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

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THOUGHTS from the EDITOR – National Farm Safety Week Sept 16 – 22, 2012

Dee Jepsen, State Safety Leader

National Farm Safety and Health Week is September 16 – 22, 2012. This annual promotional week commemorates the hard work, diligence, and sacrifices made by our nation's farmers and ranchers. This year's safety theme is "Agricultural Safety and Health – A Family Affair."

Working in agriculture is different than working in other businesses. There is a culture amongst farm families that encourages children to work beside adults, usually at a young age. And on the other side of the age spectrum, there is not a pre-determined age when senior farmers retire from the farm. This family-style approach of involving many generations makes the farm work environment very different from other occupations. And from a risk assessment point of view, it is sometimes more challenging to manage.

Children are at risk

On farms it is difficult to determine where the backyard ends and the barnyard begins. Allowing children in the "work space" often means they are exposed to all the noise, dust, and chemical environments that the workforce is also subjected. They are also at risk for equipment entanglements, livestock hazards, drowning and electrocution. Because farm children grow up in these "familiar" areas, they often don't recognize the dangers.

However, farm kids need to be on the farm. It is their way of life. They are developing an understanding for hard work and what it means to have a sustainable lifestyle. Farm kids have time to be outdoors and gain a deep appreciation for the natural wonders of watching plants and animals grow. Farm teens have usually been nurtured into their work environment, learning from lessons and experiences from earlier years.

Having good role models for children is the best lesson

When the entire family unit has respect for safety, it helps promote skills and knowledge for hazard recognition. Developing a safety conscience kid requires good role models who understand dangers and teach the young person how to be aware and make good decisions in times of trouble. Farm environments can be unpredictable; children often learn the seriousness of workplace hazards through first hand experiences or story telling. And as these farm kids become employees in the mainstream workplace, they seem to have an appreciation for rules and respect for safety compared to their non-farm peers.

Senior farmers also at risk

While it is easy to focus on children, it is also equally important to realize that senior farmers face similar hazards as the young people. Some of the common conditions that put them at risk include:

- working with older equipment that may lack the modern safety shields and guards to offer protection
- working in older facilities that are not in the best repair and may contribute to slips or falls
- taking medication that affects their ability to operate equipment
- tiring easily and lacking focus during certain times of the day
- having limited range of motion or other physical limitations that prevent quick reaction time
- working in isolation or remote areas without having regular check-in times
- having limited means of communication when needed

Preventing injuries is a family affair

To have a successful business, the operation must have commitment from the owner all the way down the line to the last employee. Farming operations are no different; regardless of the size of the operation, the same dedication is needed to succeed. Similar to other businesses, there are inputs to manage, outputs to market, employees to manage, and outside pressures from the public or Mother Nature to juggle.

From a safety standpoint, managing safety and health risks in an agricultural operation can be similar to other businesses. There are equipment hazards, electrical hazards, liabilities, insurance issues, and environmental exposure to noise, dusts, and extreme temperatures. There are personal protective equipment (PPE) products like gloves, respirators, safety glasses, and harnesses available to protect the worker while in high exposure environments. There are engineering controls like Roll Over Protective Structures (ROPS), shields, guards, and safety shut-off switches that safeguard the employee during equipment operation. There are also public policies in place that may affect certain environmental practices, hiring conditions, or road transport restrictions.

Families can work together to protect against hazards, by maintaining engineering controls, and following recommended best management practices. When they do this, they are also making a commitment to remain a sustainable business. Everyday routines for farm families to follow are:

1. Have rules in place for everyone to observe,
2. Have a keen eye to scout out possible hazardous conditions and correct them, and
3. Have a respect for the dangers that exist and don't take matters of personal safety and protection lightly.

Farmers work in one of the most hazardous industries in the United States. Keeping everyone safe and healthy is a family affair.

A SECOND on SAFETY – Digging Safety

“Digging” damages a buried utility line every three minutes in the United States, and one-third of incidents are caused because a free call wasn't made to [811](#) to notify the local call-before-you-dig center.

If you are planning a home improvement job - planting a tree - installing a fence or deck - WAIT! There is an important step you must take before you begin your project.

Smart digging means calling 811 before each job. It's a free call and it's the law. Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs. Whether you are planning to do it yourself or hire a professional, it's important to call 811 to have all utilities marked so that your digging doesn't disrupt your utility services and cause possible electrocutions or explosions.

National recognition for Ohio's Amish Roadway Safety Program

Products developed through the OSUE Agricultural Safety and Health Program were recognized by two different associations for outreach education.

The National Association of County Agricultural Agents recognized Ohio's Amish Roadway Safety Program as a national finalist in their Search for Excellence of Agricultural Safety and Health Programs. The team consisted of Dee Jepsen (State Specialist), Chris Zoller (Tuscarawas Co. Ag Educator), Gene McCluer (Hardin Co. Ag Educator), Katharine Shumaker (Holmes Co. FCS Educator), and Becky Barker (Morrow Co. 4-H Educator).

The goal of this program was to increase awareness for roadway safety issues when sharing the road with horse-drawn vehicles. The target audiences included the motoring public as well as Amish and Mennonite communities who utilized horse-drawn vehicles. The specific educational objectives were to 1) utilize crash reports to understand the magnitude of the problem and geographical areas of concern for crashes between motorized vehicles and horse-drawn vehicles, 2) develop safety educational messages for use with the motoring public, and 3) establish a *Visibility on the Roadway* program for Amish communities. The outreach effort directly addressed a need to improve roadway safety in rural areas.

