relative to the winter, in the summer barn ventilation may be higher and workers may be exposed to lower levels of dust and respiratory toxins, thus the benefit of dust mask utilization may be less detectable in our study population than that of Swanberg et al. (2015).

Although we hypothesized that increased exposure to dust would be associated with decreased respiratory health among Latino thoroughbred workers, we did not detect such a relationship. In contrast to our hypotheses, we found that those new to work on the current horse farm experienced 6 times the odds of abnormal pulmonary function compared to those workers who had worked on the current horse farm for a longer duration. Several potential non-mutually exclusive explanations for these findings are plausible. First, these results may suggest that workers newer to thoroughbred work may perform jobs that are more risky for respiratory health than jobs of more senior employees. Also, as described above, newer thoroughbred workers who are new to the U.S. may potentially have pre-existing (prior to employment) abnormal pulmonary function. Another interpretation is that workers may develop a tolerance to respiratory toxins over a longer duration of employment and therefore report fewer symptoms and exhibit higher levels of pulmonary function than workers that are less tolerant with a

shorter duration of employment. Finally, these results may also indicate a healthy worker survivor population, such that those workers who experience adverse symptoms early in their thoroughbred worker career may leave the workforce, while those who are resistant to adverse effects may remain in the occupation (Arrighi and Picciotto 1994). Future longitudinal cohort studies with this worker population may help to elucidate why a shorter duration of employment may be associated with decreased respiratory health.

Study Limitations

Our results indicate the need for further studies to help to identify occupational factors that may influence the pulmonary function and respiratory health of this worker group, beginning with more precise estimates of worker dust exposure and more accurate job type and job task classifications. One of our major limitations is that we did not measure dust exposure on horse farms via dust sampling. We also did not ascertain length of horse farm employment overall, which may be an important indicator of career occupational exposure and associated respiratory health. Our measure of horse farm exposure (i.e. years on current farm) does not distinguish between a long-term worker at various farms and a short term thoroughbred worker, making it difficult to determine total career occupational exposure. We also did not measure the frequency of respiratory symptoms, which, if chronic, may help to indicate a consistent response to the occupational environment. Finally, due to the potential for non-random sampling errors as a function of our convenience sampling methodology, we may have sampled an unhealthy sub-group of this worker population and therefore overestimated the general level of abnormal pulmonary function. However, this seems unlikely as the prevalence of

self-reported respiratory symptoms, demographics, and level of dust exposure closely matches that of Swanberg et al. (2015).

Conclusions

Latino thoroughbred workers may be at risk for adverse respiratory conditions due to chronic exposure to dusty barn environments, limited use of dust masks, and a high prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function and respiratory symptoms. Our results also indicate that recent arrival in the U.S. was associated with decreased pulmonary function, which may be exacerbated by respiratory exposures encountered on the horse farm. Although we were unable to detect specific occupation factors associated with decreased pulmonary function in this worker group, in conjunction with a high prevalence of respiratory symptomology relative to a Mexican-American reference population, it is likely that the occupational environment contributes to the high prevalence of abnormal pulmonary function noted in this worker group. As a result, promoting safety education regarding occupational respiratory risks and the use of dust masks may help to improve the respiratory health of this vulnerable worker group. Further investigation is necessary to identify and quantify respiratory exposures on the thoroughbred farm, to identify specific job tasks that may pose respiratory risks, and to assess the potential for a causal relationship between the thoroughbred farm work environment and associated respiratory conditions.

