

GUIDE FOR HEALTH EDUCATORS:

Promoting Health And Safety Among Migrant Farmworkers

Resource ID#: 2982

**Guide for Health Educators : Promoting Health and  
Safety Among Migrant Farmworkers**

Carolina Health Centers, Inc.  
Trenton, S.C.  
1991

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to assist health educators in teaching migrants about health and safety. After a needs assessment, it was thought that the migrants would benefit the most from the subjects chosen which include: Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Diseases and AIDS, Controlling Parasitic Infections, and Preventing Environmental Hazards. Each section contains the basic information that is needed to discuss each topic. The health educator should then use the suggestions under materials needed, resources available, and lesson plan to develop their own strategy. Hopefully, by exposing migrants to this information, they can learn vital information which may improve their quality of life.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sexually Transmitted Diseases	
Introduction and Lesson Plan.....	1
Part 1: General Information on STD's.....	2
Gonorrhea.....	3
Syphilis.....	4
Chlamydia.....	5
Herpes Simplex II.....	6
Prevention of STD's.....	7
Part 2: General Information on AIDS.....	8
Who can get AIDS?.....	9
How do you get AIDS?.....	10
What happens when you are infected with AIDS?.....	11
AIDS prevention.....	13
Controlling Parasitic Infections	
Introduction and Lesson Plan.....	14
Lice.....	15
Scabies.....	16
Trichomonas.....	17
Pinworms.....	18
Hookworms (Roundworms).....	19
Tapeworms.....	20
Protozoal Infections (Giardiasis, Amebiasis).....	21
Prevention of Environmental Hazards	
Introduction and Lesson Plan.....	22
Work Related Accidents.....	23
Tractor Accidents.....	23
Falls.....	24
Cuts.....	25
Heat Cramps, Heat Exhaustion, Heat Stroke.....	25
Pesticide Poisoning.....	26
"Work Smart...Work Safely...With Farm Chemicals" (in English and Spanish).....	29
Dangers Around the Camp.....	42
Demonstration combining pesticide and water contamination.....	45
References.....	46

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

The incidence of sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) among the migrant population is very high. The number can be controlled by educating the migrants. There are still many misconceptions about STD's, and in particular, AIDS. By teaching the facts about STD's and AIDS and their prevention, the number of infections can be dramatically reduced.

**Objectives:**

1. Make migrants aware of the most important STD's: gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, genital herpes, and AIDS; also, the need for immediate and follow-up treatment when diagnosed with one or more of these conditions.
2. Teach migrants ways to reduce the risk of contracting a sexually transmitted disease.
3. Teach migrants how to prevent AIDS, how it is transmitted, and the treatment for AIDS.

**Materials Needed And Resources Available:**

1. Blackboard and chalk or a large tablet of paper and a magic marker
2. Poster of various STD sores - Zovirax (Acyclovir) poster by Burroughs Wellcome Co. (Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27709)
3. Pamphlets - ex. STD and AIDS pamphlets from SCDHEC, AIDS News comic book (copies can be ordered from POCAAN, 1200 S. Jackson, Suite 25, Seattle, Wa. 98144, 206-322-7061), Para La Buena Salud de Ella (for Hispanic women), and Enfermedades Sexualmente Transmitidas (for Hispanic men and women) - copies can be ordered from American Social Health Association, 260 Sheridan Ave., Suite 307, Palo Alto, Ca. 94306
4. TV and VCR - Videotapes: Sex, Drugs, and AIDS  
Alicia's Story (Spanish)  
Olga's Story (Spanish)

**Lesson Plan:**

Divide the lesson into two parts:

Part 1: Sexually Transmitted Diseases

1. Discuss facts about STD's in general
2. Discuss each disease including: signs and symptoms, treatment, and especially prevention

Part 2: AIDS

1. Discuss the general facts about AIDS
2. Discuss the timeline that AIDS follows
3. Discuss prevention

PART 1:  
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

- STD's are diseases spread by sexual contact. The old name was venereal diseases (V.D.).
- The most important STD's are: gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, genital herpes, and AIDS; there are over 20 different sexually transmitted diseases, but these are the most common.
- Common signs and symptoms of STD's are: rash, wart, blister, sore, itching, or discharge.
- Age, sex, or race does not matter; anyone can get AIDS.
- STD germs continue to cause damage until treated with the right antibiotic; some can be cured, others can't; there are no vaccines.
- A person can have more than one STD at a time.
- You can't get a STD from door knobs, dishes, or toilet seats.
- STD's are very damaging. They can cause stillbirths, deformities, and infections in babies. They are especially harmful to women, because they are more difficult to diagnose and can result in sterility.

## GONORRHEA

**Other names:** Clap, Dose, Strain, Drip

**Cause:** Bacteria

**Transmission:** Direct contact with an infected person; also, from mother to baby during birth.

**Signs and Symptoms:** In males, onset is 3-5 days after sexual contact with infected person. In females, there are usually no symptoms until the infection has seriously damaged the reproductive system.

### MALE

- painful urination
- discharge from penis
- fever

### FEMALE

- vaginal discharge
- painful urination
- abdominal cramping
- menstrual problems

If left untreated, gonorrhea can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (tube infection), sterility, acute arthritis, meningitis, or heart diseases in both men and women.

**Treatment:** If a person has any of these symptoms or have had sex with someone who has been diagnosed with gonorrhea, they need to seek medical attention immediately. Pregnant women with gonorrhea must be treated, because the bacteria can get into babies' eyes and cause blindness. Gonorrhea can be completely cured when treated with antibiotics.

**Prevention:** Use a condom when having sex. Complications from the disease can be avoided by finding out if your partner is infected and by receiving early treatment.

## SYPHILIS

**Other names:** Bad blood, Pox

**Cause:** Bacteria (Spirochete)

**Transmission:** Direct contact with infected person; also, from mother to baby during pregnancy because they share the same blood supply.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Onset 10-90 days (avg. 21 days) after sexual contact with infected person.

**1st Stage:** A painless sore, called a chancre, can appear on the genitals, fingers, lips, or breasts. This sore lasts for a few days and then goes away, however, the disease continues to spread throughout the body.

**2nd Stage:** Weeks or months later, there may be a rash, fever, sore throat, mouth sores, or swollen joints.

If left untreated, syphilis can spread to any part of the body, causing heart disease, paralysis, or insanity, and can lead to death.

**Treatment:** If a person has any of these symptoms or has had sex with someone who has been diagnosed with syphilis, they need to get immediate medical attention. Pregnant women need to be treated, because syphilis can cause damage to the eyes, bones, liver, and teeth of a fetus or newborn. It is usually completely cured when treated by antibiotics, but the patient must be followed for months and sometimes years to determine if they are completely cured.

**Prevention:** Use condoms when having sex. The spreading of syphilis can be prevented if infected people seek early treatment.



## CHLAMYDIA

Chlamydia is the most common STD in the U.S. today. It is approximately three times more prevalent than gonorrhea.

**Cause:** Bacteria

**Transmission:** Direct contact with infected person, and also, from mother to baby.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Onset 1-5 weeks after sexual contact with infected person.

### Male

- whitish discharge from the penis
- feel need to urinate alot
- burning when urinating

### Female

- may not have any symptoms
- slight discharge from vagina
- feel need to urinate alot

If left untreated, chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in women or lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV) in men and women, and can lead to sterility.

**Treatment:** If a person has any of these symptoms or has had sex with someone who has been diagnosed with chlamydia, they need to seek medical attention immediately. Pregnant women, especially need to be treated prior to delivery. Chlamydia is the most common cause of eye infections and pneumonia in newborns. The baby may even die after birth. Chlamydia can be cured with antibiotics.

**Prevention:** Use a condom when having sex, and have good personal hygiene (if uncircumcised, be sure to pull back the foreskin and clean the area everyday).

## HERPES SIMPLEX II

**Other names:** Genital herpes

**Cause:** Virus

**Transmission:** Direct contact with an infected person. Also, from mother to baby during birth.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Onset 3-20 days after sexual contact with infected person. Small, red, painful sores or blisters appear on or around genitals. The sores itch and burn. Sometimes there is a fever, swollen glands, muscle aches, and trouble urinating. Usually the sores last about 2-3 weeks, then disappear, but the virus is still present in the body. Some people will have recurrent infections, others will not.

**Treatment:** There is no cure and no vaccine for herpes, but the pain, burning, and itching can be relieved, and further outbreaks can be prevented by medicine prescribed by a doctor. A person should avoid sexual contact until the sores are totally healed. It is important, especially for women, to receive early treatment because there is a greater risk of developing cervical cancer after having herpes. Almost all babies infected during birth die, and those that live may suffer serious damage to the central nervous system.

**Prevention:** Use a condom when having sex. Women with genital herpes should have a pap smear every 6 months. Wash thoroughly after touching sores because the virus can be spread to other parts of the body (ex. if virus spreads to the eyes it can cause blindness).

## OVERALL PREVENTION OF STD's

- Inspect your partner's genitals, if they have sores or a discharge avoid having sex with them until they are treated and cured
- Use a condom when having sex (birth control pills offer no protection)
- If uncircumcised, be sure to pull back the foreskin and clean the area every day.
- Urinate and wash with soap and water after having sex
- Have a sexual relationship with only one person who you know is free of disease; having sex with many people you don't know leads to infection frequently
- Avoid mouth to anus (butthole) contact - diseases are easily spread this way
- If you have been diagnosed as having an STD, let your sexual partner(s) know, so he/she can receive treatment as well

## PART 2:AIDS

- AIDS is caused by HIV = the Human Immunodeficiency Virus for which there is no cure and no vaccine. A person with the AIDS virus will have the virus in their body for the rest of their life.
  
- AIDS stands for Autoimmune Deficiency Syndrome. It is given this name because the virus attacks the body's immune system. This system allows your body to fight diseases. When the immune system is compromised, as in a person with AIDS, they get sick from diseases (opportunistic infections) that don't normally affect healthy people. The most common of these diseases are a rare type of pneumonia and skin cancer. A person with AIDS dies from these opportunistic infections, not the virus itself.
  
- People infected with HIV may or may not have symptoms, but they can transfer the virus to other people.
  
- Drinking alcohol, using drugs, and not eating nutritiously can weaken the body's defense system and help the virus to progress.

## WHO CAN GET AIDS ?

AIDS is an equal opportunity disease. Anyone can become HIV infected regardless of age, sex, race, or sexual orientation (homosexual or heterosexual). However, certain people who have a greater risk are:

- men who have sex with other men
- women who have sex with other women
- men who have sex with men and women
- women who have sex with women and men
- people who use IV drugs ("shoot up") and share their needles and syringes ("works")
- a man or woman who has sex with a person who engages in any of the above behaviors
- anyone who recieved a blood transfusion before March 1985 (now all blood is tested for the AIDS virus)
- babies born to women who are HIV - positive

## HOW DO YOU GET AIDS ?

AIDS is actually hard to get. The AIDS virus is spread by blood, semen, and vaginal secretions. It is also found in saliva and tears, but not in large enough quantities to infect. It takes a quart of saliva to isolate enough virus to look at under a microscope.

AIDS can be spread by:

- having sex with an infected person - especially anal (rear-end) sex
- sharing needles for "shooting up" drugs
- from mother to baby during pregnancy - maybe even through breastfeeding
- blood transfusions before March 1985

You cannot get AIDS by:

- touching, hugging, shaking hands, or casual kissing
- being coughed on, sneezed on, or spit on
- eating food prepared by an infected person
- living with or taking care of a person with AIDS
- swimming in a pool
- being bitten by a mosquito

AIDS cannot be spread through air, water, food, or casual contact.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE INFECTED WITH AIDS ?

AIDS varies from person to person. The infection follows a timeline (see next page).

The timeline begins when the person is infected with HIV. but has no symptoms of the disease. Even though this person appears healthy, he/she is capable of spreading the virus.

