



Migrant Health Taskforce Evaluation of 2022 Initiatives



Background & 2022 Evaluation Report Overview

Background

The Ottawa County Department of Public Health (OCDPH) received a 3-year grant from the Office of Minority Health to survey the migrant farmworker community in Ottawa County and get a better understanding of health inequalities and disparities. After receiving this funding, the OCDPH worked with agencies and organizations in the county to form a Migrant Health Taskforce to help guide the process.

During the first year of the grant, the taskforce reviewed existing data about the migrant farmworker population and contracted with Dr. Martin Hill, PhD, of VIP Research and Evaluation, to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. Needs assessment data was collected from 319 migrant farmworkers in 18 different health-related areas. The full report can be viewed [here](#). The taskforce then embarked on a strategic planning process with facilitation assistance from the Ottawa County Department of Strategic Impact (DSI). The strategic planning process involved a review of the needs assessment data, prioritizing areas to focus efforts, and creating an action plan of strategies to begin working on during the second and third years of the grant. The complete strategic plan is available [here](#).



2022 Evaluation Report

During 2022, the Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH collaborated on several initiatives to improve the health of Ottawa County's migrant farmworkers by bridging health gaps, improving social determinants of health, and addressing health disparities. This report is organized by initiative, with each section including an overview of the initiative, how the initiative ties to the strategic plan, evaluation data and feedback about the initiative from the Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH, and suggestions for 2023.

The Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH encountered some challenges during the summer that impacted all the initiatives and this evaluation. The first challenge is that many of the agencies that partnered on the initiatives needed to complete scheduling well in advance of the summer when the initiatives took place. This made it difficult to pivot when unanticipated weather events and crop availability issues surfaced. The second challenge is the long work hours of migrant farmworkers. After a long day of working, the migrant farmworkers are ready to return to their homes and spend time with their children and family members which impacted the ability to collect feedback directly from them to evaluate the initiatives. OCDPH and DSI are continuing to explore how to increase survey engagement for subsequent evaluation efforts.

Welcome Baskets & Resource Guides

Overview of Initiative

The Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH partnered with Ottawa Food and Community Action House to create and distribute welcome baskets for migrant farmworkers and to migrant summer school families at West Ottawa Public Schools and Grand Haven Area Public Schools (basket pictured to the right). The baskets included an Ottawa County Community Resource Guide with information relevant to migrant farmworkers in both English and Spanish, a food resource guide, and household staples like cooking supplies, laundry detergent, beans, rice, oil, soap, and more. The group worked with five area growers to place the baskets in housing units where migrant farmworkers resided during the summer months. Extra resource guides were also printed and available in other locations throughout the county.

360
baskets
distributed

1,500
resource guides
distributed

How does this initiative tie to the strategic plan?



Provide services that account for migrant farmworkers' **lack of time, work schedule, and conflicting hours with service providers**



Coordinate **events to engage** and **connect migrant farmworkers** with the community



Work on solutions that address the **cost of healthcare services** and **fruit/vegetable access**



Improve **centralization** of **reference materials** for migrant farmworkers



Welcome Baskets & Resource Guides

2022 Evaluation

The five area growers who participated in this initiative were asked to provide feedback about the helpfulness of the baskets and the resource guides. In addition, DHHS staff shared feedback they received from migrant farmworkers.

100% of growers rated the Household Supplies as a **4 or 5 (out of 5)** for usefulness to the migrant farmworkers.

100% of growers rated the Welcome Baskets as a **4 or 5 (out of 5)** for being beneficial to the migrant farmworkers.

50% of growers rated the Resource Guides as a **4 or 5 (out of 5)** for helpfulness to the migrant farmworkers. The remaining 50% rated them as a 3 out of 5, meaning somewhat helpful.

100% of growers said they would be interested in Welcome Baskets again next year.

“ I wanted to tell you thank you for those baskets. My employees went nuts for them and loved them. Only one problem, every employee wanted their own!

They couldn't believe it was all free....they kept saying this is all for us! They said thanks over and over!

The migrant farmworkers have never felt so welcome at a place than they did here in Ottawa County.

Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH Feedback

Feedback from the Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH staff revealed that the welcome baskets may have been too large, making it difficult to notice the resource guides. In addition, the time commitment required to collect and assemble the welcome baskets felt inefficient.

