



Improving the health status of Maine's seasonal workers and their families by providing culturally appropriate care and services.

January 8, 2025

Alexander R. Peacock
Maine Board of Pesticides Control
28 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

Dear Mr. Peacock,

I am contacting you on behalf of the Maine Mobile Health Program (MMHP) with a request for support from the Maine Board of Pesticides Control for a continued effort to deliver EPA Worker Protection Standard (WPS) education to Maine's farmworkers during the 2025 harvest season.

Throughout the 2024 season, the Maine Mobile Health Program worked to provide the Worker Protection Standard (PST) training to farmworkers across the state. The program trained a currently employed community health worker and recruited a new trainer who was bilingual with the capacity to speak in Spanish and English. Highlights from the season include collaboration with another MMHP staff member to offer training in Haitian Creole and active engagement between our trainers and workers on the topic. Similar to previous seasons, we experienced several difficulties that limited the number of workers we could support. One of our long-standing partner farms sold their operations this past year so we were not able to train their workers. We hope to reconnect with that crew in 2025. Another farm continues to hire fewer blueberry rakers each season as they increase their use of mechanized harvesting. The challenging labor market also made it difficult for us to hire a second trainer early in the season. Despite the challenges, our PST trainers were able to offer training on the WPS to 65 farmworkers across Maine in addition to curricula from the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP) on occupational safety.

For 2025, we plan to implement several new strategies to increase our impact and ability to train more farmworkers. While recruiting a new summer trainer, we will train several current staff to offset concerns about the challenging labor market. MMHP is also increasingly interested in promoting heat safety and looking for ways to pair that with pesticide safety trainings and other occupational safety trainings. We received a grant from Farmworker Justice and OSHA to offer heat stress trainings and intend to implement an outreach plan promoting trainings on both topics.



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The Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs awarded \$480 to MMHP in support of on-going WPS training for 120 workers in 2025. MMHP plans to use these funds to support the staff time for multilingual WPS and occupational health trainings to farmworkers across the state. AFOP may provide additional funding if we exceed our initial training goals. We request from the Maine Board of Pesticides Control a contribution of \$6,432 which we would leverage with the funds from AFOP. The funding from the Board of Pesticides Control will be used to support the staff positions who provides WPS trainings; including both the hourly wage and the travel and lodging required to reach farmworkers, growers and partners, and the overhead of managing the grant and project. We request that the funding be made directly to MMHP.

We thank the Board for its past support and for considering this current proposal. To connect with us about this request or our activities, please contact me at hmillers@mainemobile.org or 207-441-1633.

All the best,

Hannah A Miller

Hannah Miller
Director of Outreach
Maine Mobile Health Program