Utility Type Vehicles (UTVs) are a vital piece of equipment used during setup and the duration of Farm Science Review. UTVs are utilized by FSR committee members, CFAES personnel and vendors to increase their capacity to function during the event.

It is very important that those operating UTVs do so in a safe manner to minimize the risk of injury and/or property damage. With over 120,000 attendees each year, safe operation is essential to ensure there are no incidents involving attendees enjoying the show.

The following information provides operational and safety guidelines to follow while operating a UTV at Farm Science Review.

Requirements to Operate
Based on driving policies established by Ohio State University, the following criteria must be met before operating a UTV during Farm Science Review:
- Must be a University employee or “Authorized Driver”.
- Must have a valid drivers license.
- Be approved by FSR management.
- Follow all traffic laws and FSR policies.
- Operate vehicles in a safe and responsible manner.

UTV Compared to a Highway Vehicle
To safely operate a UTV the operator must understand the stability, drive characteristics, and load capacity of the unit. Compared to a car or pickup truck a UTV:
• Has a smaller wheel base.
• Has a higher center of gravity.
• Center of gravity is always moving during operation.
• Has lower pressure, off-road tires.

All of these factors can contribute to a UTV being less stable and more prone to roll or flip if driven too fast or steered abruptly.

Potential UTV Hazards
There are several hazards associated with UTV operation during the event.
• Rolling over from steep slopes, dangerous terrain, or fast turns.
• Collision with another vehicle or object.
• Driving around blind corners or having an obstructed view.
• Injury from falling from the UTV while in operation or mounting and dismounting.
• Injury to driver and passengers from arms and legs being outside the cab area.
• Injury to driver and passengers from shifting loads in cargo area.
• Injury to pedestrians from being struck by the UTV or from loads falling off of UTVs.
• Injury to the eyes from dust and insects while the UTV is in motion.
• Distractions from cell phones or passengers.
• Pinch points, cut points, wrap points, or burns while operating certain functions of the UTV.

A safe operator must be able to recognize potential hazards and react accordingly.
Defensive Driving

It is important to drive in a defensive manner. In many cases attendees or other operators may not be paying attention. Operators should:

• Stop at all “blind intersections” and then proceed with caution.
• Yield the right of way to pedestrians.
• Ensure other drivers have seen the UTV prior to progressing. Operators must **not** assume that other vehicle drivers will give the “right of way”.
• Verify safety prior to all turns. Operators must look over the shoulder in the direction of travel prior to the turn to check for other vehicles or pedestrians.

Passenger Safety

Operators are also responsible for the safety of their passengers. Safety requirements for passengers include:

• Do not exceed the number of passengers than the number of seats / seat belts available.
• No passengers are allowed to ride in cargo bed.
• Keep head, legs and arms within the cab.
• Remain in seats and ensure seat belts are properly fastened.

Using a UTV during Farm Science Review

• Before initial use, inspect machine by walking around it before starting. Check for flat tires, fluid leaks, or damage. Report any issues immediately.
• Understand how the controls function and how to operate the UTV.
• Seat belts for all passengers must be properly fastened during operation.
• Operators are prohibited from talking on a cell phone or texting.
• Operators are prohibited from use of audio headsets or ear buds.
• Designated travel directions have been established and the center path is to be used by golf carts and UTVs.

• Avoid driving in areas that are highly congested with pedestrians.
• When approaching pedestrians, use extreme caution and give pedestrians the right of way.
• Communicate your intentions to pedestrians or other drivers by using eye contact, hand signals, radio communication, or other means.
• When parking or stopping, do not block pedestrian or vehicle travel paths.
• Maintain a safe following distance from other UTVs, golf carts, shuttles or pedestrians even at slow speeds.
• When leaving a UTV unattended, the vehicle must be taken out of gear, ignition must be turned off and parking brake applied. Remove and secure the vehicle ignition key to prevent unauthorized use.

Public Road Operation

When traveling on the road from the show site to other areas, operators must:

• Drive at a safe speed given the operating conditions. Excessive speed requires a greater stopping distance and increases risk of tip over on corners.
• Follow the normal flow of traffic and **do not** pass shuttles.
• Be observant to pedestrians crossing the road at shuttle stops.
• Make sure any loads are properly secured.

Off Road Operation

When UTVs are operated off of roadways, operators must:

• Stay on designated “off-road” paths as much as possible.
• Be alert to ground hazards, look ahead, watching carefully for holes, ruts, uneven surfaces, or drop offs.
• Be aware of overhead clearance obstructions such as tree limbs.
• Reduce speed according to the terrain and visibility conditions.