

Vermont Latino Dairy Farmworker Housing: Summary of Research Findings & Recommendations

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- Currently there is a broad, informal group that meets on farmworker housing in Vermont. I've facilitated this group for the past year
- In March 2021, this group included 23 separate organizations & agencies concerned and interested in farmworker housing.
 - Broad array of stakeholders
- Focus thus far is encouraging information sharing between groups

Vermont Farmworkers

Different situations and constraints

- **Farmworkers who are US Citizens or Residents (often Vermonters)**
 - **Some local and permanent**
 - **Some migrant**
 - **On or off-farm housing are options**
 - **Off-farm faces limited affordable housing**
- **Seasonal H2A Visa holders**
 - **In Sept 2020, 325, about 200 of which are on apple orchards**
 - **H2A visa program requires housing be provided**
- **Undocumented migrant farmworkers**
 - **How many in Vermont?**
 - **UVM Extension Migrant Education Program in 2018: 672 Dairy farmworkers + families**
 - **Milk with Dignity Standards Council – 1300-1500**
 - **On-farm housing is predominant and is the focus of this presentation**

My team's research on Vermont Dairy Farmworkers

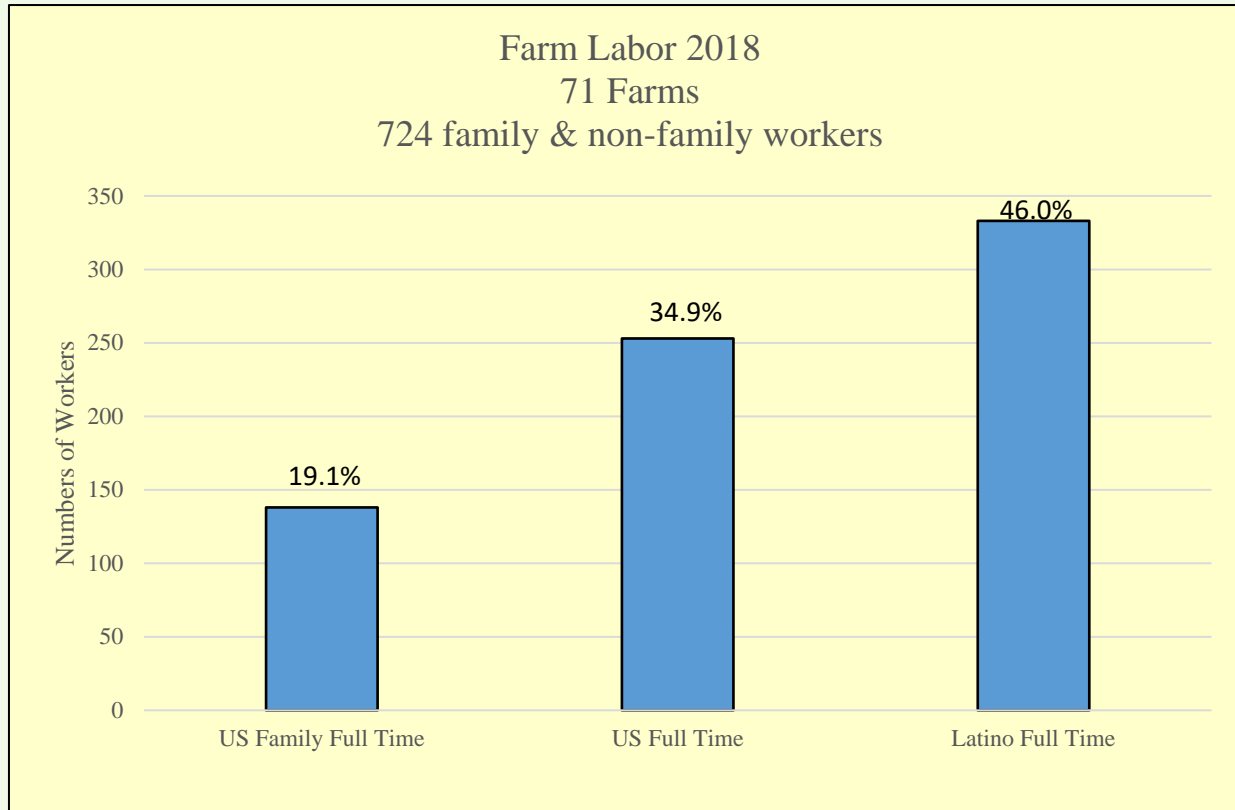
Dairy Farmer Interviews	
2010	73 farms statewide
2018	71 farms statewide

