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Health Risks Related to Agricultural Activities in Rural Countries of the Venezuela West.

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Abstract

Agriculture is one of the most diffused economical activities in the world. The technologies that sustain their development introduce risks not only for the quality and quantity of the natural resources, the environment in general, but also the health of rural people. To these circumstances the deficient environmental sanitation systems and economical disadvantages that affect the rural areas are added. In this article a series of health risks associated to the agricultural activities and the rural areas are analyzed. These were identified in studies done in some agricultural counties of the Venezuelan west.

The following health risks groups were identified in this research: Occupational risks, which is integrated by inappropriate pesticide use, deficient pesticide transport and storage, deficient personal protection for the pesticide application, inappropriate farming tools use, participation of children in farm work, permanent contact with earth, physical effort and corporal position in the work, compressions and vibrations by the motor equipments, and residual water use.

Others important health risks associated to the rural areas are constituted by those related to the environmental sanitation. In this group there are items like deficient water quality for the people consumption, deficient residual water treatment, deficient solid waste treatment, and existence of insect habitats.

The housing conditions involve health risks, like its inappropriate characteristics, that do not offer security for its occupants, the overcrowding and the deficient aeration.

Finally, the others health risks groups are associated to the lifestyle, and the social and cultural conditions of the rural people (poverty, illiteracy and laboral encouragement).

Keywords: Agriculture, environment, health, rural areas