References

- American Horse Council. 2005. The economic impact of the horse industry on the United States national report.
- Arif AA, Delclos GL, Lee ES, Tortolero SR, Whitehead LW. 2003. Prevalence and risk factors of asthma and wheezing among US adults: an analysis of the NHANES III data, *European Respiratory Journal*. 21:827–833
- Arrighi HM, Hertz-Picciotto I. 1994. The evolving concept of the healthy worker survivor effect. *Epidemiology*. 5:189–96.
- Avol EL, Gauderman WJ, Tan SM, London SJ, Peters JM. 2001. Respiratory effects of relocating to areas of differing air pollution levels. *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*. 164:2067–2072.
- Bünger J, Schappler-Scheele B, Hilgers R, Hallier E. 2007. A 5-year follow-up study on respiratory disorders and lung function in workers exposed to organic dust from composting plants. *International archives of occupational and environmental health*. 80:306-312.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2006. Fatal Occupational Injuries, Employment, and Rates of Fatal Occupational Injuries by Selected Worker Characteristics, Occupations, and Industries, 2006. Available online: http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/cfoi/cfoi_rates_2006.pdf (accessed on 17 August 2013).
- Cho KJ, Jones S, Jones G, McKay G, Grinshpun SA, Dwivedi A, Shukla R, Umesh Singh U, Reponen T. 2010. Effect of particle size on respiratory protection provided by two types of N95 respirators used in agricultural settings. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene*. 7:622-627.
- Curtis L, Raymond S, Clark A. 1996. Dust and ammonia in horse stalls with different ventilation rates and bedding. *Aerobiologia*. 12:239-247.
- Donham KJ, Reynolds SJ, Whitten P, Merchant JA, Burmeister L, Pependorf WJ. 1995. Respiratory dysfunction in swine production facility workers: dose response relationships of environmental exposures and pulmonary function. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*. 27:405–418.
- Donham KJ, Cumro D, Reynolds SJ, Merchant JA. 2000. Dose-response relationships between occupational aerosol exposures and cross-shift declines of lung function in poultry workers: recommendations for exposure limits. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 42:260–269.

- Douphrate DI, Rosecrance JC, Stallones L, Reynolds SJ, Gilkey DP. 2009. Livestock-handling injuries in agriculture: An analysis of Colorado workers' compensation data. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*. 52:391–407.
- Eastman C, Schenker MB, Mitchell DC, Tancredi DJ, Bennett DH, Mitloehner FM. 2013. Acute pulmonary function change associated with work on large dairies in California. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 5:74–79.
- Elfman L, Riihimaki M, Pringle J, Walinder R. 2009. Influence of horse stable environment on human airways. *Journal of Occupational Medicine and Toxicology*. 4:10-16.
- Ford ES, Mannino DM, Wheaton AG, Giles WH, Presley-Cantrell L, Croft JB. 2013. Trends in the prevalence of obstructive and restrictive lung function among adults in the united states. *Chest*. 143(5):1395-1406.
- Gallagher LM, Crane J, Fitzharris P, Bates MN. 2007. Occupational respiratory health of New Zealand horse trainers. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*. 80:335–341.
- Gamsky TE, McCurdy SA, Samuels SJ, Schenker MB. 1992. Reduced FVC among California grape workers. *American Review of Respiratory Disease*. 145:257–262.
- Hankinson JL, Odencrantz JR, Fedan KB. 1999. Spirometric reference values from a sample of the general U.S. population. *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*. 159:179-87.
- Hughson WG. 2005. Approaches to occupation-environmental lung disease. In Richard A. Bordow, Andrew L. Ries, Timothy A. Morris (Eds.), *Manual of Clinical Problems in Pulmonary Medicine* (pp.451-457). Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Iba K, Wada T, Kawaguchi S, Fujisaki T, Yamashita T, Ishii S. 2001. Horse-related injuries in a thoroughbred stabling area in Japan. *Archives of Orthopaedic and Trauma Surgery*. 121:501–504.
- Iversen M, Dahl R. 2000. Pig farming causes accelerated decline in FEV1, a seven-year follow up of Danish farmers. *European Respiratory Journal*. 16:404-408.
- Kimbell-Dunn M, Bradshaw L, Slater T, Erkinjuntti-Pekkanen R, Fishwick D, Pearce N. 1999. Asthma and allergy in New Zealand farmers. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*. 35:51–57.
- Langley R., Morris T. 2009. That horse bit me: Zoonotic infections of equines to consider after exposure through the bite of the oral/nasal secretions. *Journal of Agromedicine*. 14:370–381.