Latino Dairy Farmworker Interviews		
2016	173 Latino Farmworkers	116 unique farms
2018/2019	67 Latino Farmworkers	40 unique farms

Currently interviewing farmers for a Vermont Dept of Health Covid project in partnership with UVM Medical Center

On-going public opinion polling on opinions on migrant farmworkers

Distribution of Family and Hired Labor on Vermont Dairy Farms (*dairy farms hiring non-family labor*)



Farms hiring Latinos:

In 2010:

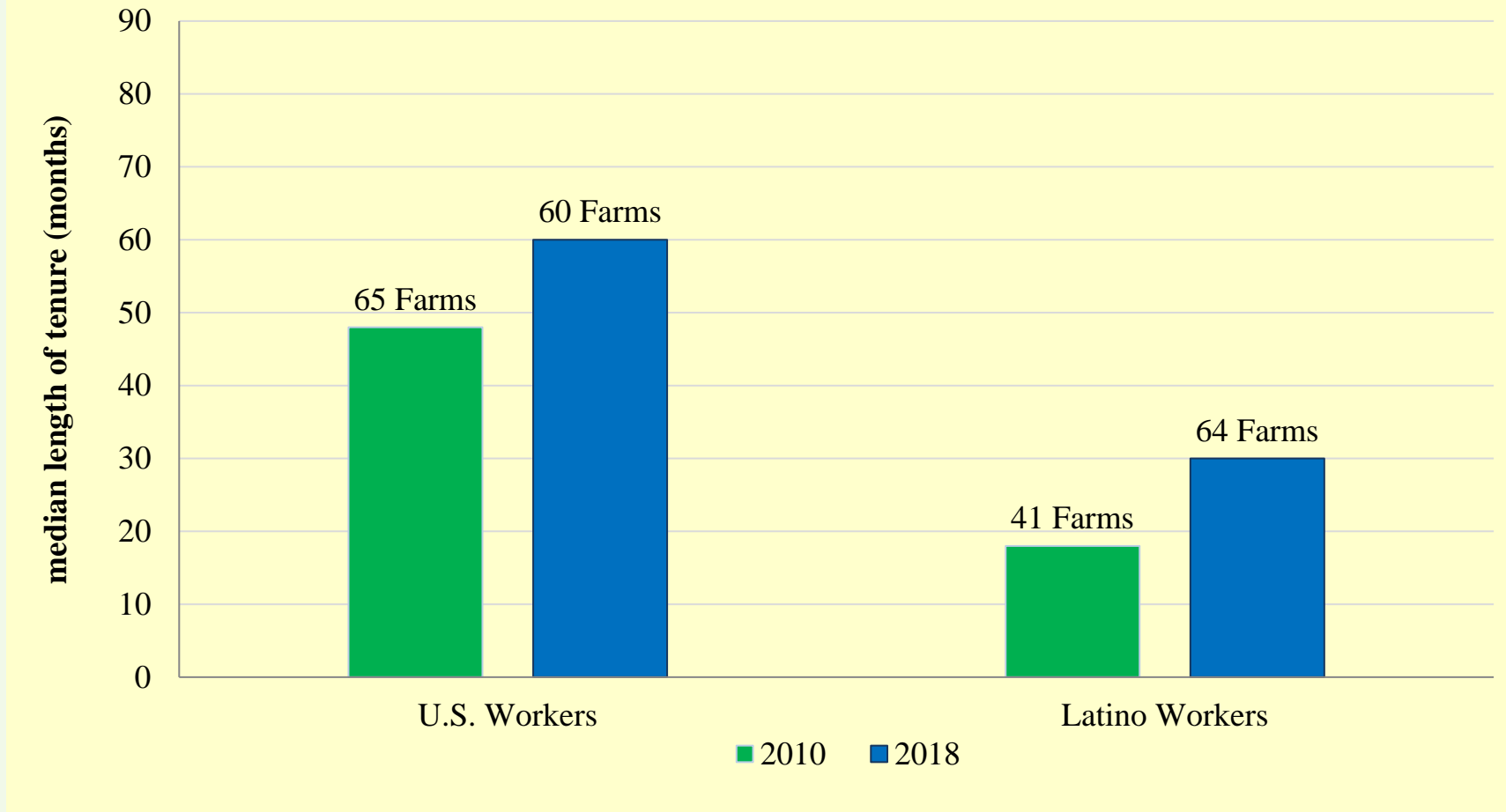
56% of farms surveyed hired Latino workers