At some point on the timeline, the infection has progressed, and the person's immune system has been weakened. They develop some unusual signs and symptoms which are indicative of AIDS. This stage of the infection occurs at different times for every person. Some people go months or years before they develop any symptoms, some take only weeks. Some of the symptoms include:

- feeling tired most of the time for no apparent reason
- fever, chills, sweating alot
- lightheadedness, dizziness, headaches
- swollen glands - feel like knots in the neck, armpits, or groin
- pink, purple, blue, or brown flat or raised bumps or patches showing on or under the skin
- white spots or sores in the mouth
- diarrhea
- weight loss of more than 10 lbs. in less than a month (not due to dieting)
- dry, heavy cough, shortness of breath

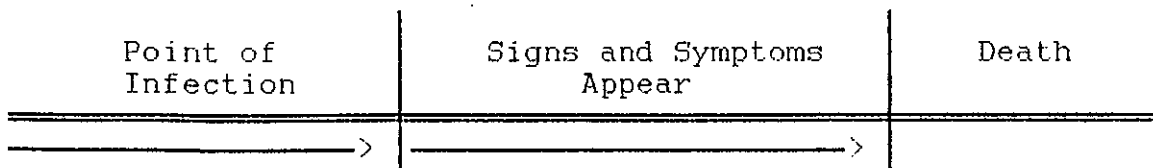
- unexpected bleeding from any body opening or from growths on the skin
- bruise more easily than normal

\* These symptoms can occur with other illnesses, but the difference when they occur with AIDS is that they last for longer than two weeks or they keep coming back over and over again.

The second part of the timeline is from the point where signs and symptoms develop to death. This period of time also varies from person to person. The person's immune system is basically ineffective, so diseases that would not normally affect a healthy person are able to develop. These are referred to as opportunistic infections, the most common being a rare forms of pneumonia, tuberculosis, and a skin cancer. It is these infections that kill the AIDS patient, not the virus itself.

There is no way to determine the length of the timeline between which the person is infected and their death, but what is known is that if you are infected with the AIDS virus, you will die. They are working on cures and vaccinations everyday, but as of today, there are none. There are a few treatments which help slow the progression of the virus, such as AZT, but mostly doctors can only treat the infections AIDS patients develop as a result of AIDS.

#### TIMELINE





## HOW DO YOU REDUCE THE RISK GETTING AIDS

- avoid sex with an HIV - positive person
- avoid sex with people you don't know well
- avoid sex with a lot people
- avoid sex with someone who uses IV drugs ("shoots up")
- avoid oral - genital (privates) contact
- when having sex, **USE A CONDOM** and spermicidal jelly, cream, foam, sponge, or suppository which contains nonoxynol 9. This has been proven to kill the AIDS virus
- avoid using drugs, but if you do, don't share syringes and needles; this is not to condone the use of IV drugs or the sharing of needles, but to sterilize your "works," stick them (syringe, needle, and plunger) in boiling water or alcohol for 15 minutes
- avoid sharing toothbrushes, razors, or anything that can be contaminated with blood
- \* People who are in a monogamous (have sex with only one person) relationship and don't use IV drugs have the lowest risk for contracting AIDS.
- \* If you "shoot up" and/or have many sexual partners, it greatly increases your risk for getting AIDS. And remember, AIDS is a fatal disease. No one who has developed full - blown AIDS has survived.

CONTROLLING PARASITIC INFECTIONS  
AMONG MIGRANT FARMWORKERS

## CONTROLLING PARASITIC INFECTIONS AMONG MIGRANT FARMWORKERS

The living conditions of most migrant farmworkers is less than ideal, with overcrowded living areas and unsanitary conditions. However, there are certain habits and precautions that can be taught in order to reduce the risk of contracting and spreading parasitic infections. The signs and symptoms of the major parasitic infections likely to occur among the migrant population should be discussed. However, for this program to be effective, the focus should be on prevention.

### Objectives:

1. Make migrants aware of the main parasitic infections that are common to this area.
2. Inform migrants of how these infections are contracted.
3. Teach migrants how to prevent these infections .

### Materials:

1. Blackboard and chalk or large tablet of paper and magic markers.

### Lesson Plan:

1. Write down the name of the parasite or infection as you discuss each one.
2. After each discussion, write the method of prevention next to each infection.
3. After each parasite has been discussed, review what has been written down, noting that most of the infections can be prevented by following the same, few, easy rules.

## LICE (Pediculosis)

Anyone can get lice regardless of age, sex, race, or socioeconomic status. There are three different types of lice: head lice, body lice, and pubic lice. Head lice are spread by direct contact with someone who has lice, sharing combs, brushes, towels, hats, or even a movie seat after it has been used by an infected person. Body lice are spread by direct contact or sharing clothes with someone with lice. Pubic lice are spread by sexual contact.

**Signs:** Head lice can be found attached to hair near the scalp and/ or eyelashes. Body lice are usually found in clothes and bedsheets. Pubic lice are found attached to pubic hair. More often, it is the eggs (nits) that are seen, not the lice themselves.

**Symptoms:** Lice cause itching which can lead to skin infections due to scratching.

**Prevention:** To avoid getting lice, good personal hygiene should be stressed. It is important to bathe and wash hair frequently. Check children's hair often. If eggs are seen, get treatment immediately to prevent spreading.

## SCABIES

Scabies is a skin disease caused by a mite that burrows into the skin. It is common in the camps, especially in children. Dogs can also have scabies, called mange, and can spread it to people. It is usually spread through direct contact with an infected person, sharing clothes, or sleeping in the bed of an infected person.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Scabies produces itchy, little bumps usually between the fingers, but also found around the waist, on the wrist, on the bottom, on the genitals, and in the armpits. The itching is more severe at night, and scratching can cause the bumps to become infected.

**Prevention:** Personal hygiene should be stressed again. One should bathe and change clothes everyday. Wash clothes and bedsheets in hot water and hang them in the sun to dry. If one person in a family or camp is infected, everyone in the family or camp should be checked.

## TRICHOMONAS

Trichomonas is a sexually transmitted disease. Which means this parastic infection is contracted through direct, intimate contact.

**Signs and Symptoms:** There is usually vaginal swelling, discharge, odor, lower abdominal pain, painful urination, and sometimes bleeding.

**Prevention:** Urinate and wash vaginal area with soap and water after having sex. It is very important to notify sexual partner(s) if person is diagnosed, so they can be treated as well.

## PINWORMS

Pinworms are small, white worms that live in the lower intestine of humans (dogs cannot have pinworms). They are the most common worm infection in the United States. Anyone can become infected, but they are more common in children. The eggs get on the fingers and under the nails of an infected person who has scratched their bottom or has used the bathroom and not washed their hands, and they are spread very easily through hand contact.

**Signs and Symptoms:** There is itching in the perianal area (around the butthole), and sometimes urinating is painful. Children may be irritable and have trouble sleeping. Sometimes the short, white worms can be seen around the anus (butthole), especially if you use a flashlight at night.

**Prevention:** Wash hands after using the bathroom and before eating. If a child has pinworms, the whole family should be checked. Children should wear tight diapers or underpants to keep them from scratching when they are sleeping. Children's nails should be cut very short. Wash their hands and bottom thoroughly when they wake up and after each bowel movement. Change child's clothes and bathe them often. If child has pinworms, take him/her to the doctor to get medicine, and continue the above procedures to prevent them from returning.

## HOOKWORMS (Roundworms)

Unlike pinworms, hookworms (and other roundworms) can be very serious infections. They are red or brown, but ususally aren't seen in the stool.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Hookworm larva enter a person's bare feet and may cause itching. They travel through the bloodstream to get to the lungs which may produce a dry cough. When the person coughs, they swallow the young worms, and a few days later, the person may have diarrhea and a stomach ache. The worms attach to the intestines and can cause anemia and weakness. If a child is very pale and has a tendency to eat dirt, this is a sign of anemia and he/she might have a hookworm infection. Hookworm eggs leave the body in the stool.

**Prevention:** Be sure children use toilets. Do not let them go to the bathroom just anywhere. Do not walk around barefooted. Tell children to not eat dirt. Wash vegetables thoroughly before eating. Always wash hands after using the bathroom and before eating.



## TAPEWORMS

The tapeworm is a ribbon-shaped worm that inhabits the human intestinal tract and can reach lengths of as much as thirty feet. Infections occur after eating infected, raw or undercooked beef, pork or fish, and contaminated water, or coming into contact with infected dog stool.

**Signs and Symptoms:** The majority of cases are asymptomatic, although sometimes there may be diarrhea, abdominal pain, weight loss, muscle pain, weakness, fever, and rarely anemia. Occasionally, the worm can be felt moving around in the bottom. The eggs or part of the worm can be seen in the stool.

**Prevention:** Cook all meats thoroughly. Be sure drinking water is safe. Wash hands after using bathroom and before eating.

**PROTOZOAL INFECTIONS**  
(Giardiasis, Amebiasis)

Both types have two forms: the parasitic form which feeds and multiplies in the intestine and the cyst form which is passed out with the stool. The cyst is the infective form and can be spread directly from person to person by the fecal-oral route (ex. If a person doesn't wash their hands after using the bathroom, then shakes hands with another person, then that person puts their fingers near their mouth). It can also be spread indirectly by contaminated water or food.

**Signs and Symptoms:** These infections are usually asymptomatic or mild. Sometimes there is abdominal pain, gas, constipation or diarrhea, and nausea. In severe cases, malabsorption (nutrients and water are not absorbed into the intestine) can lead to weight loss and large, foul-smelling, runny stools.

**Prevention:** Make sure drinking water is safe, but most importantly, always wash hands after using the bathroom and before eating.

PREVENTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

## PREVENTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

There are two main categories of environmental hazards which concern migrants, they are work related accidents and dangers around the camp. Even though some of the incidents are rare, it is important to know about prevention, so they don't become problems.

### Materials Needed and Resources Available:

1. Overhead projector - make transparencies of the "Work Smart...Work Safely...With Farm Chemicals" pamphlet or pass copies around (take copies up after the lesson)
2. Two dark t-shirts, flour, a household insect spray (Raid), paper towels, and a bucket of water
3. Pamphlets - Assisting Victims of Farm Accidents and Safety Emblems for Slow Vehicles from the Clemson University Cooperative Exchange Service (803-637-3161, contact person - Tony Watson); the pamphlet mentioned in #1 is by the National Agricultural Chemicals Association - 1155 15th St., N.W., Washington D.C. 20005

### Lesson Plan:

Discuss the situations and solutions to each hazard as to how to prevent them. When lecturing on pesticide safety, read the "Work Smart...Work Safely...With Farm Chemicals" pamphlet. Discuss the pictures and explain correct and incorrect practices. After talking about pesticide poisoning and water contamination, give the demonstration described on p.45.

## WORK RELATED ACCIDENTS

Some of the more common work related accidents include:

- Tractor accidents
- Falls - from ladder or tree
- Cuts - ex. from pruning equipment
- Heat stress, heat exhaustion, heat stroke
- Poisoning from pesticides

### Tractor Accidents

Tractor accidents are one of the most common of all farm accidents. These accidents include collisions, tractors overturning on or running over people, or people falling from tractors. All of these can be prevented by certain precautions followed not only by the drivers of the tractors, but by the people who work around them as well.

When driving a tractor on public roads, a slow-moving vehicle emblem (a yellow-orange triangle with a red reflective border) must be placed on the back. This is required of all vehicles that are driven under 25 mph on public roads. The emblem should be mounted with the triangle pointed up, placed centrally at the rear 2-6 feet above the ground. Crates of peaches should be stacked so they don't cover the emblem, or an emblem can be placed on a crate as long as it is visible to the driver behind the tractor.

Also, when driving on public roads, obey all traffic laws. It is probably a good idea to stay as far to the right in the lane as possible, so faster traffic can pass more easily. If traffic backs up behind you, pull over to the side until traffic clears. Most importantly, if the tractor does not have turn signals, hand signals must be used. Most collision accidents occur when the driver of the tractor fails to signal, and the car behind is unaware that the tractor is turning.

Always stay on even pavement or a path that allows all the wheels to stay level. This will prevent the tractor from overturning. An overturned tractor can not only lead to serious injuries to the driver and riders, but can also become a fire hazard. If you come across this kind of accident, make sure the area is safe before you try to help. In particular, check to see if gas is leaking from the wreckage. If the area is safe, first turn off the tractor's engine, if it is still running. Next, check the victim, but absolutely do not move the victim unless the situation is .

life threatening. You always assume the victim has a spinal injury. Call the emergency medical service as soon as possible.

For people working around tractors, there is always a danger of being run over or falling off of a tractor. Always be aware of where the tractor is located and stay a safe distance away while one is passing. It is possible to lose your footing and fall under the tires as one is driving by.

It is very dangerous to ride on the trailer that the tractor is pulling, but if it is necessary, it is important to follow some precautions. For instance, always stay seated while the tractor is moving, make sure whatever you are sitting on is stable, and sit towards the middle of the trailer.