- Löfqvist L, Pinzke S, Stål M, Lundqvist P. 2009. Riding instructors, their musculoskeletal health and working conditions. *Journal of Agriculture Safety and Health*. 15:225–240.
- Mackiewicz B, Prazmo Z, Milanowski J, Dutkiewicz J, Fafrowicz B. 1996. Exposure to organic dust and microorganisms as a factor affecting respiratory function of workers of purebred horse farms. *Pneumonologia i Alergologia Polska*. 64:19-24.
- Mazan MR, Hoffman AM. 2006. How to do air quality testing in the equine barn. *AEP proceedings*. 52:81-86.
- Mazan MR, Svatek J, Maranda L, Christiani D, Ghio A, Nadeau J. 2009. Questionnaire assessment of airway disease symptoms in equine barn personnel. *Occupational Medicine*. 59:220–225.
- Melbostad E, Eduard W, Magnus P. 1997. Chronic bronchitis in farmers. *Scandinavian Journal of Work and Environmental Health*. 23:271–280.
- Meyers JM, Chapman L. 2001. Ergonomics and musculoskeletal injuries in agriculture: recognizing and preventing the industry’s most widespread health and safety problem. <http://nasdonline.org/document/1839/d001771/ergonomics-and-musculoskeletal-injuries-in-agriculture.html>.
- Mitchell DC, Armitage TL, Schenker MB, Bennett DH, Tancredi DJ, Langer CE, Reynolds SJ, Dooley G, Mehaffy J, Mitloehner FM. 2015. Particulate matter, endotoxin, and worker respiratory health on large Californian dairies. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 57:79-87.
- NORA AgFF Sector Council. 2008. National agriculture, forestry, and fishing agenda. Washington, DC: NIOSH. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/comment/agendas/AgForFish/pdfs/AgForFishDec2008.pdf>
- O’Shaughnessy PT, Donham KJ, Peters TM, Taylor C, Altmaier R, Kelly KM. 2010. A task-specific assessment of Swine worker exposure to airborne dust. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene*. 7:7–13.
- Petty TL. 2000. Scope of the copd problem in north America: early studies of prevalence and nhanes iii data: basis for early identification and intervention *Chest*. 117(5_suppl_2):326S-331S.
- Rodriquez EK, Stoecklin-Marois MT, Bennett DH, Tancredi DJ, Schenker MB. 2014. Agricultural work exposures and pulmonary function among hired farm workers in California (The MICASA Study). *Journal of Agromedicine*. 19:427-436.

- Samadi S, Wouters IM, Houben R, Jamshidifard A, Eerdenburg F, Heederik DJJ. 2009. Exposure to inhalable dust, endotoxins, beta(1-3)-glucans, and airborne microorganisms in horse stables. *Annals of Occupational Hygiene*. 53:595–603.
- Schenker MB. 2012. Inorganic Agricultural Dust Exposure Causes Pneumoconiosis among Farmworkers. *Proceedings of the American Thoracic Society*. 7:107-110.
- Sigsgaard T, Schlunssen V. 2004. Occupational asthma diagnosis in workers exposed to organic dust. *Annals of Agriculture and Environmental Medicine*. 11:1-7.
- Swanberg JE, Clouser JM, Westneat S. 2012. Work organization and occupational health among Latino farmworkers: Perspectives from Latinos employed on crop and horse breeding farms. *Journal of Industrial Medicine*. 55:714-728.
- Swanberg JE, Clouser JM, Westneat S, Marsh K, Reed D. 2013. Occupational injuries on thoroughbred horse farms: A description of Latino and non-Latino workers' experiences. *International Journal on Environmental Research and Public Health*. 10:6500-6516.
- Swanberg JE, Clouser JM, Maninno DM, Gan W, Flunker JC. In Press. Individual and Occupational Characteristics Associated with Respiratory Symptoms among Latino Horse Farm Workers. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*.
- Tutluoglu B, Atis S, Anakkaya AN, Altug E, Tosun GA, Yaman M. 2002. Sensitization to horse hair, symptoms and lung function in grooms. *Clinical and Experimental Allergy*. 32:1170–1173.
- Vogelzang PFJ, van der Gulden JWJ, Folgering H, Kolk JJ, Heederik D, Preller L, Tielen MJ, van Schayck CP. 1998. Endotoxin exposure as a major determinant of lung function decline in pig farmers. *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*. 157:15-18.
- Wålinder R, Riihimäki M, Bohlin S, Hogstedt C, Nordquist T, Raine A, Pringle J, Elfman L. 2011. Installation of mechanical ventilation in a horse stable: effects on air quality and human and equine airways. *Environmental Health and Preventive Medicine*. 16:264–272.