In 2018:

94% of farms surveyed hired Latino workers

Of the 586 non-family full-time farmworkers in 2018, 57% were Latinos

Length of Employment of a "typical" employee over the past 5 years

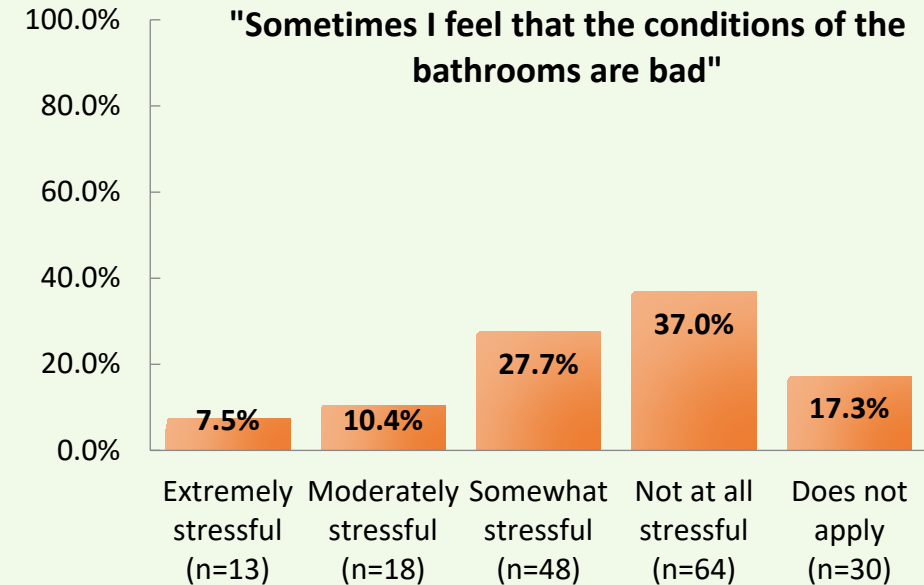
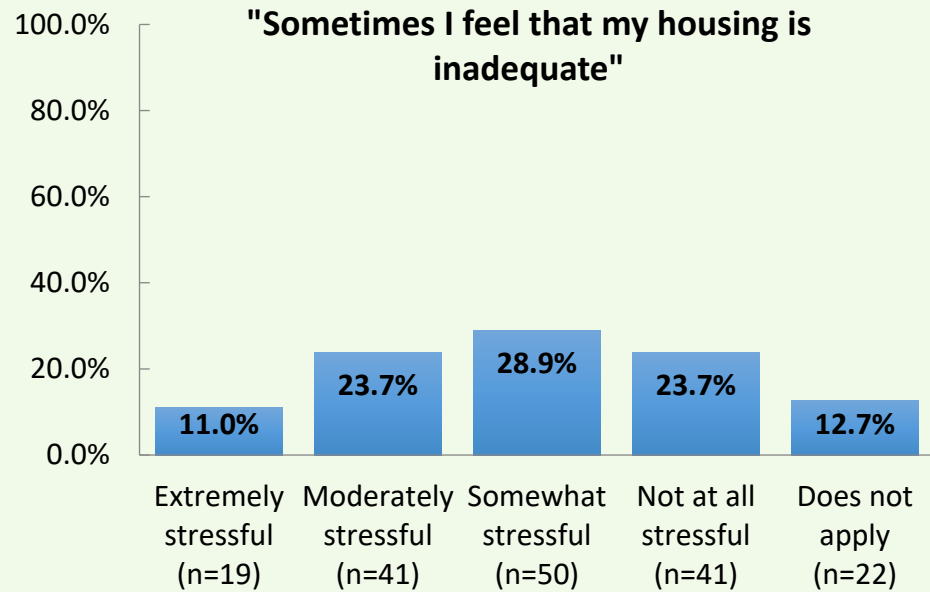


US farmworkers remain with the same farm for longer in both surveys between 2010 and 2018
Tenure of hired workers has increased for both US and Foreign workers.