It's also important to note that a survey was developed to collect data about the welcome baskets directly from the migrant farmworkers who received the baskets. However, due to the long work hours of migrant farmworkers, it was difficult to obtain feedback directly from them.

Suggestions for 2023

- Consider providing a smaller basket to ensure the resource guides are easy to locate.
- Consider shipping the welcome basket contents directly to the grower locations—cutting down on the time and expense of assembling the baskets.
- Consider purchasing more culturally relevant foods such as beans, rice, and cooking oil.

Together in Grand Haven

Overview of Initiative

The Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH contracted with Momentum Center to provide free transportation for migrant farmworkers on 10 Sundays this summer. Each Sunday, the bus would arrive at First Pick Farms, the farm that was targeted for participation this year, and provide migrant farmworkers the opportunity to attend a church service at St. John's Episcopal Church, do laundry at Watermark Church facilities or another coin laundry in the area, receive a free meal at St. John's, and get transportation to Walmart for grocery shopping before going back to the camp. On August 28, the migrant farmworkers also had the opportunity to attend a picnic at Kirk Park, with many seeing Lake Michigan for the first time. Spanish speaking volunteers joined in the effort each Sunday to ensure migrant farmworkers felt connected to the community and resources.

89

total
passengers

10

passengers
on average

How does this initiative tie to the strategic plan?



Improve **transportation** options



Coordinate **events to engage** and **connect migrant farmworkers** with the community



Provide services that account for migrant farmworkers' **lack of time**, **work schedule**, and **conflicting hours with service providers**

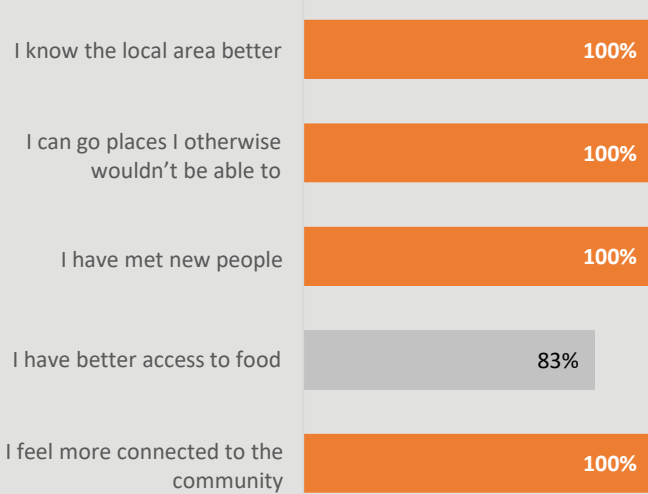


Together in Grand Haven

2022 Evaluation

The volunteers for this program did their best to obtain feedback from the migrant farmworkers who participated. The feedback that was obtained from 6 migrant farmworkers is provided below.

100% of surveyed participants said that they felt **more connected to the community, knew the area better, met new people, and had access to new places thanks to the program .**



Comments from Participants:

“ I am very thankful for the program because it honestly helped us so much. Thank you so much. Blessings.

We are very grateful you made us feel like we are at home with family.

“ I was very satisfied with the experience and the help. It would be a perfect activity to do other shopping, not just food. Thank you so much for your attention.

I am very happy with all the support you gave us. Thank you so much. I hope to be here next year.

Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH Feedback

Feedback from the Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH staff revealed that the migrant farmworkers who participated in the program were interested in going to every location, which made the logistics difficult and inefficient—especially if the group was larger than the 15-passenger maximum of the bus. When this occurred, the bus had to make two trips to ensure all migrant farmworkers could participate. Staff also shared that this was an expensive initiative to operate.

Like the other initiatives, it was difficult to obtain feedback directly from the migrant farmworkers to learn about the initiative.

Suggestions for 2023

- Consider partnering with Harbor Transit to provide larger busses and the ability to provide the service to more farms. A partnership with Harbor Transit could also result in educational opportunities where migrant farmworkers can learn how to use this service on their own.
- Consider additional transportation opportunities to clothing stores, Goodwill stores, and tourist locations.
- Consider expanding the initiative to serve more migrant farmworker camps.

