

Anti-SARS-CoV-2 Seroprevalence among Seasonal Field Workers in Lower Saxony – Risk-Perception and Protective Behaviour

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Seasonal field workers (FW) are an at-risk group for SARS-CoV-2 (SC2) infection. Outbreaks of SC2 among FW were reported in Germany (D). The study aimed to estimate prevalence of SC2-IgG (SC2-P) among FW and to assess perception of risk for SC2 to develop targeted public health measures.

In 2021 and 2022 sera from FW at two farms in Lower Saxony (LS) were tested for SC2 by ELISA. Data on demographics, risk behaviour, disease awareness and housing conditions was collected by a multilingual questionnaire.

189 FW (median age 45 years, 58% male) from Poland (PL) (59%), Romania (RO) (18.0%) and D (23%) participated. SC2-P of 34 (18%) FW corresponded to status after infection; SC2-P of 34 (18%) FW indicated status after vaccination. 19 (56%) FW reported previous infection with SC2; 21 (62%) FW reported vaccination. Out of 140 FW 49% lived in single rooms; 6% shared rooms with more than 3 people. 46% FW reported having been in quarantine (40%) or isolation (6%). FW adhered to preventive measures e.g. frequent handwashing (98%), ventilation (95%), masks (93%) and social distancing during work (90%) or leisure (85%). On a scale of 1 to 6, FW from RO scored higher for personal risk for SC2 (4.9) than FW from D (3.4) or PL (2.6).

SC2-P among FW in LS was 18%; FW from RO had lowest SC2-P. Data indicate that 44% of infections had not been diagnosed. Due to workplace arrangements FW had a high adherence to preventive measures. Data will be used to develop public health measures for FW.

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Senior Scientist

Junior Scientist Status

No, I am not a Junior Scientist.

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