

**AG SAFETY S.T.A.T. - SAFE TACTICS FOR AG TODAY**

Vol. 11 No. 5 May 2018

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**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/OSUAgSafety>

**ANNOUNCEMENTS –Women’s Tractor Operation and Safety Program**

The program will be held Saturday June 2<sup>nd</sup> at Brown’s Family Farm Market - 11620 Hamilton Cleves Rd, Hamilton, Ohio. This event empowers women to:

- become more comfortable with agricultural equipment
- have a greater knowledge of general operation
- become more safety minded while operating equipment

For more information visit: <https://u.osu.edu/ohwomeninag/2018/05/01/womens-tractor-operation-safety-program/>

**ANNOUNCEMENTS – New fact sheet: Safety Practices for a Tractor Mounted Post-Hole Digger**

OSU Ag Safety and Health has published a new “Safety Practices for a Tractor Mounted Post-Hole Digger” fact sheet. The fact sheet can be found on Ohioline at: <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/aex-5931>



**SAFETY RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT – OSU Ag Safety: Employee Safety**



This web page contains the occupational safety program and safety management materials specifically for OSU College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) employees. In addition, the site serves as an OSU Extension resource on safety and health compliance issues for those working in the agricultural industry. Along the left menu bar there are program "areas" to find more information, resources, and materials.

Here is the link to the page: <https://agsafety.osu.edu/programs/cfaes-osh>

**Ohio AgrAbility in Action: Becoming an Ohio AgrAbility Client**

**Laura Akgerman – Disability Services Coordinator for Ohio AgrAbility**

Ohio AgrAbility has been called “One of the Best Kept Secrets” in agriculture, and the Ohio AgrAbility team would like to change that to “The Best-Known Resource for Farming with a Disability”. Ohio

AgrAbility has a variety of services – on-farm assessments, fact sheets, educational presentations and displays. This article explains Ohio AgrAbility’s service process – from farm visit to Peer Network.

One of the missions of Ohio AgrAbility is to work with farmers with disabilities to identify ways to make changes or modifications to equipment, facilities or worksites to allow the farmer to continue farming.

The second mission of Ohio AgrAbility is to offer resources and education to all farmers on how to reduce the risks of injury and introduce modifications and technology that help farmers stay safe, and work more efficiently.

Ohio AgrAbility has a step-by-step process for working with farmers to determine if they are eligible for Ohio AgrAbility services. Our goal is always to meet the needs of Ohio’s farmers, and work with them to decide what services, assistive technology and modifications would be best for them.

**Glossary** - *Like any industry, we have our own acronyms and key words, and forget that not everyone is familiar with our lingo.*

**Assessments** – Report detailing farmer’s capability, disability, farm operation, job tasks, equipment/machinery, modifications, AT or services needed so that the farmer can continue working productively and safely.

**AT** – Assistive Technology, refers to equipment, software, and devices that are used to increase, maintain or improve independence, functional capability or productivity of an individual with a disability.

**Modifications** – Adjustments or attachments for machinery, equipment, buildings, worksites that make the original item easier and safer for the farmer to use. Example: adding additional steps and handrails to a tractor to make it easier to get on and off the tractor.

**OOD** – [Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities](#). Ohio’s Vocational Rehabilitation agency, charged with assisting Ohioans with disabilities to find or retain employment, may provide funds to purchase necessary AT and devices needed for employment.

**Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** – services for people with disabilities that help them to overcome and manage barriers (physical, environmental, societal) to continue or return to work, often administered by a government agency.

### **The Ohio AgrAbility Service Process**

**Introduction and initial contact** – Farmer or family member contacts Ohio AgrAbility (OAP) via [e-mail](#) or phone (614-292-0622). An OAP staff member will talk to you about your disability, what work you do, and how your disability is affecting your ability to do your work. We will share your information with one of the OAP Rural Rehabilitation Coordinators (RRC), who will call you and schedule a farm visit.

**Farm visit** – The RRC will talk to you about your work, if you can safely use your equipment and facilities, and ask how Ohio AgrAbility can help. The RRC will ask about your ability to pay for the AT and modifications needed to help you continue farming. OAP does not have funding to purchase any equipment or supplies for farmers.

The RRC will explain how Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) can work with farmers to modify equipment and facilities. They will ask questions to determine your eligibility for OOD services. You do not have to use OOD services, and there is no guarantee that you will be eligible for their services. OAP and RRCs get no financial benefits from referring you to OOD, or vendors that sell AT and

modifications. RRCs will suggest specific vendors or equipment because they know the quality and value is good and want to help you find the best equipment or AT for your needs.