Finally, when a tractor is not in use make sure it is not in gear and the ignition is turned off. Working with or around tractors is a part of most migrants' jobs everyday. If they are taught a few very simple rules and precautions, many accidents can be avoided.

### Falls

When using a ladder or climbing trees to pick, or riding the trailers that tractors pull, there is always a risk of falling. This can result in broken bones, or even worse, a spinal cord injury. It is worth the time it takes to prevent these accidents, rather than lose time working due to an injury.

#### Safety tips:

- make sure the base of the ladder is planted firmly on level ground
- test the ladder to make sure it is stable before you climb it
- if someone is available to help, have them hold the ladder while you pick
- when on a ladder, only reach as far as your arm can reach; never lean your body to one side to reach something
- if climbing a tree, make sure branches are strong enough to support your weight and also follow the previous tip
- when riding a tractor, always stay seated, make sure whatever you are sitting on is stable, and sit towards the middle of the trailer

## Cuts

Care must be taken when using any sharp tool, for example, pruning shears. Serious cuts or puncture wounds can occur from their misuse.

### Safety tips:

- never point a sharp object at someone
- when walking with a sharp tool, hold the handle in your hand and keep the pointed end towards the ground
- don't run while holding them
- when laying them down, make sure they are closed and are not sticking up where someone could step on them

If someone is cut and they are bleeding heavily, apply direct pressure to the wound with a clean dressing (rag, towel, shirt, etc). Do not remove the dressing to check the wound. If the first dressing becomes soaked with blood, just apply another dressing on top of it. If the wound is on an arm or leg, have the person lie down and raise the limb above the level of the heart. **Never** apply a tourniquet to stop the bleeding. This cuts off the blood supply totally, and the person would possibly have to have their arm or leg amputated. All you are trying to do is slow down the bleeding until the emergency medical service arrives.

## Heat cramps, Heat exhaustion, Heat stroke

All three of these conditions are due to overexposure to heat, but they are varying degrees. This is a serious problem in the summer months, and everyone needs to know the signs and symptoms, so they can assist victims or avoid becoming victims.

Heat cramps are muscle pains or spasms, usually in the stomach and legs, due to the loss of water and salt through heavy sweating. The person should move to a shady place and drink half a glass of water every 15 minutes for an hour. It is important not to drink too much water too fast.

Heat exhaustion is caused by the same thing, but to a greater extent, and it is more serious. Some signs are: cool, pale, moist skin; heavy sweating; large pupils; headache; dizziness; nausea and vomiting. The person should lie down in a cool place and drink half a glass of water every 15 minutes. It is also helpful to fan them and put wet towels or sheets on them. If no improvement is noticed within 30 minutes, take the person to the doctor or to the emergency room.

Heat stroke is the most serious form and is a medical emergency. This occurs when the body loses its ability to cool down. Some signs are: sweating stops; skin is hot and red; pupils are very small; and the person has a very high body temperature. The emergency medical service should be called as soon as possible. Meanwhile, keep the person cool by putting them in a lukewarm bath or by putting wet towels or sheets on them. It is very important for a person suffering from heat stroke to receive medical attention immediately because this condition can be fatal.

Safety Tips:

- rest in the shade if you are feeling weak
- eat salty foods on hot days, so you will retain more water
- wear a hat when working
- drink alot of fluids - about 1-2 gallons a day to replace what you lose through sweating; keep the water in a covered container to prevent contamination with dirt or pesticides

### Pesticide Poisoning

Pesticides are chemicals which prevent insects, bacteria, fungi, etc. from destroying crops. These are very strong chemicals and can also be harmful to humans and cause many serious health problems if used improperly. Migrant workers are particularly susceptible to pesticide poisoning, but by following guidelines and using them correctly, they can be safe.

Exposure to pesticides is not only a concern in the fields, but in the camps as well. When the chemicals get on the migrant's work clothes and they return to the camp, they can expose anyone who comes into contact with them. There are three main ways in which pesticides can enter the body, they are through the:

1. skin - when the pesticide comes in direct contact with the skin or gets on wet clothing and soaks through to the skin
2. mouth - by eating contaminated food, smoking, or swallowing dust or liquid left on hands
3. nose - by inhaling dust or vapors of the pesticide



Ways to prevent pesticide poisoning through the:

1. skin
  - when working, wear protective clothing including a hat, scarf, long-sleeved shirt, long pants, socks, gloves, and shoes
  - wash clothes everyday after working to remove any pesticide
  - work clothes should be washed separately from other clothes, so they don't get contaminated
  - bathe everyday after working to wash off any pesticide residues
2. mouth
  - always wash hands before eating or smoking
  - don't eat foods that are just picked; always wash foods before eating them
3. nose
  - don't go into a field right after it has been sprayed; the grower should put a sign up or tell you when it is safe

Symptoms of pesticide poisoning:

Early symptoms of acute pesticide poisoning can occur during exposure or within 12 hours, but usually within 4 hours. These symptoms include: headache, dizziness, and nausea. Anxiety and restlessness are common as well.

Some other symptoms include:

- vomiting, abdominal cramping, diarrhea
- skin rash
- profuse (a lot of) sweating
- eye problems - tearing, stinging, blurred vision, conjunctivitis
- respiratory problems - coughing, wheezing, trouble breathing, chest tightness
- muscle weakness, incoordination, tremors, convulsions
- confusion, bizarre behavior (may appear drunk)
- tingling sensation or loss of feeling in face and extremities
- blistering or ulceration of skin
- nosebleed

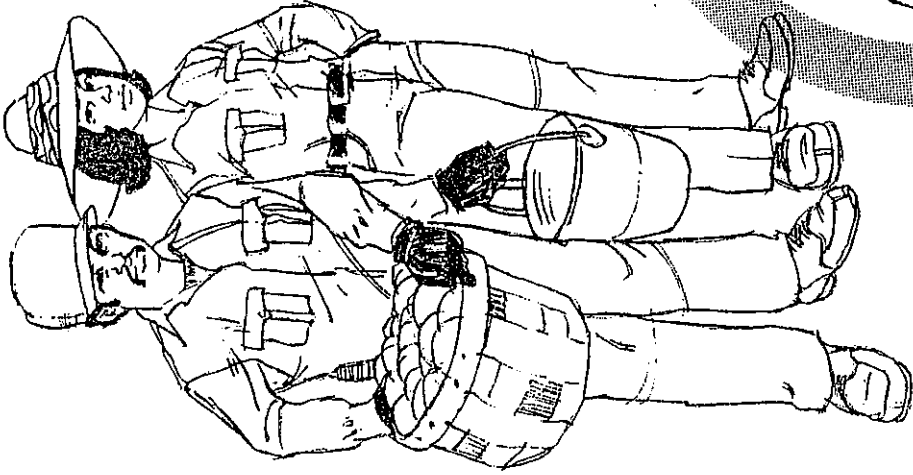
These symptoms can occur with other illnesses, so it is important for the person to know when they started feeling sick. If many people come down with the same symptoms at around the same time, it is important to learn where they were all working and when the crop was last sprayed and the name of the pesticide that was used.

If a person is exposed to pesticides:

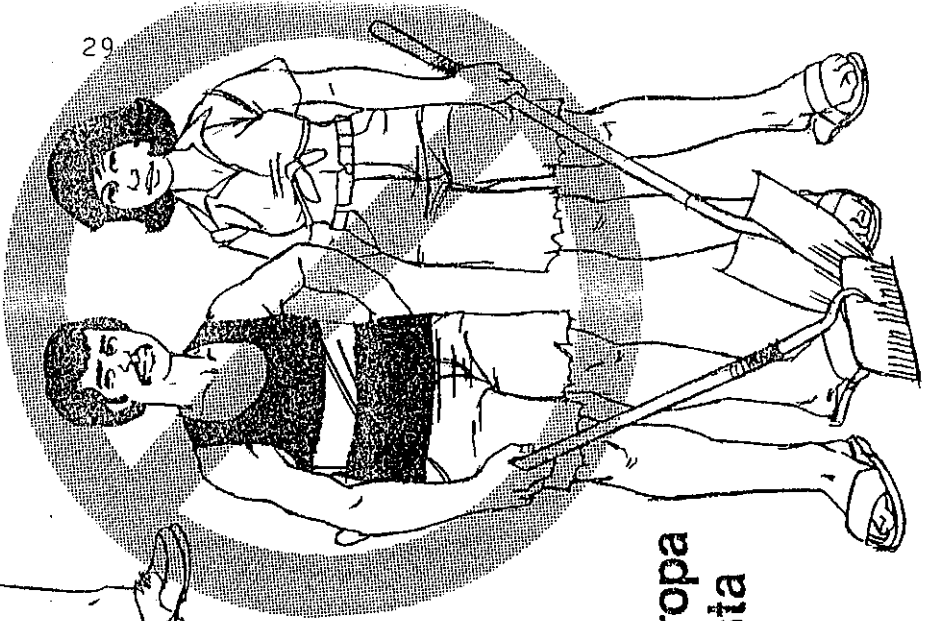
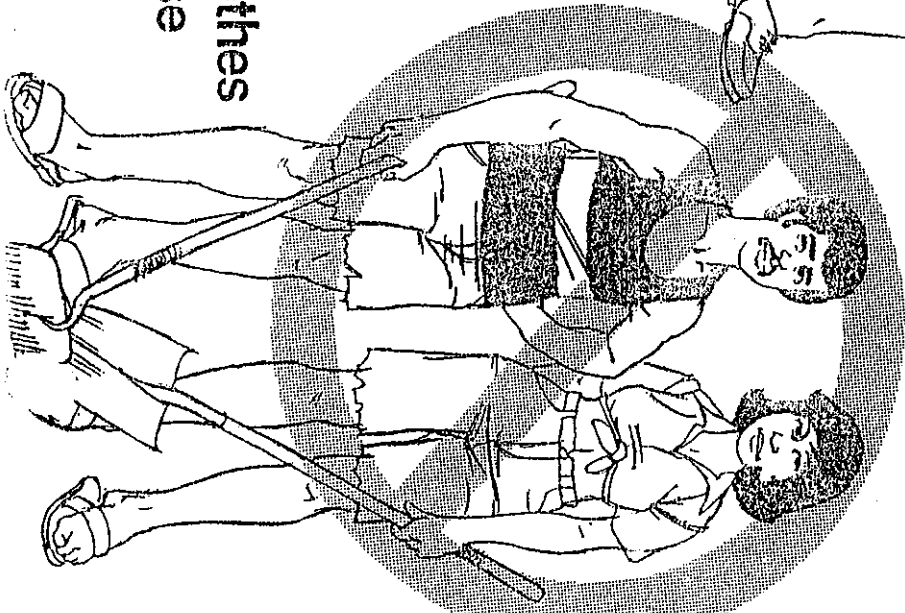
1. Take off the contaminated clothes
2. Take a bath to remove pesticide residues on the skin
3. If the person is feeling very sick, find out the name of the pesticide and go to the clinic or emergency room

**En el campo..:**

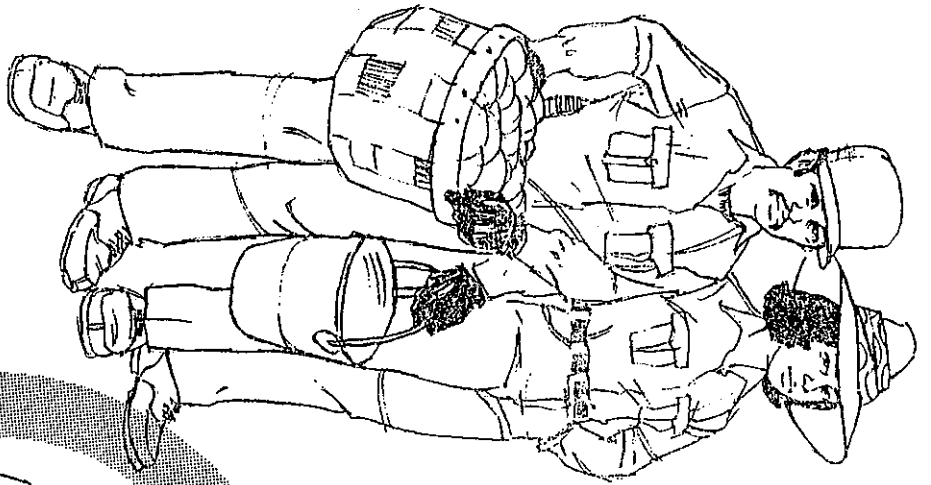
**Use ropa  
de trabajo  
que le cubra  
la piel**



