Reviewer's report

Title: Employment in the Ecuadorian Cut-Flower Industry and the Risk of Spontaneous Abortion

Version: 1 Date: 11 June 2009

Reviewer: David Camann

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This paper makes an important contribution regarding possible association of spontaneous abortion among female agricultural workers with occupational pesticide exposure. The authors are careful to discuss overexertion as an alternative explanation to pesticide exposure, and to discuss the limitations inherent in this secondary analysis of data from their original study of pesticide exposure and delayed neurobehavioral development in infants and young children. They also offer guidance on performing the needed follow-up study.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. p. 2. Results. Correct “an SABs” to singular or plural in the sentence beginning: “Odds of reporting an SABs increased”

2. p. 2. Conclusions. This exploratory analysis suggests a potential positive association, rather than a negative association, between employment in the cut-flower industry and SAB, since you “found an excess of reported spontaneous abortion among women working in the Ecuadorian cut-flower industry.”

3. p. 5. The reported n=126 mothers who reported only one pregnancy appears inconsistent with other numbers of mothers reported in this paragraph: 219 mothers participated (in 2003 study) – 126 mothers who reported only one pregnancy – 2 exclusions = 91 eligible for this analysis, whereas you provide data for 153 eligibles as stated in this paragraph and reported in the three tables.

4. p.11. Need to insert “in” before reproductive in the sentence ending: “a male-mediated role reproductive toxicity.”

5. Table 2. Change footnote a from “< 12 months” to # 12 months.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a
statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.