

The Farmworker Protection Standards Revisited

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ABSTRACT

Nearly a decade ago, the EPA implemented comprehensive regulations intended to protect farmworkers from the harmful effects of pesticides in the workplace. These “Worker Protection Standards” mandated that farmworkers receive training in the avoidance of pesticide exposure and what to do if an exposure occurs. The WPS was a sign of progress in the area of occupational health of farmworkers, and brought farmworkers closer to receiving some of the protections provided by federal law. In 1996, JSRI published a research report which examined the history, requirements, and implementation of the WPS. That report discussed the absence of information available in Michigan about farmworker health and occupational illness. This research report updates to the earlier one, examining issues affecting the implementation and efficacy of the WPS since 1996, and examining what can be learned from recent information on the occupational health of farmworkers regarding pesticide exposures in the fields.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lisa J. Gold is a graduate of the U.C. Berkeley School of Law. She has been practicing environmental law for nineteen years, most recently for the Los Angeles firm of Johnson & Higgin LLP. She has also worked as a Research Scholar for JSRI, and has taught at Michigan State University College of Law.