**Do not  
wear clothes  
like these**

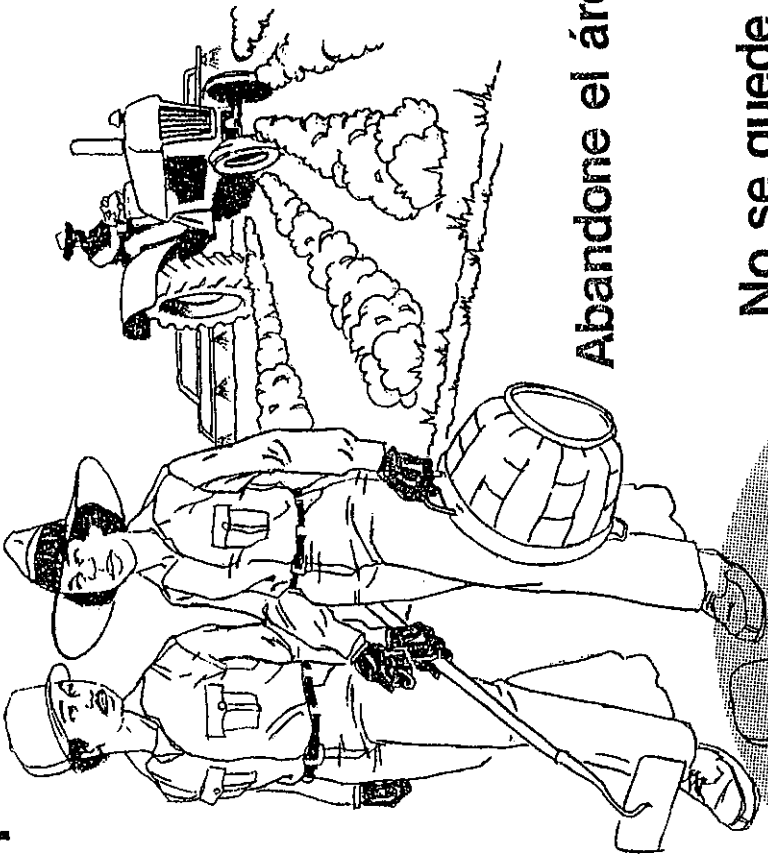


**No use ropa  
como ésta**



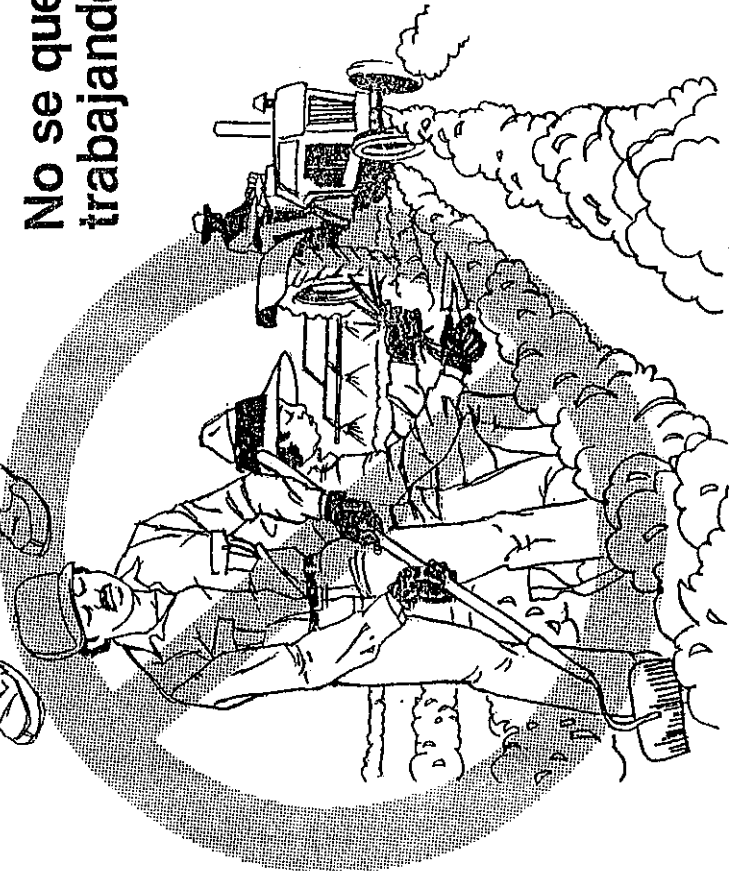
**In the field...  
Wear  
work clothes  
that cover  
your skin**

**Si se encuentra en un campo  
a punto de ser fumigado...**

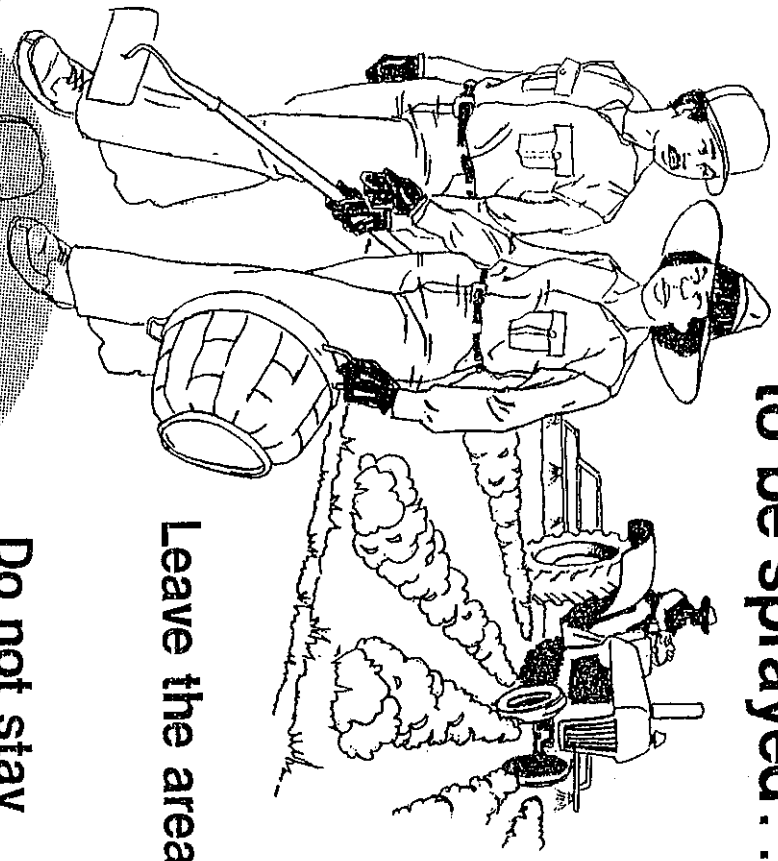


**Abandone el área**

**No se quede  
trabajando**

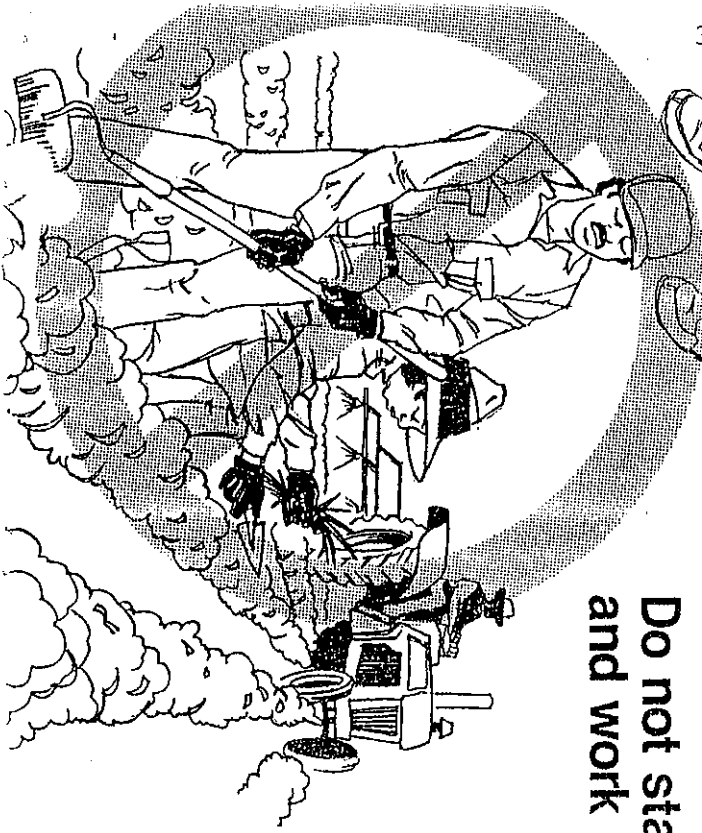


**If in a field about  
to be sprayed...**

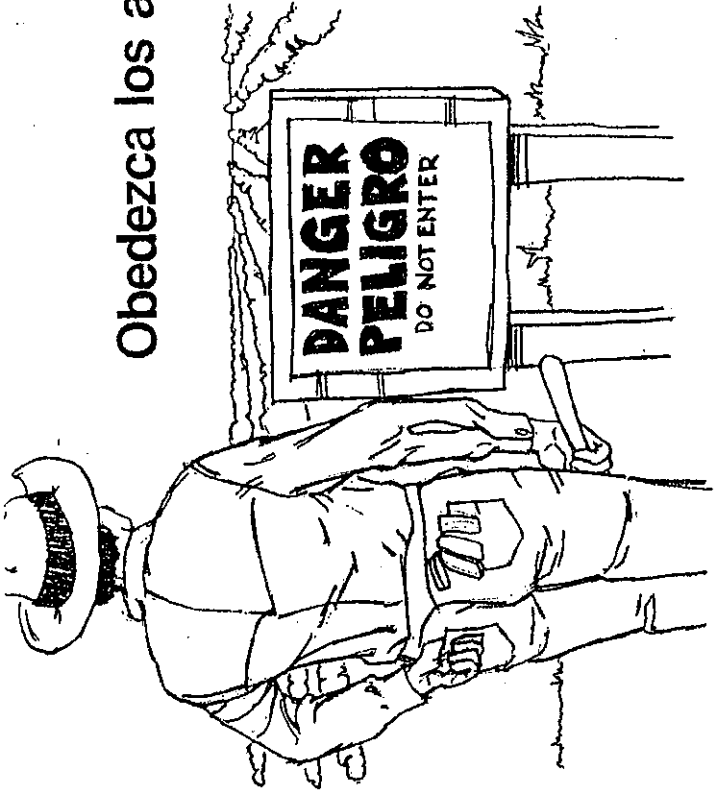


**Leave the area**

**Do not stay  
and work**



Obedezca los avisos



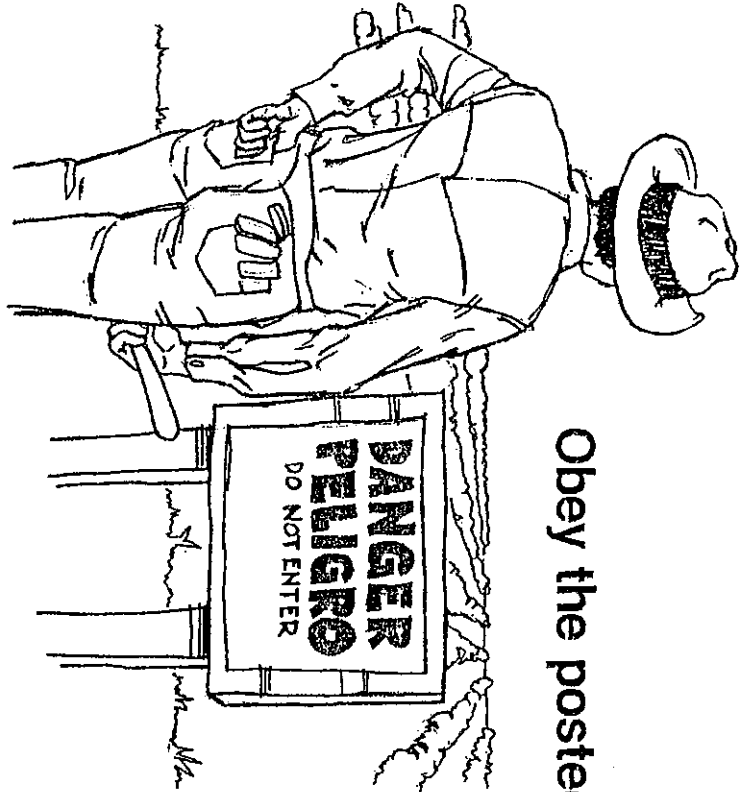
No vuelva mientras estén vigentes los avisos de advertencia



