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Migration, agribusiness and nutritional status of children under five in Northwest Mexico.

<https://arctichealth.org/en/permalink/ahliterature125562>

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Source: Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2012 Jan;9(1):33-43

Date: Jan-2012

Language: English

Publication Type: Article

Keywords: Agriculture
Child, Preschool
Humans
Mexico
Nutritional Status
Transients and Migrants

Abstract: The aim of this study was to examine the nutritional status of children of Mexican migrant worker families under five years of age within the context of global food markets. The sample included 404 children less than five years old from farms and agricultural communities in northwest Mexico. Prevalence of stunting and underweight of children appeared very similar to that of indigenous children from the national sample survey (difference 0.9 and 1.6 percentage points, respectively). Compared to the national sample of Mexican children, stunting and underweight seemed higher in migrant children (difference 17.7 and 4.5 percentage points, respectively), but wasting, an indicator of both chronic and acute undernutrition, appeared to indicate a process of nutritional recuperation. Migrant children living in poverty and suffering from chronic undernutrition, poor performance and scarce education opportunities, can be expected to eventually become agricultural workers with low productivity and poor general health. Consumer's demands on social and environmental standards of fresh food production in developed countries could be an opportunity to impact the lives of migrant agricultural workers, their families and communities.

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PubMed ID: 22470276 [View in PubMed](#) 