Veggie Van & TEFAP Distribution

Overview of Initiative

The Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH partnered with several community agencies and farms as part of this initiative to deliver fresh produce to migrant farmworkers at four farm locations throughout the County. In addition to fresh produce, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) boxes were also distributed at the farm locations. The community agency partners include Community Action Agency, Community Action House, Jehovah Jireh, Ottawa Food, Groundswell Community Farm, the YMCA and Spectrum Health.

2,240

pounds of fresh
produce distributed

400

TEFAP boxes
distributed

How does this initiative tie to the strategic plan?



Work on solutions that address the **cost of healthcare services** and **fruit/vegetable access**



Provide services that account for migrant farmworkers' **lack of time**, **work schedule**, and **conflicting hours with service providers**



Other strategies around **food**

FREE FOOD

No ID or registration required

<p>Woodland Enterprises 10821 Pierce St. Zeeland Thursday, July 14 Monday, July 25 7:30 - 8:00 PM</p>	<p>Bowerman Blueberries 15793 James Street Holland Monday, August 1 Monday, August 22 7:30 - 8:00 PM</p>
<p>Ag Installers 12100 Clearview Ln Holland Tuesday, September 6 Thursday, September 15 7:30 - 8:00 PM</p>	<p>Dekker Farms 12331 Rich St Grand Haven Tuesday, September 6 Thursday, September 15 7:30 - 8:00 PM</p>

Special thanks to our community partners: Community Action Agency, Community Action House, Jehovah Jireh, Migrant Health Task Force, Ottawa Food, Ottawa County Department of Public Health, and Spectrum Health.

Veggie Van & TEFAP Distribution

2022 Evaluation

As the Veggie Van and TEFAP distribution was a free service that explicitly did not require any form of identification to receive the produce, no data was collected directly from the migrant farmworkers who used the service. Some feedback was obtained from other grower employees.

“ Thank you for your generosity in reaching out and blessing so many! After talking with some of the people, I think if we had to do it over again, we would probably have just one night of distribution and have it delivered by the camp. Even though the families were very grateful for the food, it was difficult to get them to stop by to get their food because they work until dark and are ready to get back to their children at the end of the day.

I know they really enjoyed the fresh produce and some of the other items as well. I hope this helps you moving forward and thank you again for letting us be a part of your trial year with this program.



Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH Feedback

Feedback from the Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH staff revealed that timing and logistics were the biggest concerns with the Veggie Van and TEFAP distribution. Migrant farmworkers work late hours and getting the food to them was not always easy. And as there were a lot of moving parts and partners involved, it was often difficult for staff and volunteers to be as efficient as possible, particularly with the transportation of large, heavy boxes to multiple locations.

Food waste was also a concern, as distributions were only two weeks apart and each distribution included a large amount of produce. The food was not always culturally appropriate and sometimes lacked variety—including a lack of fruit.

Like the other initiatives, it was difficult to obtain feedback directly from the migrant farmworkers to learn about the initiative.

Suggestions for 2023

- Consider providing food distribution once a month rather than every two weeks.
- Consider purchasing fresh produce from the farmers market using grant funds rather than relying strictly on donations. This option could also provide a greater variety of produce that is more culturally relevant.
- Consider purchasing more culturally relevant foods such as beans, rice, and cooking oil.

Dental Services

Overview of Initiative

The Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH contracted with Miles of Smiles Mobile Dental Unit and InterCare to provide free dental services to migrant farmworkers at Bowerman Blueberries. This initiative involved two visits to the farm, the first to assess dental problems and the second to provide the needed dental services. Migrant farmworkers who required more extensive dental services were referred to InterCare. Toothbrushes, toothpaste, and floss packets were also distributed to migrant farmworkers as part of this initiative.

12

farmworkers
received dental
services

648

dental packets
distributed

How does this initiative tie to the strategic plan?



Work on solutions that address the **cost of healthcare services** and **fruit/vegetable access**



Provide services that account for migrant farmworkers' **lack of time, work schedule**, and **conflicting hours with service providers**



Dental Services

2022 Evaluation

Data was not collected directly from the migrant farmworkers who received dental services. However, the dental services provided to the migrant farmworkers is included in the table below.