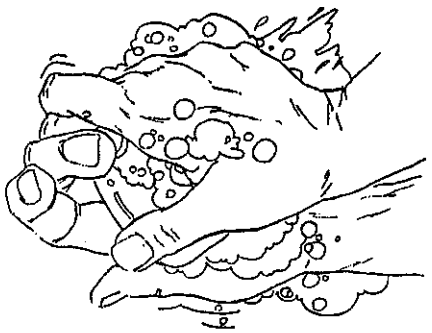
Do not return while sign is posted



Obey the posted sign



# While working in the field . . .



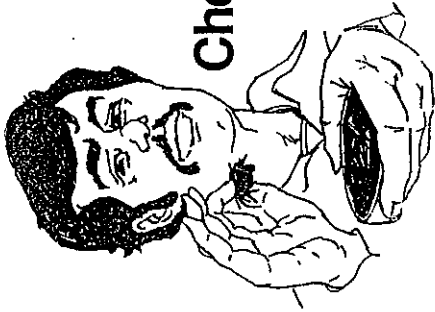
Wash hands with soap  
and water before you:



Drink



Smoke

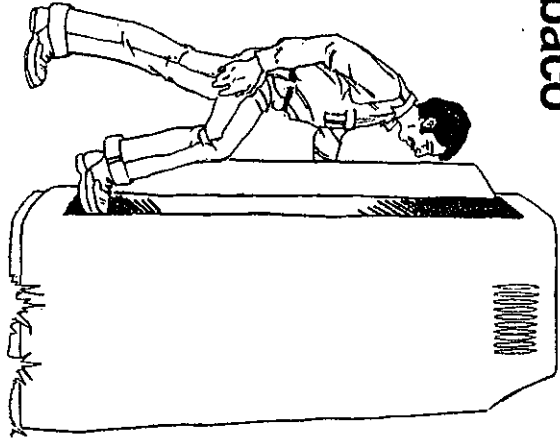


Chew tobacco



Eat

Ir al baño

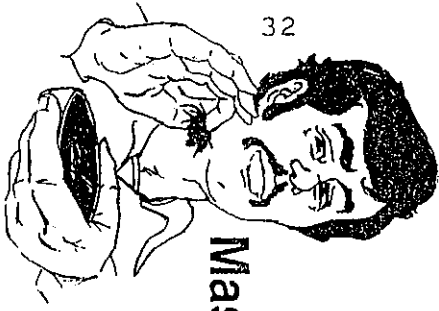


Use the toilet

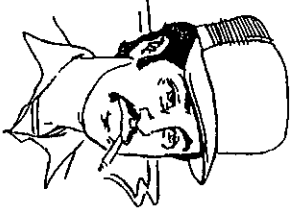
Comer



Mascar tabaco



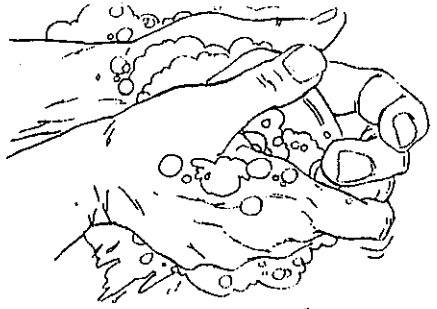
Fumar



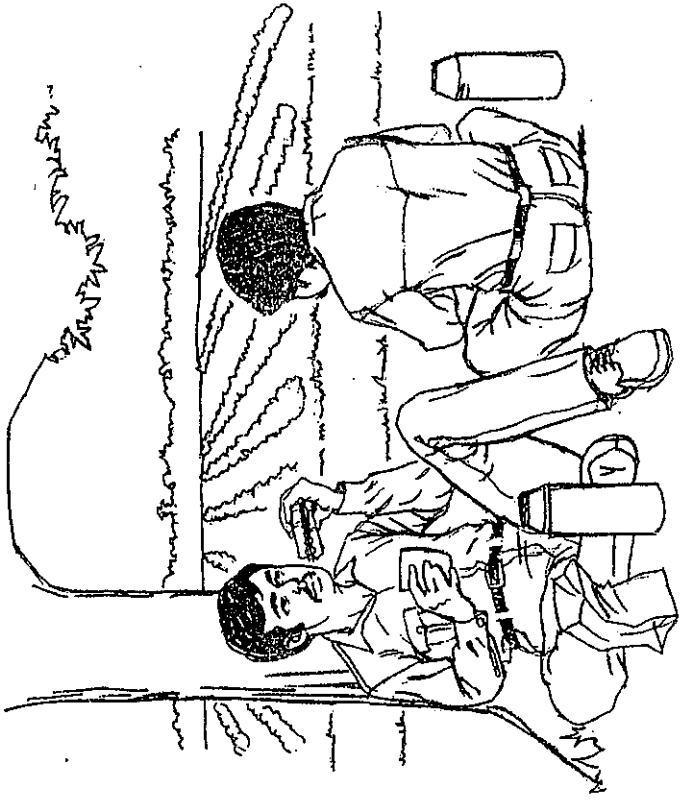
Beber



Lávese las manos con agua  
y jabón antes de:



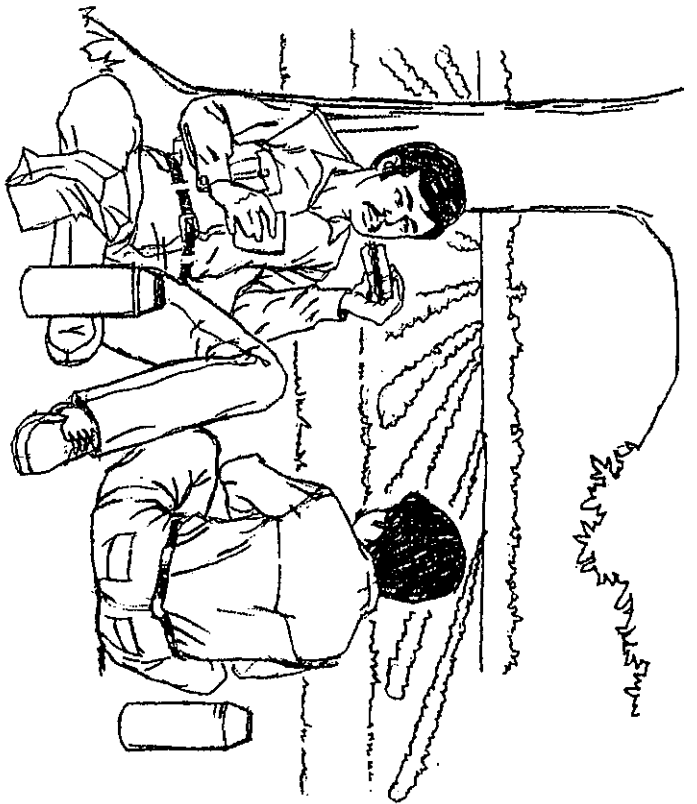
# Mientras esté trabajando en el campo . . .



