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For Immediate Release

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NCAE Partners with AgConex to Source CDC/WHO Approved Vaccines in Mexico

(Washington, D.C.) The National Council of Agricultural Employers (NCAE) has partnered with AgConex to source CDC/WHO approved vaccines in Mexico for H-2A Temporary Workers. Mexico is the largest provider of H-2A Temporary Agricultural Workers to U.S. farms and ranches.

“Last season, NCAE members worked diligently to get farmworkers vaccinated when vaccines became available here in the U.S.,” noted Michael Marsh, President and CEO of NCAE.

“However, there are several challenges for American farmers and ranchers with the Biden Administration’s recent requirement that, effective January 22, 2022, all essential workers seeking to transit to temporary seasonal agricultural jobs in the U.S. must first provide proof of being fully vaccinated with a CDC/WHO approved vaccine against COVID-19.”

According to Marsh, “Last season, thousands of workers returned home at the conclusion of their contracts prior to vaccines being made widely available to the public here in the U.S. Even though many temporary workers received the vaccine in clinics set up around the country, not all did. And although the U.S. donated millions of doses of vaccine to Mexico, it appears much of the vaccine made available to potential workers in rural areas of Mexico are not CDC/WHO approved vaccines.”

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Last fiscal year, more than 258,000 temporary foreign workers received H-2A visas to fill the more than 317,000 farm and ranch jobs for which no qualified, willing, and available domestic workers could be recruited. This was an increase of approximately 21% in the number of temporary foreign workers employed in the prior fiscal year. Early data from the U.S. Department of Labor indicates the FY 2021 record demand for temporary seasonal H-2A workers will be eclipsed this year.

“The unintended consequence of the Administration’s regulation is that supply chain infirmities created by the pandemic are likely to be exacerbated by this requirement. We have had several reports already of potential workers being stymied in their attempts to acquire CDC/WHO approved vaccinations,” said Marsh. “This is the reason we have searched for an in-country option to mitigate the reality that too few approved vaccines have been provided to H-2A eligible workers in Mexico.”

According to Grant Thompson, President of AgConex, “The employer typically provides us a list that includes contact information for the workers. Our customer service people in Mexico contact the employees directly (by phone or email) to help them schedule a vaccination. We’re excited to have this opportunity to partner with NCAE and help solve this challenge for America’s farm and ranch families.”

AgConex is a Company Headquartered in Boise, ID, that has created a call center specifically to assist growers with testing and vaccination services in Mexico.

NCAE is the national trade association focusing on agricultural labor issues from the employer’s viewpoint.