Biographical Sketch

Full Name:

John C. Flunker

Previously Earned Academic Degrees:

BS, MS: Biology – University of Missouri – St. Louis

Relevant Professional Employment:

Thoroughbred Worker Health and Safety Study - University of KY - Research Assistant

Teaching Assistant – University of KY - Biology Department

Beaver Dam Offspring Study - University of WI-Madison – Health Examiner

Biology Adjunct Faculty – St. Louis Community College – St. Louis, MO

Long Term Contact Information:

Phone: 314-956-2640

Email: Johnflunker@gmail.com

Tables

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Latino Thoroughbred Workers and Risk Factors for Occupational Exposure

Variable	Mean/ %	N	Min	Max	Std. Dev.
<i>Demographic/Non-Occupational Factors</i>					
Age	37.7	80	18.0	65.0	10.9
Race (White)	98.8	80			
Gender (Male)	73.8	80			
Nationality					
Mexican	76.3	80			
Mexican-American	16.3	80			
Guatemalan	5.0	80			
Honduran	2.5	80			
Years living in the U.S.	16.7	80	1.25	39.0	9.8
Current Smoker (yes)	21.3	80			
Former smoker (yes)	17.5	80			
Never smoker (yes)	61.3	80			
High educational attainment (\geq high school)	42.5	80			
Low educational attainment ($<$ high school)	57.5	80			
<i>Job Related Risk Factors</i>					
Hours per week breathing dust or dirt	22.4	80	2.0	52.0	13.4
Hours per week working in the barn	21.0	77	0	60.0	14.0
Years working at current farm	5.4	80	1.0	30.0	4.50
Work in barn (yes)	96.3	77			
Wear dust mask in barn (yes)	28.6	77			
Never/Seldom/Sometimes use dust mask	93.5	77			
Often/Always use dust mask	6.5	77			

Table 2. Bivariate Associations between Demographic, Occupational Factors, and Respiratory Conditions

	Overall		Upper Respiratory Symptoms (Presence)		Lower Respiratory Symptoms (Presence)			All Respiratory Symptoms (Presence)			Abnormal Pulmonary Function (Presence)						
	%	N	χ^2	Sig.	%	N	χ^2	Sig.	%	N	χ^2	Sig.	%	N	χ^2	Sig.	%
Gender		80	1.294	0.189		80	0.058	0.507		80	0.825	0.282		80	0.058	0.510	
Male	74	59			47.5	59			69.5	59			76.3	58			25.9
Female	26	21			61.9	21			66.7	21			85.7	21			26.6
Age		80	4.438	0.109		80	6.541	0.038		80	3.617	0.164		79	4.285	0.117	
≤30	25	20			70	20			90	20			90	19			26.3
31-40	40	32			50	32			56	32			68.8	22			15.6
>40	35	28			39.3	28			67	28			82.1	28			39.3
Smoking		80	5.099	0.078		80	3.466	0.177		80	1.201	0.548		78	1.775	0.412	
Current	21	16			62.5	16			87.5	16			87.5	15			13.3
Former	17	18			27.8	18			61.1	18			72.2	18			33.3
Never	61	45			55.6	45			64.4	45			77.8	45			26.7
Education		80	2.617	0.082		80	0.629	0.293		80	3.179	0.064		79	0.159	0.447	
<High School	58	46			43.5	46			65.2	46			71.7	46			28.3
≥High School	42	34			61.8	34			73.5	34			88.2	33			24.2
Years in U.S.			4.334	0.032			2.886	0.073			3.040	0.069			4.746	0.031	
≤10	29	23			69.6	23			82.6				91.3	23			43.5
>10	71	57			43.9	57			63.2				73.7	56			19.6
Years at current farm			0.001	0.58			6.06	0.014			3.85	0.046			4.314	0.038	
≤5	56	45			51.1	45			80	45			86.7	45			35.6
>5	44	35			51.4	35			54.3	35			68.6	34			14.7
Barn Work (hours/week)			2.201	0.105			0.000	0.591			2.678	0.088			0.093	0.481	
≤20	60	48			57.8	48			68.9	48			84.4	47			25.0
>20	40	32			40.6	32			68.8	32			68.8	32			28.1
Dust Exposure (hours/week)			0.001	0.578			0.208	0.417			0.741	0.278			0.127	0.458	
≤20	56	45			51.1	45			66.7	45			82.2	44			25
>20	44	35			51.4	35			71.4	35			74.3	35			28.6
Wear Dust Mask in Barn			0.005	0.57			1.02	0.230			1.27	0.20			0.48	0.33	
Yes	29	22			50	22			65.5	22			74.5	22			24.1
No	71	55			50.9	55			77.3	55			86.4	54			31.8
Dust Mask Use			1.843	0.187			2.421	0.145			1.515	0.276			0.110	0.604	
Infrequent	93.5	72			48.6	72			66.7	72			76.4	71			26.8
Frequent	6.5	5			80	5			100	5			100	5			20