**Eat away from a field**



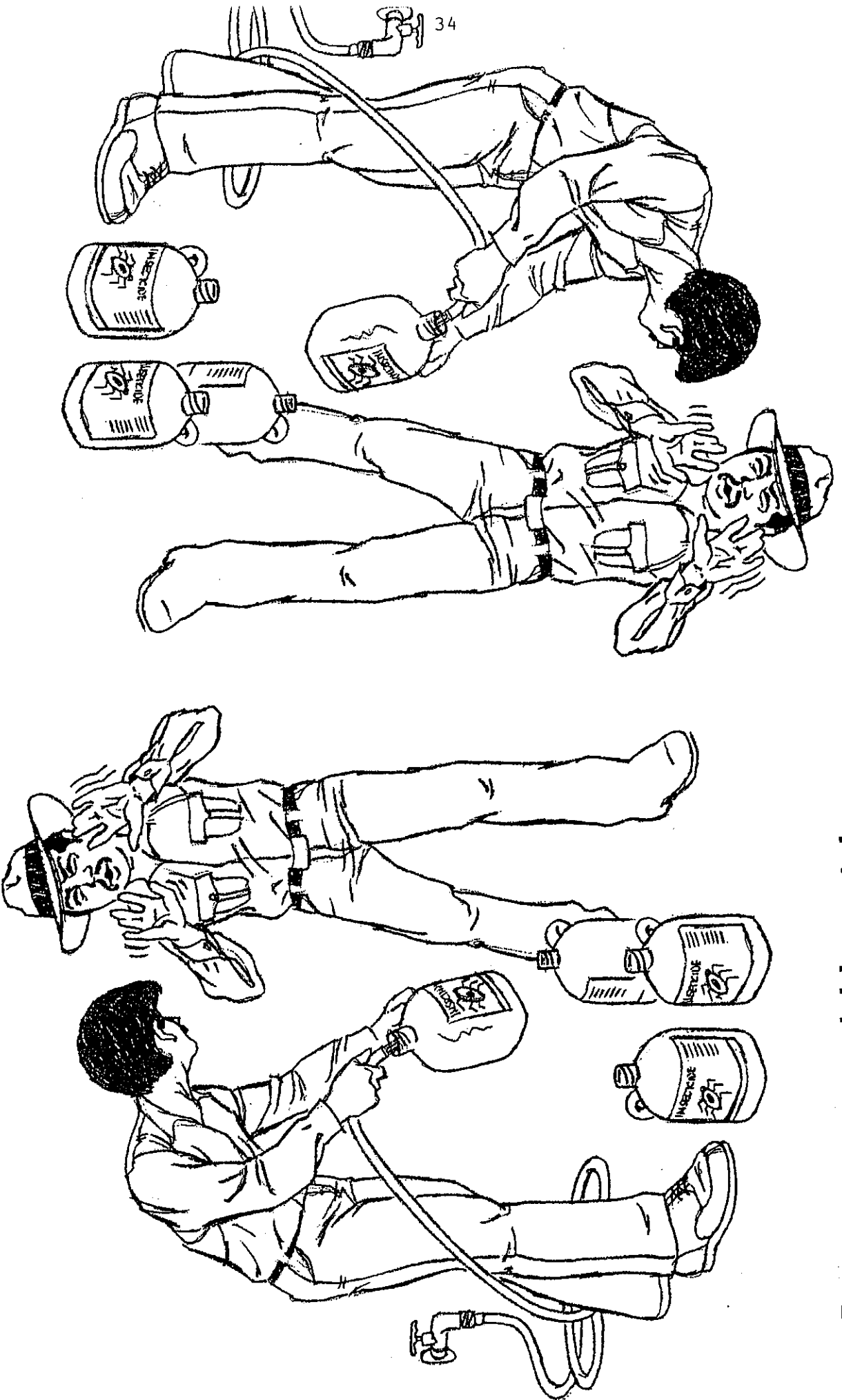
**Do not eat in the field**



**Coma lejos del campo**



**No coma en el campo**



**No vuelva a usar recipientes  
que contenían pesticidas**

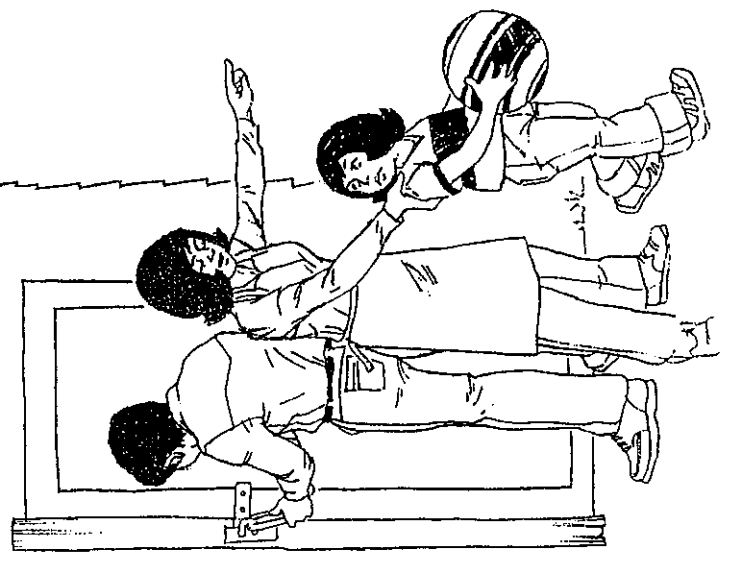
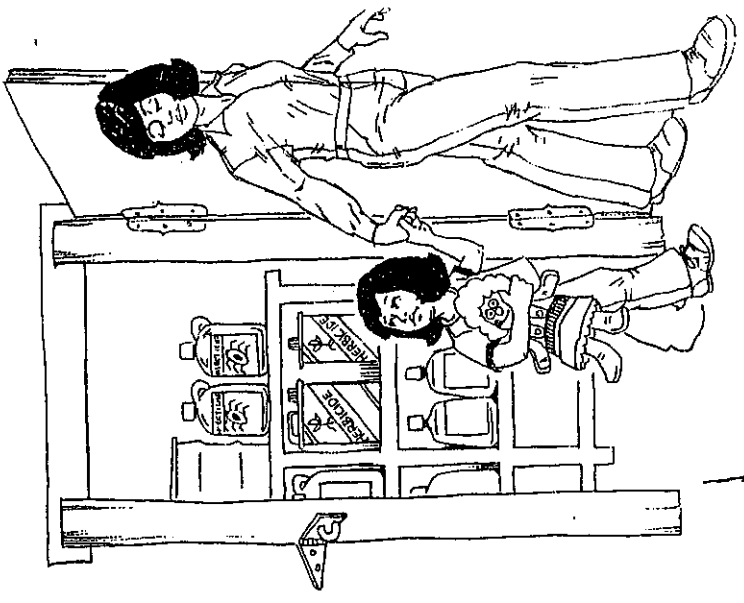
**Do not reuse pesticide containers**



**For children's safety . . .**

**Keep children  
away from:**

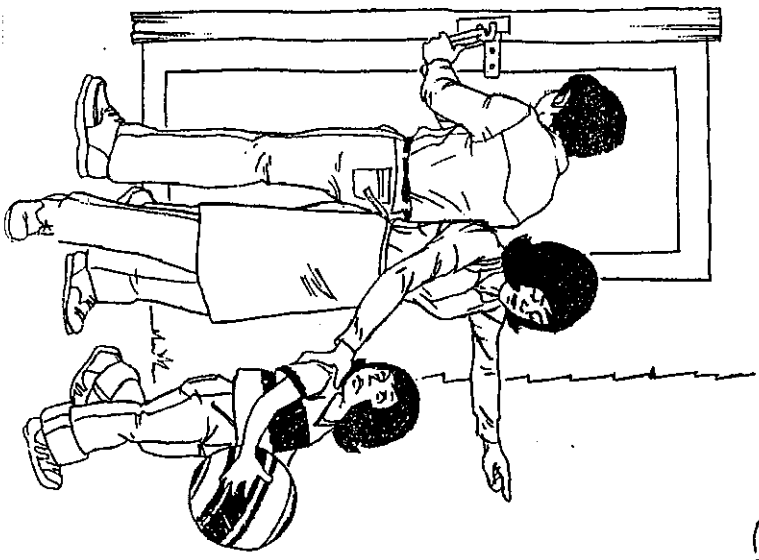
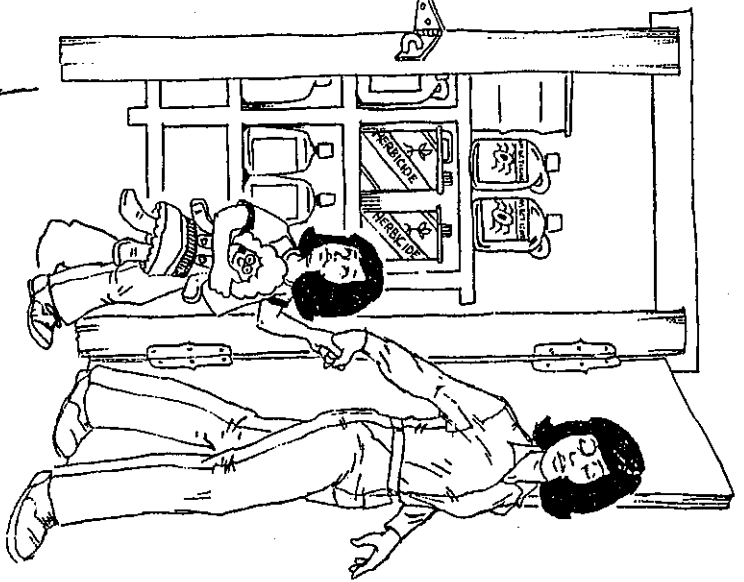
**Pesticide  
storage areas**



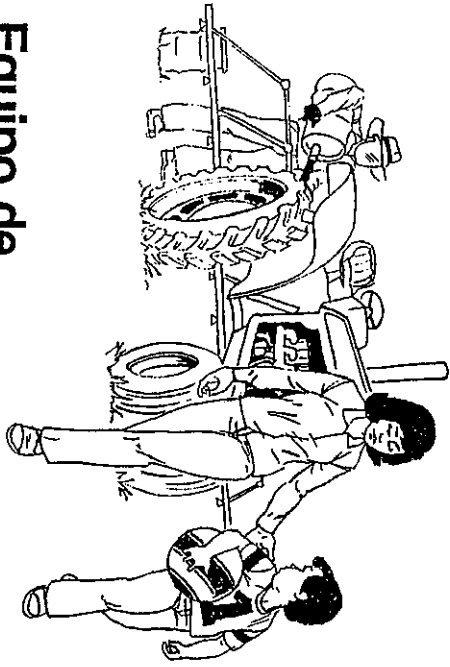
**Para seguridad de los niños . . .**

**Manténgalos  
lejos de:**

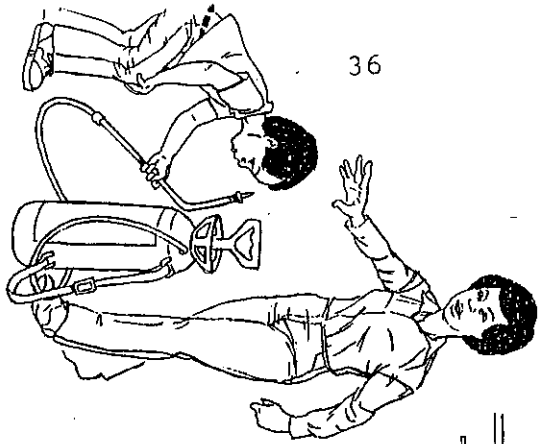
**Areas de  
almacenamiento  
de pesticidas**



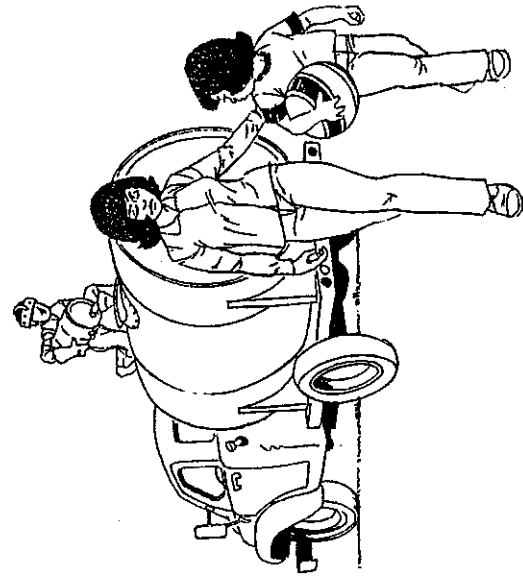
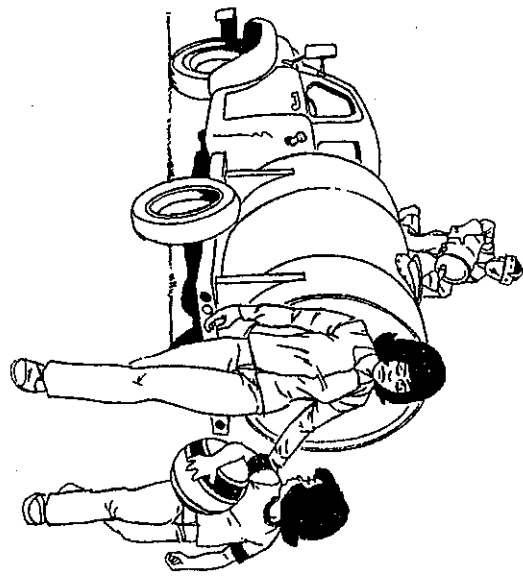
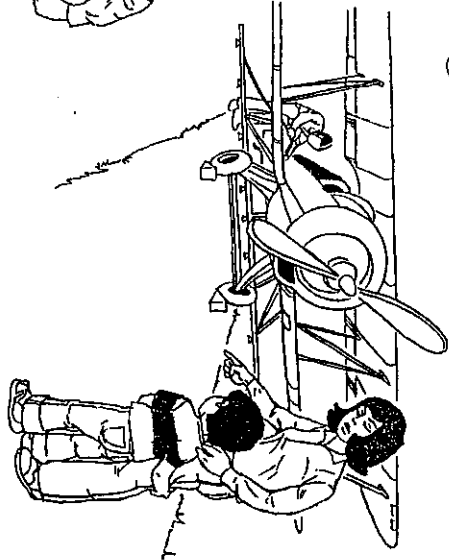
Manténgalos lejos de:



