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# •CULTIVATION•

*The Newsletter for The Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education*

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## *From the Director...*

### **Fostering Strategic Partnerships to Reach Latino Shrimp Fishermen on the Gulf Coast**

When embarking on any community based research initiative, it is imperative to make connections with local stakeholders in order to secure support and ensure optimum participation. Recently, one of the SW Ag Center's research projects, Innovative Approaches to Worker Health Protection Among Shrimp Fishermen of the Gulf Coast, expanded its target population to include a group of Latino shrimp fishermen in the Port Isabel-Brownsville area. With the help of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and local marine safety trainer, Israel Linarte, about 40 commercial shrimp fishermen provided feedback through a written survey about their experience in the fishing industry, their comfort using various types of safety equipment, and their preference for different styles of training. [See page three for photos from the data collection experience.](#)

On April 23rd, two training sessions will be held at the University of Texas-Brownsville on South Padre Island to provide fishing safety education to Latino shrimp fishermen according to the preferences they reported on the survey. Strategic partners have been vital to the successful coordination and implementation of this training event. Juan Garza and Gilbert Gallardo with support from Robert Perkins in the USCG District 8 office and Mr. Linarte will lend expertise to the training by delivering classroom presentations and hands-on demonstrations in four areas: Communication/Navigation, Fire, Flooding, and First Aid. All topics will be addressed in Spanish. Coastal Area Health Education Center also aided in coordination efforts, safety equipment procurement and logistics. Ann Carruth, DNS from Southeastern Louisiana University will contribute her substantial experience in group facilitation to guide evaluation discussions following each training session.

Truly, this program would not be possible without the support and dedication of the project's loyal partners. As Margaret Mead said, *"Never doubt that a small group of concerned citizens can change the world, indeed it's the only thing that ever has."*



## **Meet the Advisory Board**

**Featured Member: Francisco Cerda**

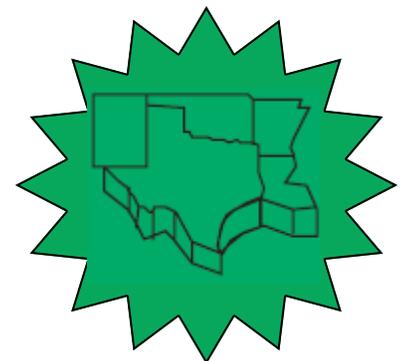
Francisco Cerda was appointed Texas State Monitor Advocate in Austin, Texas in January 1998. As the State Monitor Advocate for Texas, Mr. Cerda is responsible for overseeing and ensuring that migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW) receive the same services that are provided to non-MSFWs throughout the state of Texas.

Mr. Cerda serves as Civil Rights Compliance Investigator on complaints filed by MSFWs through the Employment Service system, observes the working and living conditions and coordinates with state and federal enforcement agencies as well as legal entities and farmworker advocacy groups on many labor statutes that affect MSFWs. Mr. Cerda has been instrumental in working with many agencies and farmworker organizations. In addition, he has served on numerous organizational committees throughout his career.

Francisco has been employed for almost 24 years with the Texas Workforce Commission. Prior to joining the Texas Workforce Commission, Mr. Cerda worked several seasons in the watermelon fields. Later he worked on his family ranch and other ranches in the South Texas area while he attended high school, Southwest Texas State University and Texas A&I University.

Mr. Cerda introduced the SW Ag Center to many farmworker organizations and individual advocates in the last year. We are excited about future opportunities to engage MSFWs in safety and health education and/or intervention projects.

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*Spring 2010*

## Pesticide Safety Education Workshop in Laredo

On April 1st, Miguel Gaona (Program Coordinator for Lake Country Area Health Education Center) and Amanda Wickman (Outreach Education Coordinator for the SW Ag Center) traveled to Laredo, Texas to deliver the 4 hour Pesticide Safety Education Workshop.

This program continues to grow and reach new audiences through collaboration with various partners across the region. The April workshop was sponsored by the Border Environment Cooperation Commission. The Laredo Health Department organized and hosted the event which included afternoon sessions devoted to Household Hazardous Materials and Influences of Nutrition on the Risk of Environmental Hazards.

Audience members represented the Texas Department of State Health Services, sanitarians, the Laredo Health Department and promotores.

Amanda shared basic pesticide safety information with the participants. Main topics included:

- Definition of a pesticide,
- Immediate and chronic effects of pesticide exposure,
- How pesticides enter the body,
- How to avoid direct contact,
- Personal protective equipment,
- Residues,
- What to do if someone is exposed,

## Have you Heard of AgrAbility?

AgrAbility is funded by The Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, an agency within the United States Department of Agriculture. It includes a national project and numerous state level projects that serve farmers and ranchers with disabilities. Each AgrAbility project has the same three goals:

- Provide education to build service capacity with health, farm and government service providers on accommodating disabilities and preventing secondary injuries.
- Expand program capacity through networking activities of mutually sharing information and resources with non AgrAbility individuals and organizations.
- Provide farmers with disabilities consultative services and technical assistance that increases the likelihood the farmer can continue to farm successfully; such as,

- Protecting your home, and
- Pesticides and children.



Workshop participants work together to map pesticide transfer.

Miguel described the pesticide safety education resources that are currently available. Examples include:

- El Terror Invisible,
- Nuestra Piel,
- Pesticidas: No los Traiga a la Casa,
- Steps to Protect Yourself from Pesticides,
- Aunque Cerca Sano Comic Book, and
- Protecting Families and Farmworkers from Pesticides: A Training Curriculum.

For a complete list of resources used in the workshop, contact Amanda by phone at 903-877-5998 or by email to [amanda.wickman@uthct.edu](mailto:amanda.wickman@uthct.edu).

modifying or adapting the agricultural operation, buildings, equipment, and/or tools.

The SW Ag Center provided feasibility study funds to document the prevalence of farmers/ranchers with disabilities in Oklahoma which was critical to the successful OK AgrAbility application. In addition, Matt Nonnenmann, Ph.D., the SW Ag Center's Deputy Director, currently serves on the advisory committee for the Texas AgrAbility project. Louisiana is identified as a AgrAbility Affiliate. New Mexico and Arkansas currently do not have AgrAbility projects.

For more information, visit the National AgrAbility website at <http://www.agrabilityproject.org/index.cfm>.

# Latino Shrimp Fishermen in Port Isabel & Brownsville



1: Fishermen complete surveys at a church in Port Isabel. 2 &3: Fishermen complete surveys at a dockside shop in Port Isabel. 4: Fishermen complete surveys at Israel Linarte's office in Brownsville. 5: Fishermen model their project T shirts in Port Isabel. 6: Fishermen in front of their vessels in Port Isabel. 7: Man mends a fishing net in Brownsville. 8: Fishing vessels in Brownsville.