Several educational resources were developed through this program:

1. "Sharing the Roadway in Amish Country" DVD video and available on line at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5b7HuinLPQM>
2. "Snowplows in Amish Country: A Guide for Buggy Drivers, Pedestrians, and Snowplow Operators" AEX 596.8-11 ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/pdf/0596-8.pdf
3. "Lighting and Marking Recommendations for Buggies and Wagons" AEX-596.4-03, Agricultural Engineering Series ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/pdf/0596_4.pdf
4. "Lighting and Marking Recommendations for Animal-Drawn Carriages" AEX 596.7-09
http://ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/pdf/0596_7.pdf
5. Child seat promotional posters for Amish families and van drivers who transport Amish children

The American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) awards "Blue Ribbons" to the top 20% of entries received in their national educational aids competition. Three Blue Ribbons were given to OSUE for the DVD and factsheets listed above.

Along with these educational aids, the Safety Group is leading the effort to make changes to the ASABE Standards to improve the lighting and marking of Amish pony carts. This 18-month effort has involved many demonstrations and visits to horse-drawn equipment dealers and Amish communities in five states. The concern is that many children are operating pony carts on the road, with limited time for a motorist to see the cart and react to the slow-moving vehicle. A new publication will be developed to help the Amish families know how to improve the visibility of their carts while on public roads. Besides the expected SMV emblem and reflective tape, an aerial flag is included in the recommendations. The flag will help catch the attention of the low-profile carts when a motorist pops over a hill or rounds a curve.

Please contact our office for additional information on these Roadway Safety Projects or to request programming materials for Amish in your communities.

YOUTH HEALTH TIP- Sleeping Matters

Kathy Mann – Program Coordinator

While staying up every now and then for slumber parties and late-night movies may be fun, being unable to sleep every night is a problem. As school has started, getting enough sleep to stay alert through out the

day is a concern. The amount of sleep a person needs varies from person to person. To know whether or not you are getting enough sleep, answer this question: Can you stay awake and alert even when you are doing something that is boring and routine?

Not sleeping can have far-reaching effects. Think about how you feel after a long night of being awake. A lack of sleep leads to a decreased ability to concentrate, decreased productivity, and in many cases, bad moods!

Some common sleep disorder symptoms include:

- Snoring or noisy breathing during sleep
- Breathing through your mouth while sleeping
- Daytime sleepiness
- Waking in the early morning and being unable to return to sleep
- Complaints of pain, typically in the legs

You might be able to get by just fine with only six hours of sleep, while your friend is usually tired even if he or she gets eight hours of sleep. Keep this in mind and respect others right to get a good night's sleep.

INJURY PREVENTION- Working with Livestock Safety

Kent McGuire - Ohio AgrAbility Program Coordinator

Many farmers never stop to think of their personal safety when working with livestock. Farmers may work carefully around livestock most of the time, however because an animal's behavior can be unpredictable at times, individuals can be injured because of preoccupation, haste, impatience, or even anger. Injuries that are common when working with livestock include bites, kicks, being stepped on, pinned against a solid surface, or overcome by a single animal or the whole herd. Some general guidelines when working with livestock include:

- Understand and study the typical behaviors of the livestock you are working with.
- Herd livestock such as cattle or sheep can become agitated or stressed when one animal is isolated from the herd.
- Maternal female livestock can become aggressive in an effort to protect their young.
- Mature male livestock can become aggressive in an attempt to show dominance.
- Understand aggressive warning signs such as showing of teeth, ears laid back, or stomping of feet.
- Avoid startling an animal by making it aware of your approach before getting too close.
- Move calmly, deliberately, and patiently. Avoid quick movements or loud noises that may startle animals.
- Excessively changing of the animal's environment or daily routine can take the animal out of their comfort zone.
- Avoid being in travel paths during the feeding of a herd or large group of livestock.
- Be aware of your surroundings and always leave an escape route when working in close quarters with livestock.
- Bottle fed or show livestock can become playful because of constant handling, After being placed back in with the general livestock as an adult, they may still approach you in a playful manner when you are not expecting it.
- Be patient, and avoid frustration when working with difficult or stubborn livestock. Back injuries, muscle strains and slip /fall injuries can occur when frustrations lead to over aggressive handling practices.

For more information about the Ohio AgrAbility Program, please contact Kent McGuire, OSU Agricultural Safety & Health, at mcguire.225@osu.edu or 614-292-0588.

Emergency Management Tip of the Month – National Preparedness Month by the Federal Emergency Management Agency

September has been designated as National Preparedness Month. This is a time where Americans are asked to take the time to prepare for an emergency. Emergencies can come in variety of forms and have a severe impact on your entire family. There are three steps to preparing for an emergency.

- **Be Informed:** What to do before, during, and after an emergency such as natural disaster, home fire, hazardous materials incident or public health hazard.
- **Make a plan:** Plan for your specific risks and make considerations for young children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and pets.
- **Prepare an emergency kit:** Build a kit of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. Consider that basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment and telephones may be cut off for days or even a week, or longer.

For more information on preparing for an emergency review the www.ready.gov link provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

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 may be 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