Housing is one of the most common non-wage benefits provided to workers on dairy farms

Latino Workers	Housing & Utilities provided by 100% of farms
	Farmer estimated median annual value per worker: \$4,367 Maximum: \$3,200 Minimum: \$1,167
U.S. Workers	Housing provided by 62% of farms; Utilities provided by 53% of farms
	Farmer estimated median annual value per worker: \$14,100 Maximum: \$14,100 Minimum: \$3,300

Latino Migrant Farmworker Specific Housing Stress (2016)



Out of 173 responses on 116 farms:

15 farms (13%) had at least one worker reporting extreme stress

43 farms (37%) had at least one worker who reported moderate or extreme housing stress

Latino Dairy Farmworker Housing Density



Number of people living in workers housing (n=66)

Range: 1-9

Mean: 4.3

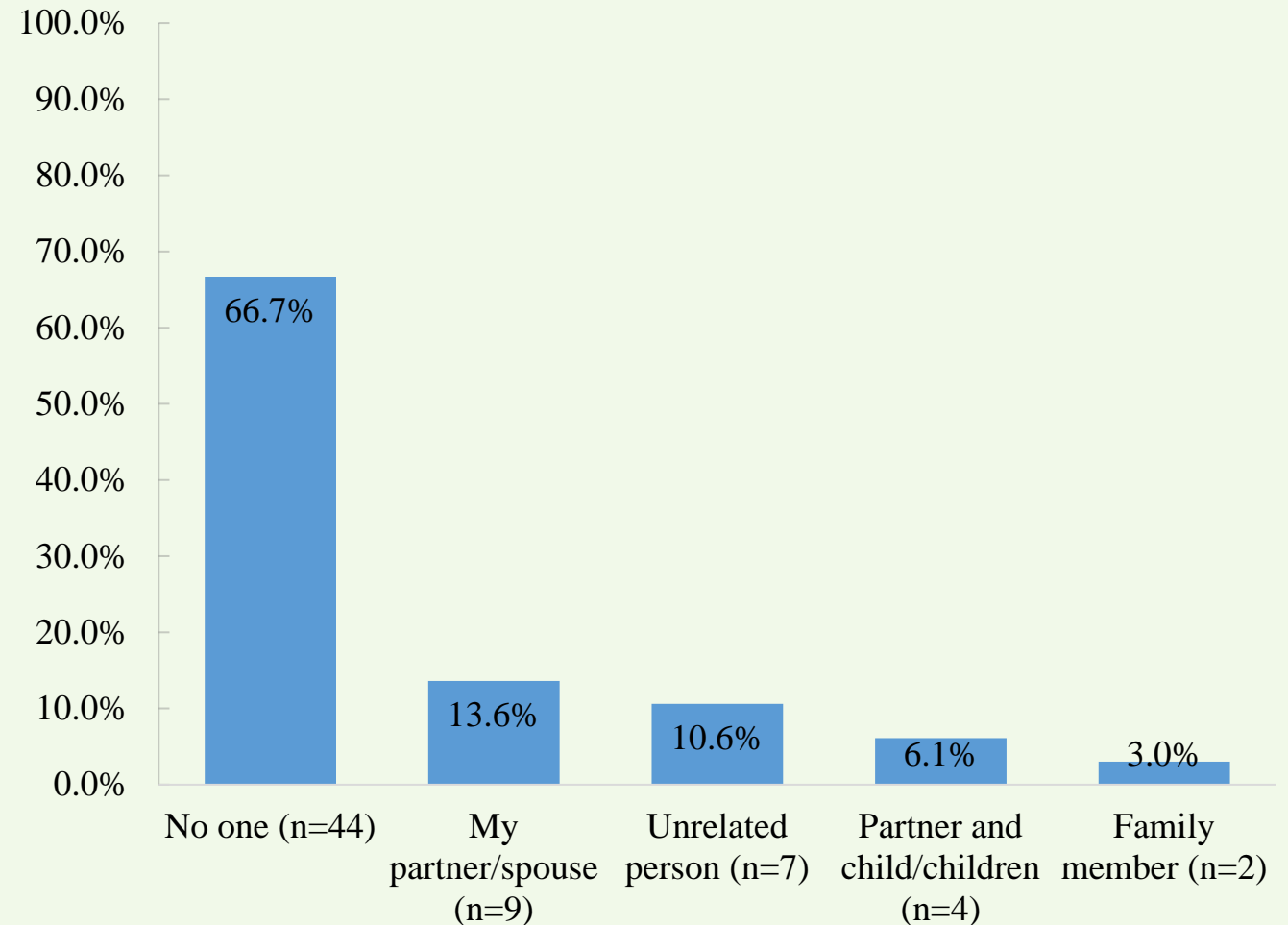


Number of bedrooms in workers housing (n=66)

Range: 1-7

Mean: 3.7

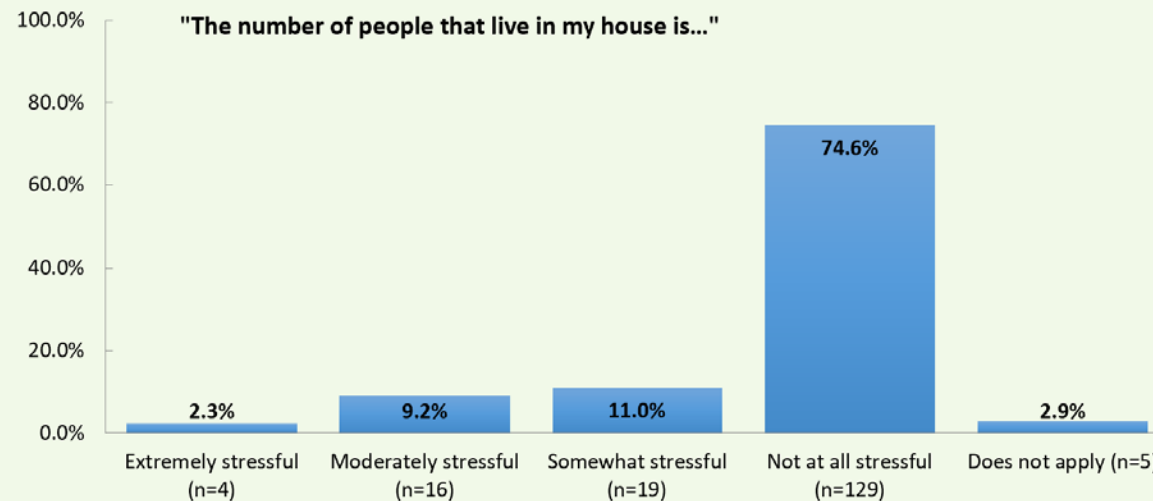
"I share my bedroom with..."



Housing Density is a significant, current concern for Covid

- Nearly all Latino workers live on-farm
- Alternative housing on farms is extremely limited
- Off-farm housing is challenging for Latino workers

Separate from the current public health risks posed by Covid , housing density should be considered in relation to other issues



Recommendations

- While most Latino farmworkers report housing to be adequate, for more than 1/3 of Latino dairy workers housing is a major cause of stress
- Need further research to distinguish between the need to whole house replacement and repair
 - More research on the extent and needs of on-farm housing is needed
 - A significant portion of farmworker housing are manufactured homes (“mobile homes”)
- Provide funding and incentives for farmers to improve farmworker housing
 - Programs that could assist with housing repair can help in the short term
 - \$10,000-\$20,000 per repair?
 - Weatherization
 - Assistance with replacing/building new homes
- Formalize a multi-sector farm labor housing working group to expand recommendations and options
 - Stakeholders should include both farmer and farmworker representatives in addition to housing agencies and organizations.

Vermonters believe migrant farmworkers contribute positively to our farms and communities