Table 3. Multivariate Logistic Regression Models: Demographic, Occupational, and Non-Occupational Factors

		Abnormal Pulmonary Function			Upper Respiratory (presence)			Lower Respiratory (presence)			Any Respiratory (presence)		
		95% C.I.			95% C.I.			95% C.I.			95% C.I.		
		OR (adj.)	Lower	Upper	OR (adj.)	Lower	Upper	OR (adj.)	Lower	Upper	OR (adj.)	Lower	Upper
Gender	Male	1			1			1			1		
	Female	2.76	0.62	12.32	1.83	0.54	6.21	1.12	0.26	4.79	2.90	0.57	14.78
Age	>40 years	1			1			1			1		
	≤30 years	0.12	0.02	0.81	3.25	0.71	14.86	1.19	0.16	8.47	0.76	0.09	5.96
	31 – 40 years	0.10	0.02	0.56	1.66	0.48	5.71	0.26	0.06	1.02	0.27	0.06	1.22
Smoke status	Never	1			1			1			1		
	Current	1.64	0.27	10.05	1.49	0.38	5.86	6.60	0.95	45.77	4.89	0.70	33.86
	Former	2.18	0.49	9.67	0.62	0.15	2.46	0.51	0.12	2.09	0.84	0.18	4.00
Years in U.S.	>10	1			1			1			1		
	≤10	5.16	1.29	20.64	3.95	1.17	13.33	2.17	0.52	8.95	3.91	0.69	21.94
Years on current farm	>5	1			1			1			1		
	≤5	6.29	1.15	34.34	0.71	0.23	2.15	4.45	1.18	16.75	2.98	0.76	11.64
Dust exposure	≤20 hrs/wk	1			1			1			1		
	>20 hrs/wk	1.63	0.46	5.74	0.96	0.35	2.63	1.63	0.50	5.27	0.65	0.19	2.27
Wear dust mask in barn	Yes	1			1			1			1		
	No	1.59	0.40	6.30	1.28	0.40	4.04	1.04	0.26	4.08	0.79	0.17	3.59

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the mentorship, friendship, and opportunities my committee members have facilitated throughout the MPH degree. Their critique of this manuscript is also greatly appreciated. In addition, I would especially like to thank Dr. Jennifer Swanberg for generously allowing me to participate in all facets of this project and for the use of the resulting data as my capstone project. I emphatically thank Jessica Clouser Miller for her insightful and detailed viewpoints, as well as her meticulous organization and limitless capacity to provide help with all aspects of Latino thoroughbred worker research. The remainder of the Latino thoroughbred worker research team, particularly Susan Westneat, I thank for their support and help. I am thankful to Dr. Wenqi Gan for offering very helpful discussions regarding data interpretation and logistic regression. I also thank the CDC-NIOSH-CARERC staff and research team, namely Dr. Wayne Sanderson and Christin Kane, for all of their assistance with funding and travel throughout the MPH degree. Finally, I thank my fellow MPH students for their support, friendship, and great sense of humor throughout the degree.