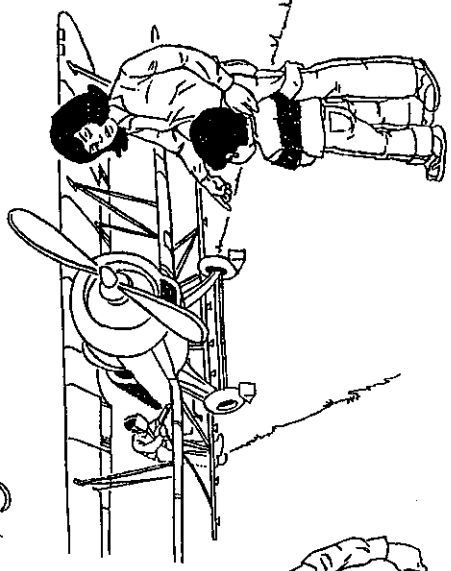
Equipo de fumigación



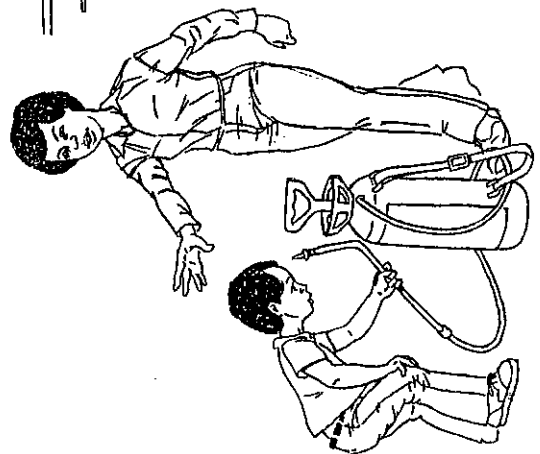
Areas donde se mezcla pesticidas



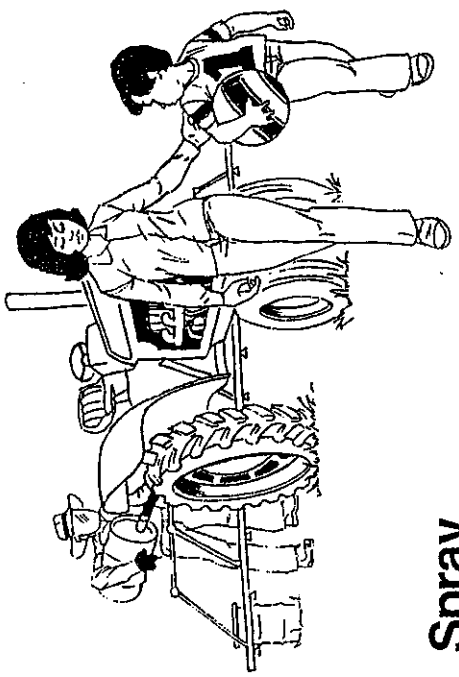
Pesticide mixing areas



Spray equipment



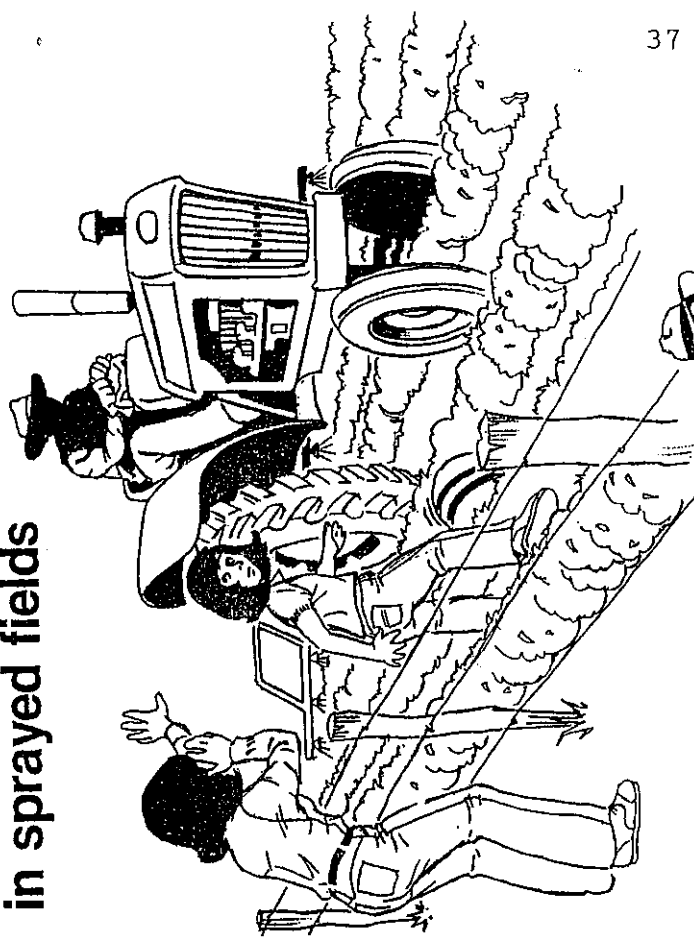
Keep children away from:



No permita que los niños beban  
o jueguen con agua cercana a campo

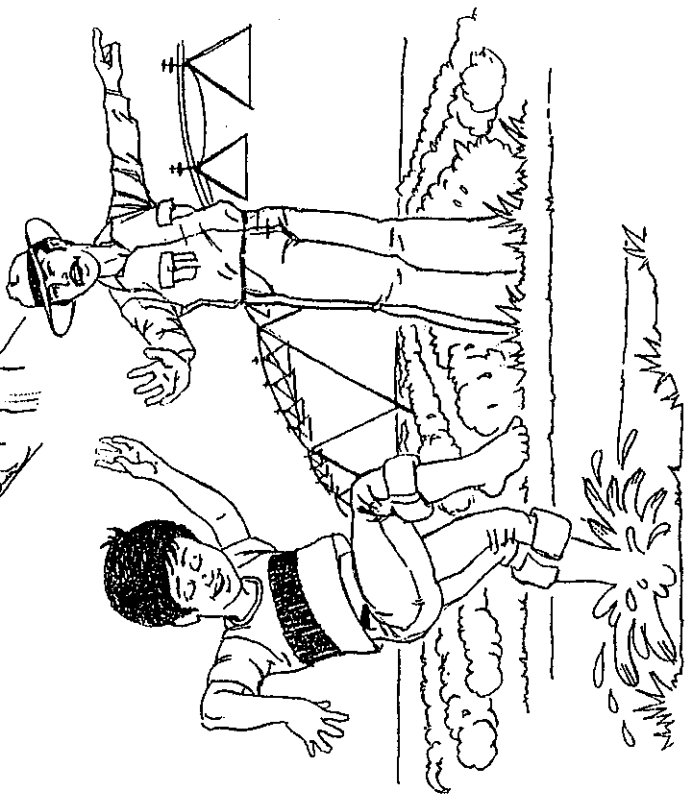


Don't let children play  
in sprayed fields

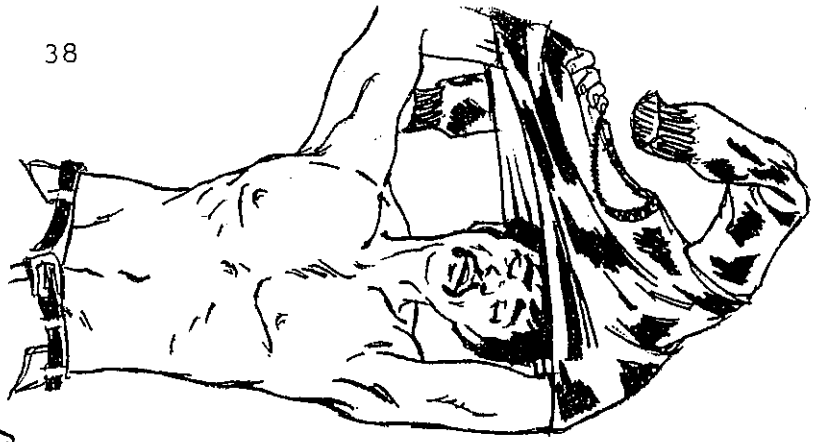


No permita que los niños  
jueguen en campos fumigados

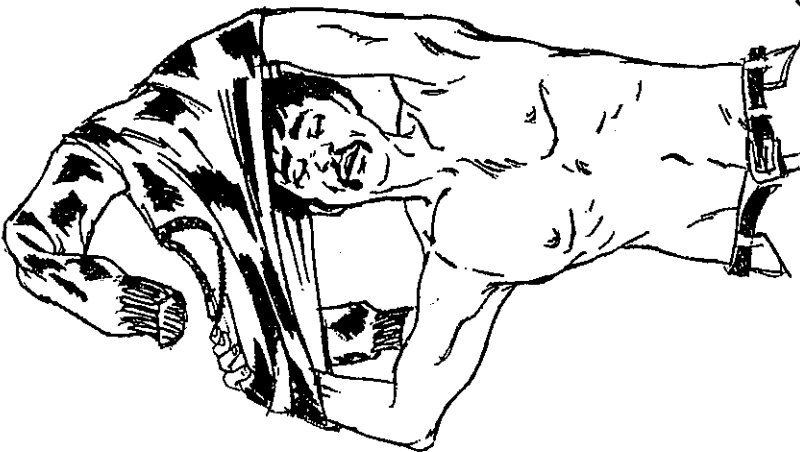
Don't let children drink  
or play in any water near a field



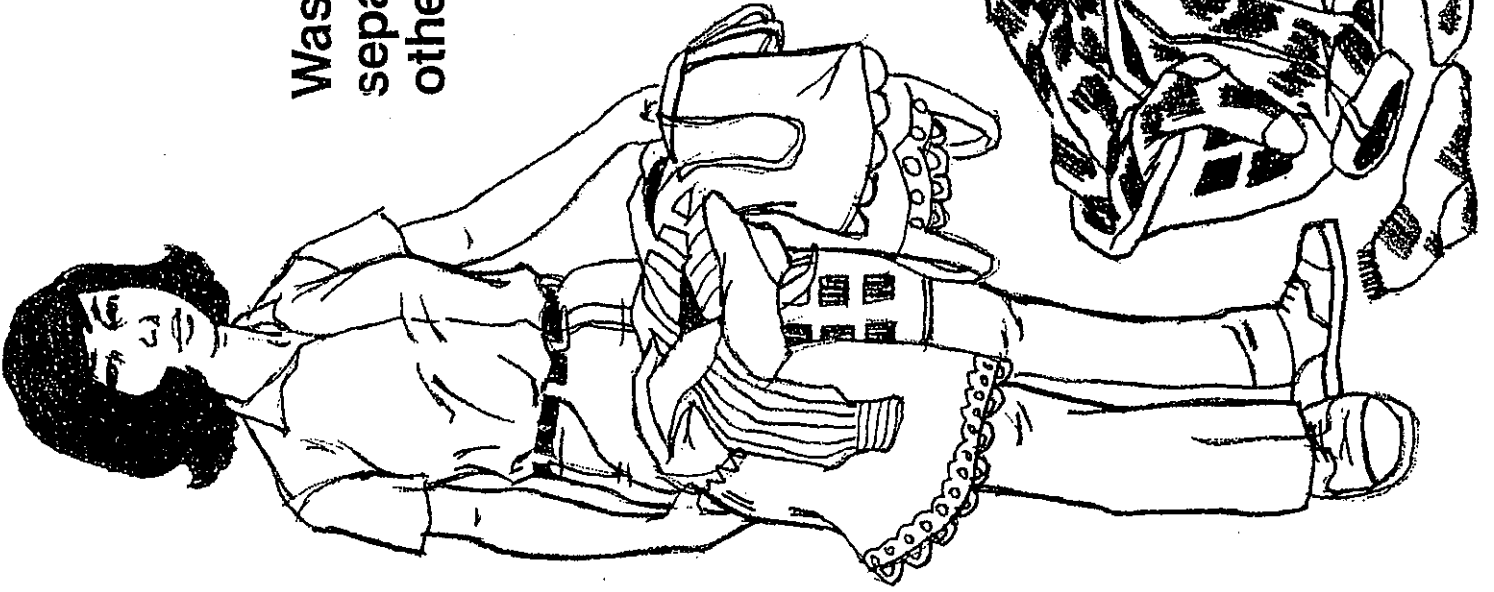
**Dúchese tan pronto regrese de trabajar**



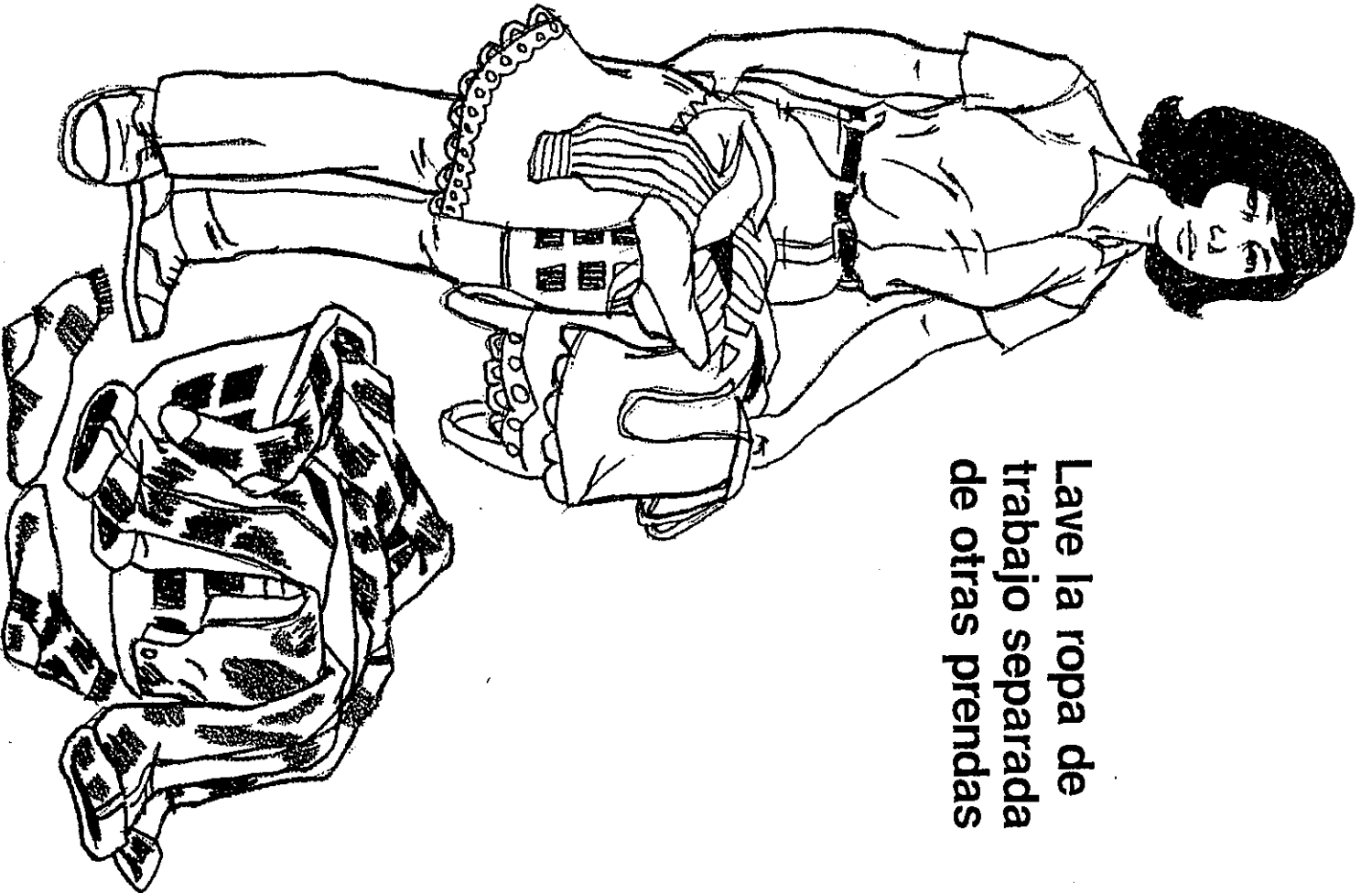
**Change clothes and shower right after work**



