

Grant aids farm worker health care

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The Davis-based California Institute for Rural Studies has received a \$140,000 grant from the Sierra Health Foundation to establish an innovative health plan for farm workers.

"Promotores de Salud," Advisers for Health), will seek to improve health care access for more than 80,000 Spanish-speaking farm workers and their families in Yolo, Solano, Colusa, Yuba and Sutter counties.

"A gap in the health care system limits use of existing medical services for farm workers and their families," said the institute's Executive Director Don Villarejo. "Many Latino/Hispanic farm workers are unaware of existing services, postpone medical

care or use emergency room care. Health care providers, on the other hand, face cultural and language barriers that limit services to and treatment of this needy population."

The project will recruit lay health advisers, "promotores," from farm worker communities, providing health information and referrals and improving farm workers' awareness of existing services. They will also organize meetings and work to improve transportation and other problems that restrict farm workers' access to health care.

The project is an expanded effort of Festival de la Salud, a voluntary association that has conducted a health fair for low-in-

come residents of the lower Sacramento Valley for the last two years.

The California Institute for Rural Studies is a non-profit research and advocacy organization. It studies agricultural, labor and environmental issues and has extensive experience in coordinating rural community projects.

The private, non-profit Sierra Health Foundation awards grants to support health-related activities in 26 Northern California counties. Since 1984, the foundation has awarded nearly 600 grants totaling more than \$15 million, and has established itself as one of the state's largest philanthropic organizations devoted to health.