**Recommendations and Referrals** - The RRCs will make suggestions on how to modify your facility or equipment to make it safer and more accessible. Some modifications are simple – lowering or raising a workbench to reduce strain on your back and shoulders while you work, or upgrading your tractor seat with an air ride or padded seat to ease the strain and pain from riding the tractor for hours every day. A common upgrade to equipment is to add handrails and additional steps so it is easier and safer to get on and off the tractor or other equipment. They may also suggest upgrades to the lighting in your barn and worksite, or tilt tables and chutes to manage your animals and make treating them safer for the farmer and the animal.

Rural Rehabilitation Coordinators work with the farmer, and OOD (if the farmer is an OOD client) to design and develop an individualized work, modifications and Assistive Technology plan for the farmer, making sure new equipment and AT are a good match for the farmer and the work environment.

**Plan Implementation** – If the farmer wants to implement the RRCs recommendations for modifications or AT, the RRCs will assist with looking at items and getting price quotes. When the equipment is delivered RRCs will usually be on hand to ensure that the correct equipment has been delivered and the farmer knows how to use it safely. The RRCs continue to work with farmers to make sure the new equipment and modifications are meeting the farmer’s needs, and to work with the farmer to solve problems and maintain productivity and success.

**Peer Network** – OAP has a strong Peer-to-Peer Network of farmers and their families who have worked with OAP throughout the years. The Peers meet a few times a year for workshops and networking. OAP staff introduces new AT and modifications, shares resources from OSU Extension, and talks about safety on the farm. Peers have time to talk to one another and build friendships and connections with other farmers from across the state.

OAP holds a Peer to Peer meeting at the Farm Science Review, you are welcome to come to the OAP tent to attend the meeting, and meet the Peers and OAP staff (meeting time, date and agenda will be announced in the August and September OAP in Actions columns).

Ohio AgrAbility in Action’s June column will review website resources, and educational workshops available from Ohio AgrAbility.

For more information, please contact Laura Akgerman, Ohio AgrAbility and OSU Extension Disability Services Coordinator, at [Akgerman.4@osu.edu](mailto:Akgerman.4@osu.edu), or 614-292-0622.

## **INJURY PREVENTION – Who Can Work on Your Farm**

**Emily G. Adams - Ohio State University Extension Educator, Coshocton County, Ohio**

It won’t be long until hay season will be upon us. For some farms that means more labor than usual is required to get all the jobs done. That labor may include your own children or grandchildren. Today we’ll take a look at what the law allows and also consider what types of jobs kids are capable of handling from a developmental standpoint.

One great reference to guide these considerations are “Youth on the Farm: What Type of Farm Work Can They Perform” by Peggy Hall and Catherine Daniels in the OSU Agricultural and Resource Law Program. Another very helpful publication is Penn State Extension’s “Children and Safety on the Farm.” The law treats the children you hire differently depending on their relationship to you. If you hire your own child or grandchild, Ohio and federal law allows you to have the child do any type of job, including

agricultural jobs that are categorized as hazardous. However, if you hire a student, neighbor, friend, niece, nephew, cousin, etc., then there are very specific rules about the jobs they can perform according to their age.

A 16 or 17 year old that you hire may perform any type of farm job, including those that are considered hazardous. If you hire a 14 or 15 year old, who is not your child or grandchild, then they may not perform hazardous jobs. There is an exception if they hold a certificate for tractor operation or machine operation from 4-H or agriculture education/ vocational agriculture training.

It is helpful to define what types of jobs are considered hazardous according to the state and federal law. These tasks include:

- Operating a tractor with over 20 PTO horsepower, or connecting or disconnecting an implement or any of its parts to or from such tractor.
- Operating or assisting to operate the following: grain combine, hay mower, forage harvester, hay baler, feed grinder, crop dryer, forage blower, auger conveyor, power post-hole digger, trencher or earthmoving equipment, fork lift, or power-driven circular, band, or chain saw.
- Working on a farm in a yard, pen, or stall occupied by a bull, boar or stud horse maintained for breeding purposes, a sow with suckling pigs, or a cow with a newborn calf with umbilical cord present.
- Felling, bucking, skidding, loading, or unloading timber with a butt diameter of more than six inches.
- Working from a ladder or scaffold (painting, repairing, or building structures, pruning trees, picking fruit, etc.) at a height of over 20 feet.

Remember that injuries often occur when children are doing something that is beyond their abilities. This includes mental, physical and emotional abilities. Physical readiness must certainly be considered when assigning tasks to youth, but reasoning and cognitive ability are even more important if a dangerous situation suddenly arises. Few children under the age of 14 can anticipate or handle danger.

And finally, the best way to establish safe habits in the youth that work on your farm is to model safe habits. I'll leave you with this quote today from James Baldwin, "Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them."