Wash work clothes  
separately from  
other clothes



Lave la ropa de  
trabajo separada  
de otras prendas

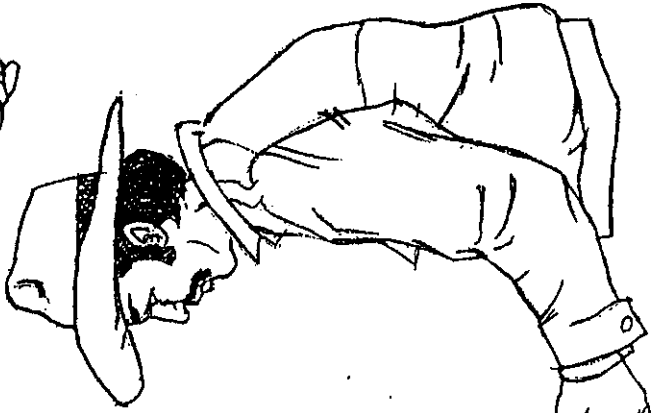
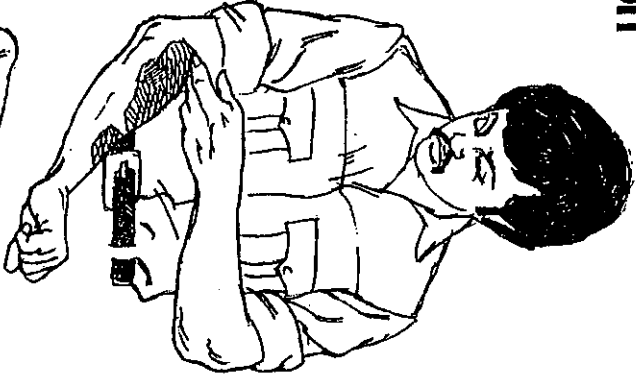


# Consejos para mayor seguridad . . .

En caso de contacto con un pesticida y si usted:

Nota una erupción en la piel

Se siente mal



Ask your boss which pesticide was used . . .

Get a rash

Feel sick

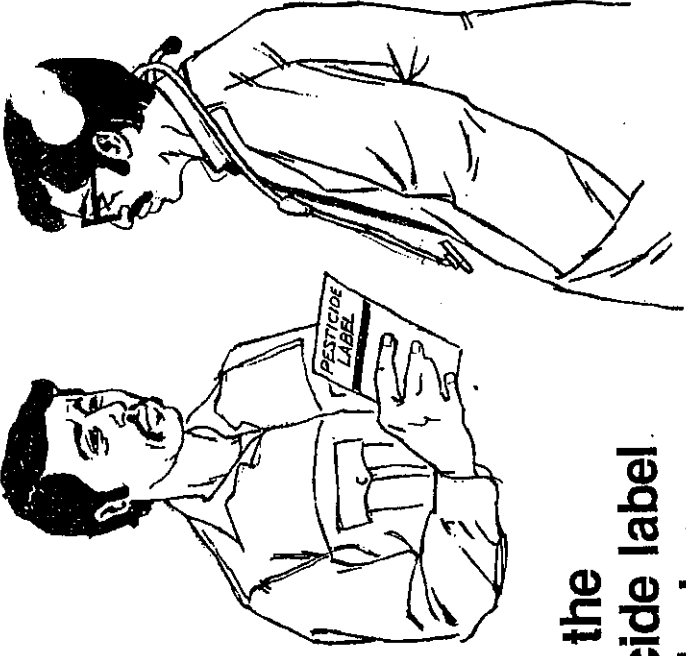
Pr , ante a su jefe que

noctivida ca nien



Saf y tips . . .

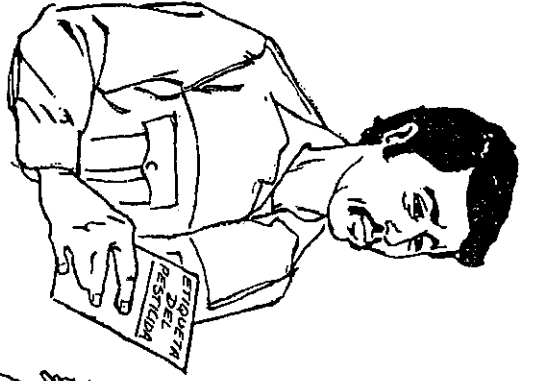
If you are exposed to a pesticide and you:



**Show the pesticide label to a doctor**



**Muestre la etiqueta del pesticida a un médico**



**DANGERS AROUND THE CAMP****Problem:**

Overloaded electrical outlets - these can start fires and short circuits

**Solution:**

Don't plug in more electrical cords into an outlet than there are sockets for; use a circuit breaker if more sockets are needed

**Problem:**

Worn out electrical cords - these can be fire hazards or shock someone

**Solution:**

Replace old electrical cords - never try to repair them with duck tape, they will still be unsafe

**Problem:**

Using stove to heat the house - fire hazard

**Solution:**

DON'T DO IT

**Problem:**

Stoves placed close to doors or windows - if a fire occurred, people may not be able to get out

**Solution:**

Place stoves away from ways out of the house

**Problem:**

Storing flammable products (paint thinner, gasoline) in the house - fire hazard; this could also lead to a poisoning incident if small children have access to the substances

**Solution:**

DON'T DO IT

**Problem:**

Torn screens that allow flies and other insects to get into the house and cause a health hazard - flies and other insects get germs on their feet and transfer them to food when they land on it - this is one way illnesses are spread



**Solution:**

Replace torn screens as soon as possible

**Problem:**

Trash and debris laying around the camp - ex. wood with nails sticking up, old car batteries (there is a dangerous fluid inside), broken glass, etc.

**Solution:**

All trash should be taken to a dump

**Problem:**

Inadequate trash storage before it is picked up or taken to a dump - attracts flies and other animals such as rats

**Solution:**

Use plastic bags, close them securely, and put them where animals can't get to them (trash can with a lid)

**Problem:**

Burning trash - paper burns well, but most other trash doesn't which leads to problems with flies and other pests - also, the burning of some trash can give off dangerous fumes

**Solution:**

DON'T DO IT - dispose of trash as the previous solution suggests

**Problem:**

Dirty toilets and outhouses, or portable toilets that aren't pumped out often enough

**Solution:**

Don't flush sanitary napkins or tampons down the toilet or into the portable toilet; only toilet paper should be flushed down these; dispose of feminine products and diapers in a covered trash can near the toilet; all of these things can be put down an outhouse hole (just use lime after each use to keep the smell down); keep toilet lid and the door to the bathroom closed at all times, even when not in use; and most importantly, keep the toilets clean; this will help keep down the number of flies; if there is a problem getting the portable toilets pumped out, the grower needs to know

**Problem:**

Contaminated water - water can be contaminated by washing dirty clothes (which could be contaminated with pesticides) near the water faucet or well - when the dirty water is thrown out it mixes with the clean water and makes people sick

**Solution:**

Washing machines should not be put near the drinking water supply - this is also important because of the risk of electricution if standing in water when using the machine - it should be placed on a cement slab with safe electrical outlets available

**Problem:**

Childhood poisonings - thousands of children are poisoned each year by common household products that parents didn't realize were poisonous as well as by medicine and chemicals that were carelessly stored - usually household poisons are thought to be paint thinner, bleach, etc., but some other common household products that are potentially poisonous are: shampoo, detergent, deoderant, mouthwash, vitamins, aspirin, which most people don't think of being dangerous - another thing that parents themselves need to be careful of is taking medicine that has expired - medicines are good for only a limited period of time, after which there chemical composition can change, and they may become poisonous

**Solution:**

- make sure all childproof packaging is secured correctly after use
- keep potentially poisonous household products and all medicines out of children's sight and reach
- store medicines away from household products
- never put medicines or chemicals in a cup or soft drink bottle because someone may accidentally drink it
- read the warning or caution labels on all products that have them
- avoid taking medicines in front of children - they may learn to imitate your actions
- if you are called to the door or telephone while you are using a potentially harmful substance, take it with you, so the child won't get into it when you are gone
- have the phone number to the nearest doctor, poison control center, or hospital available in case an accident occurs

**Problem:**

Wild animals - their bites are dangerous and can spread diseases, like rabies

**Solution:**

It is illegal and dangerous to keep wild animals, so don't try to play with, catch, or keep them; notify animal control if there is a problem

- \* Keep the camp clean. The major importance of this is to keep flies, other insects, rats, and other wild animals which spread disease away. It also makes the camp nicer to live in.

Perform the following demonstration to show the migrants how pesticides are able to contaminate their clothing and skin. Emphasize the fact that when they come home from work, they can produce potentially unhealthy situations.

1. Wet one of the dark colored t-shirts with water to represent perspiration on a farmworker's shirt when he/she is working.
2. Sprinkle the t-shirt with flour. This represents a pesticide in a dust form. Show how it sticks to the t-shirt.
3. Keep that t-shirt in sight, then take the second t-shirt and put a layer of paper towels inside the shirt. Take the can of Raid (or any household insecticide - this represents the liquid form of pesticides) and spray the outside of the shirt.
4. Remove the paper towels and show how the insecticide (pesticide) soaks through onto the paper towels which represent the farmworker's skin.
5. Next demonstrate the contamination of waste water from clothes washing. Wash both of the t-shirts used in the experiments above in the bucket of water. If the water doesn't appear dirty, explain that even though it's not visible, the water is contaminated with the pesticides that were on the shirts.
6. Ask them where their waste water is thrown out. Explain that if the water is thrown out near the clean water source, the clean water can be contaminated and make people sick. It is best to throw wash water out far away from the house. It is also important to tell the children not to play around that area.
7. Explain that they should wash their work clothes seperately to avoid contaminating their other clothes.

## REFERNCES

- "AIDS News." People of Color Against AIDS Network. 1988.
- "Chlamydia." SCDHEC.
- "Gonorrhea, Syphilis, and You." SCDHEC.
- "Health Provider Guide to Evaluation of Pesticide Exposure of Farm Workers." South Carolina Area Health Education Consortium. 1991. pp. IV-3 - IV-9.
- "Herpes - There's No Cure, Only Prevention." SCDHEC.
- Kettinger, Lynda, M.P.H. Enlightening South Carolina through: AIDS Projects. 1985. pp. 8-12, 14-20, 23-25.
- "Para La Buena Salud de Ella." American Social Health Association.
- Parasitic Infections. The Merck Manual, 14th Ed. 1982. pp. 231-238, 247-249, 257-259, 2044-2046.
- Roberts, Darrel L. Assisting Victims of Farm Accidents. Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service. 1989. pp. 1-3, 11-12, 15-18.
- Robinson, June G., R.D., M.P.H. Teaching Notes to the Camp Health Aide Manual. Midwest Migrant Health Information Office. 1990. pp. 16-18, 57-66, 80-81, 83-84.
- "Safety Emblem for Slow Vehicles." Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service. 1971.
- "Sexually Transmitted Diseases - Know the Facts." SCDHEC.
- South Carolina Department of Highway and Public Transportation.
- "The Facts About AIDS." SCDHEC.
- Werner, David. Where There is No Doctor. Hesperian Foundation. 1990. pp. 131-145.
- "Work Smart...Work Safely...With Farm Chemicals." National Agricultural Chemicals Association. 1985.