Services Provided	Number	Charge*
Bitewings – Four Radiographic Images	5	\$175
Compsve Oral Eval – New/Est Pat	8	\$360
Intraoral – Complete Series of Radiographic Images	3	\$237
Periodontal Charting	3	-
Prophylaxis – Adult	6	\$324
Prophylaxis – Child	1	\$40
Sealant – Per Tooth	14	\$406
Topical Application of Fluoride Varnish 0-2	7	\$175
Grand Total	47	\$1,717

* This is the cost to Miles of Smiles for providing the dental service. Migrant farmworkers received the services at no cost.

Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH Feedback

Feedback from the Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH staff revealed that there were several roadblocks that prevented more migrant farmworkers from receiving care. One of the biggest challenges was that receiving care meant losing out on work time. While this year's grower allowed migrant farmworkers to miss work to receive dental services, workers may have opted to work and receive pay instead of dental services.

Another challenge was the language barrier between the migrant farmworkers and Miles of Smiles employees. Finally, regulations and rules regarding what procedures dentists, orthodontists, and dental hygienists can provide on site limited care.

Suggestions for 2023

- Consider alternative ways to provide dental care to migrant farmworkers that does not put their pay at risk—whether that's through different scheduling or through potentially paying migrant farmworkers for their lost wages.
- Consider finding additional dental resource providers to expand the availability of care throughout the county.

Sports Equipment & Micro Pantries

Overview of Sports Equipment Initiative

The Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH purchased sports equipment, including soccer balls, soccer goals, kick balls, footballs, bean bag toss, and storage containers for the sports equipment, for two migrant farmworker camps in the County. These include camps located in Conklin and Hudsonville that house a large population of single males. Since it is difficult for migrant farmworkers to get to local parks and recreational areas, this initiative was a way to bring recreation and physical activity to them. This initiative does not include an evaluation component at this time because the equipment was purchased later in the year with remaining grant funds.

How does this initiative tie to the strategic plan?



Improve **transportation** options



Other strategies around **loneliness** and **lack of support**

Overview of Micro Pantries Initiative

The Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH contracted with Grand Haven's migrant school to construct micro pantries that will be placed at two migrant farmworker camps in 2023. The micro pantries will be stocked with personal care items, books, food, and reference materials. This initiative does not include an evaluation component at this time because the micro pantries have not been utilized yet.

How does this initiative tie to the strategic plan?



Work on solutions that address the **cost of healthcare services** and **fruit/vegetable access**



Provide services that account for migrant farmworkers' **lack of time**, **work schedule**, and **conflicting hours with service providers**



Improve countywide **coordination** and **collaboration** efforts among agencies



Improve **centralization** of **reference materials** for migrant farmworkers



Boy & Girls Club & Improved Countywide Collaboration

Overview of Boy & Girls Club Initiative

The Migrant Health Taskforce and OCDPH partnered with Ottawa County Community Action Agency which received funding to provide Grand Haven migrant summer school students with transportation to Boys & Girls Club and to three field trips during this past summer. A total of 32 migrant students received these social support and transportation services. This initiative does not include an evaluation component because it was funded through a separate grant.

How does this initiative tie to the strategic plan?



Improve **transportation** options



Coordinate **events to engage** and **connect migrant farmworkers** with the community



Improved Countywide Collaboration

Throughout the past year, the Migrant Health Taskforce (member agencies and organizations listed in the table below) continued to meet regularly to strengthen countywide collaboration among taskforce agencies and organizations. In addition to the initiatives included in this report, another collaborative effort involves OCDPH staff serving on the Migrant Resource Council, with partnerships at vaccine clinics and with the faith community. A final collaborative effort includes relationship building during the past year with five local growers.

How does this initiative tie to the strategic plan?



Improve countywide **coordination** and **collaboration** efforts among agencies



Improve **centralization** of **reference materials** for migrant farmworkers

Migrant Health Taskforce Members

Community Action Agency	Michigan Dept. of Labor & Economic Opportunity
Community Action House	Migrant Legal Aid Project
Community Foundation of Holland/Zeeland Area	Migrant Resource Council
Community Mental Health	Momentum Center
Community Mental Health – Latino Outreach	Ottawa County Department of Public Health
GHAPS Migrant Summer School	Ottawa County DEI Office
InterCare	Ottawa Food
LAUP (Latin Americans United for Progress)	United Way
LEED, W MI Sustainable Business	West Ottawa Public Schools
LEDA (Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance)	Zeeland Spectrum Community Hospital
Michigan Dept. of Health and Human Services	