## **INJURY PREVENTION – Preventing Falls From Equipment During Spring Planting Season**

### **Kent McGuire – CFAES Safety and Health Coordinator**

Finally, warmer spring weather brings better attitudes and a busy start to the spring planting season. Spring planting is a time when farmers and farm workers are continuously moving from one piece of equipment to another and climbing on equipment to fill with seed or make repairs. Long hours, fatigue, rushing to beat the incoming weather, and working into the night can all contribute to fall related injuries. This is a time that farmers should take extra precaution to prevent falls when working around farm equipment. Precautions to prevent slips, trips and falls during spring planting should include:

- Observe the basic safety rules of the equipment's operating manual.
- Review the warning labels located on equipment.
- Shut off equipment and make sure equipment is in "park", before dismounting
- Maintain 3 points of contact when mounting or dismounting equipment.  
(1 hand and 2 feet) or (2 hands and 1 foot)
- Ensure that steps, hand holds, platforms or railings are in safe operating condition.

- Clean dirt, mud, and debris from work platforms and decks of equipment, before entering these areas.
- Face towards the equipment when mounting or dismounting equipment with ladder style steps.
- Avoid trying to carry objects when mounting or dismounting equipment.
- Exercise caution when steps are wet or dirty.
- Avoid jumping off of the last step.
- Anticipate changes in ground elevation or rough terrain when dismounting from the last step.
- Be alert and focus on foot placement when walking, especially during early morning or evening when daylight is limited.
- Lower equipment to the ground and work from the ground if possible.
- Minimize crawling around on top of tillage equipment. Work from a ladder or step stool.
- Avoid distractions or hurrying when doing elevated work on equipment. Be observant to any slip, trip or fall hazards.
- Ensure that equipment or the work area has adequate lighting to complete the task in low light conditions.
- Use a ladder or elevated platform to work on those hard to reach places, rather than trying to stand on the equipment in an awkward position.
- Clean up debris, liquid spills, or spilled seed. All of these can cause a slip, trip, or fall.

For more information about OSU Ag Safety visit <http://agsafety.osu.edu> or contact Kent McGuire, OSU Agricultural Safety & Health, at [mcguire.225@osu.edu](mailto:mcguire.225@osu.edu) or 614-292-0588.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – ‘Tis the Season for Funnel Clouds**

### **Lisa Pfeifer – OSU Ag Safety and Health Education Coordinator**

It is not uncommon for a storm to brew up quickly at this time of year. Whether you are in the field, on the road, or back at the farmstead being aware of the changes around can allow for appropriate response. Knowing what signs to look for in the sky can alert you to a tornado and allow time for action. The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness advises to look for the following danger signs:

- Dark, often greenish sky
- Large hail
- A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly, if rotating)
- Loud roar, similar to a freight train

Tornado activity in Ohio occurs at the highest rates in the months of May and June. Tornado season is April – July, but the weather in Ohio last November points to the fact that anomalies do occur outside the traditional season with 17 tornados recorded that month.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) shares information and preparedness tips to increase understanding of weather events and facilitate response.

- Recognize during a tornado a majority of injuries and fatalities are caused by being struck or cut by falling or wind-borne debris. Tornadoes are nature’s most violent storm, with winds that can reach over 200 miles per hour and with paths of destruction more than one mile wide and 50 miles long.
- Know the National Weather Service (NWS) terms that are used to describe changing weather conditions. These terms—advisories, watches, and warnings—can be used to determine the timeline and severity of an approaching storm.
- Designate where to go for protection from a tornado and ensure adequate assistance and access for people with disabilities and plan for functional needs.

- Outline emergency communications plans and policies with family and employees.
- Sign up for community notifications.
- Ensure there are basic supplies on hand to survive for at least three days if an emergency occurs.

Homeowners can find additional resources about how to secure proper insurance coverage prior to and mitigate loss following a tornado from the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness. Visit <http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov/TornadoFacts.aspx> to check to see if you have proper coverage and inventory documentation, or to see their recommended before, during, and after actions.

Keep an eye on the sky this spring and stay safe!

For more information about OSU Ag Safety, visit <https://agsafety.osu.edu/> or contact Lisa Pfeifer, OSU Agricultural Safety & Health, at [pfeifer.6@osu.edu](mailto:pfeifer.6@osu.edu) or 614-292-9455

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*Ag Safety S.T.A.T. – Safe Tactics for Ag Today* is an e-mail newsletter prepared by Dee Jepsen, Extension Agricultural Safety Specialist and team members from the State Safety Office, in the Department of Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering at OSU. The primary goal of this monthly newsletter is to help you stay connected to everyday safety news and activities that maybe used in your own newsletters or programs. If you have safety-related questions or program ideas that you would like to share, please contact Dr. Jepsen at [jepsen.4@osu.edu](mailto:jepsen.4@osu.edu)  
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