

A SUMMARY OF THE PULSE SWINE STUDY

ABOUT THE STUDY

In November 2022, a team of researchers from the **University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)**, started a study to understand how the speed of pork processing lines affects workers' health and safety. This work was supported by the **USDA Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS)**.

Between July 2024 and January 2025, they visited 6 pork processing plants and worked with over 500 workers to gather information.



Scan the QR code for more information on the PULSE Study

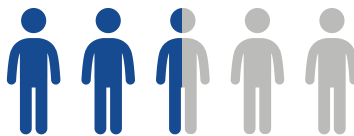
For questions, contact coeh@berkeley.edu

STUDY QUESTIONS

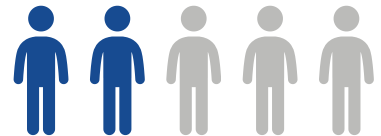
- How does the speed of swine and pork processing affect the workers' chances of hurting their muscles or joints?
- Are workers exposed to harmful chemicals, like peracetic acid (PAA), that may affect their breathing, skin or eyes?

WHAT WE FOUND

46% of workers were found to have a high chance of getting muscle and joint problems



2 in 5 evaluated workers said they had medium to very bad pain from their job in the past year



The peracetic acid (PAA) levels in the air were mostly all safe



Workers who handled more hog parts per minute are more likely to get hurt with injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome

WHAT CAN COMPANIES DO?

The study suggests these ways to help improve safety:

- ✓ Add more workers to share the work and improve safety
- ✓ Slow the speed of the hog parts in front of each worker
- ✓ Follow safety tips like **keeping knives sharp** and using **ergonomics programs** that help prevent injuries
- ✓ Provide **better medical support** and help workers get help **when pain first starts**, so injuries don't get worse

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ✓ **Work with company safety teams and/or union safety representatives** to ask for help or report pain

This study could not have happened without the workers who helped us. Thank you for giving your time and helping us learn more.

We want to help make poultry processing jobs safer and healthier for everyone.