

March
2011
Update

Farmsafe WA Alliance

- Inspiring safe farming -

Inspiring Safe Farming

Department of Health Funded projects



Our four projects, supported and funded by the Department of Health WA are well and truly on the way. The Farmsafe WA project team, Alisa, Monika, Alicia and Brenna have been working hard the past months to coordinate the forthcoming workshops scheduled for March in the Wheatbelt and Southwest regions. You may recall the four campaigns are viewed as pilot projects and with a successful evaluation we will find ourselves in good stead to apply for further funds and take these campaigns to a statewide level.

It would not be possible to run these campaigns without the collaborative support from our projects partners, namely St John, FESA, RFDS, WA Regional Police, Regional Mens Health Initiative, Independent Living Centre, Ear Science Institute, Lions Hearing, Chemcert, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, RRR Womens' Network, Mingenew Irwin Group and Primary Safety.

We are most appreciative of the support we have received from our Alliance Members in promoting our projects, in particular WA Farmers, CBH Group, PBF Australia, DAFWA, just to name a few. Thank you all for this ongoing support.

Further details on each of the projects are listed on page 2 and 3 of this ENews.



Free Hearing
Tests

at

Wagin
Woolorama

on the

11th & 12th of
March

Farmsafe WA
will be located
within the
DAFWA
exhibit

See you there!

Postal Address:
PO Box 118
Forrestfield, WA, 6058

Street address:
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Safe use of Tractors with attachments

Tractors are, by far, the most dangerous piece of equipment on Australian farms. About 20 people are killed on Australian farms each year while using tractors – more than the number killed by farm utilities, motorbikes and quad bikes combined. Many more people are injured. This can happen on any size of farm and to anyone regardless of age or type of tractor.

Agricultural tractors include a broad range and variety of vehicles, from around half a tonne in weight to more than 25 tonnes. They may be rigid or articulated, tyre or tracked, two-wheel drive, front-wheel assist and four-wheel drive, single or multi-wheeled per axle.

Tractors handle a variety of attachments. Even if the tractor itself is well set up for safe use, a new attachment introduces a new set of hazards. Combinations of tractor and attachment require competence and experience to set up, operate and maintain.

Planning and selecting the right equipment for the job is a key step before you start. You should think through the tasks, consider the type of equipment necessary and the terrain to ensure you select the right tractor and attachments for the job. This will result in a reduced risk of injury or death. It also includes benefits such as better tractor efficiency, longer equipment life and lower repair costs.



This article is continued on page 7.

FREE Workshops

Projects funded and supported by the Department of Health



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**
Public Health

Noise Injury Prevention and Management



This is a collaborative project with Ear Science Institute of WA and the Lions Hearing Clinic and aims to provide knowledge and awareness amongst farmers, their families and farm workers on the importance of taking care of their hearing

FREE workshops will be

conducted in the Wheatbelt region during March.

Topics covered in the workshops include:

- What is Noise Induced Hearing Loss?
- What happens to the ear after prolonged exposure to noise?
- How to prevent Noise Induced Hearing Loss
- Awareness and usage of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Who to contact for hearing test and further information

With the assistance from an Audiologist, the workshops will run for approximately 3 hours and time will be allocated for

the conducting of hearing tests by the Lions Hearing Bus. Bookings for hearing tests are essential and will be arranged upon your registration to the workshop. Morning or afternoon tea will be provided and complimentary.

Northam	Northam Harness Racing Club	7/3	10am-1pm
Beverley	St John Sub Centre	7/3	3-6pm
Quairading	St John Sub Centre	8/3	9am-12pm
Corrigin	St John Sub Centre	8/3	2.30-5.30pm

Supported by:



ear science institute australia



Addressing Occupational Health and Safety Requirements on farms and rural properties in Western Australia



This pilot project is a direct result from the Farmsafe WA Safety Needs Survey conducted in 2010 where the farming community indicated a need for a series of more user friendly occupational health and safety audit tools.

This project will focus on the following specific OH&S topics:

- Occupational Noise & Injury
- Safe Chemical storage, handling and disposal
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- OH&S responsibilities for employers, employees, self employed and contract workers

On site farm visits will be the main focus and in consultation with farmers, their families, farm workers, managers and

OH&S professionals existing OH&S resources will be reviewed. Through consultation with these partners, we aim to develop, trial and finalise a new comprehensive audit tool to cover these OH&S topics.

As this is a pilot project, the final evaluations should see us in good stead to further expand the audit tool and cover all the required OH&S areas.

Corrigin	Lindsay Smoker's Farm	9/3	8.30-12pm
Brookton	Murray Hall's farm	9/3	2.30-6.00pm
Cuballing	Scott Young's Farm	10/3	9.30am-1pm
Lower Chittering	Golden Grove Orchard	10/3	9am—12.30pm

Supported by:



ChemCert WA Incorporated
... training and accrediting farm chemical users



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Agriculture and Food**



REGISTRATION FOR ALL WORKSHOPS ARE ESSENTIAL.

Please visit www.farmsafewa.org or call Farmsafe WA on 9359 4118 to register.



Emergency Care and Injury Management



Emergency Care and Injury Management aims to increase awareness, knowledge and skills in relation to first aid treatments and better preparedness in managing emergencies in remote and regional WA.

Farmsafe WA Alliance will work in partnership with FESA, St John Ambulance, Royal Flying Doctor Service and the WA Regional Police Department to present the information that will be beneficial to all community members.

Workshops will be scheduled in the **Southwest** region and cover practical information on how to deal with a medical emergency on farms and stations including:

- Emergency planning and preparedness
- Who to call in a medical emergency
- The role of each emergency service
- Basis skills and what to do in an emergency. Hands on skills stations will be lead by each of the emergency services in attendance.

Following presentation by each collaborative partner, each workshop will include question and answer time and will provide for the dissemination of resource materials, namely first aid checklists, local emergency contact details and further training opportunities.

Workshops schedule:

Nannup	St John Sub	29/3	8.30am – 11.30am
Boyup Brook	St John Sub Centre	30/3	10am – 1pm
Balingup	Recreation Centre	30/3	2.30pm – 5.30pm
Harvey	St John Sub	31/3	3pm – 6pm

Registrations are now being taken
(Complimentary morning or afternoon tea will be provided)



Supported by:



Your Health, Your Future in Farming

This project is primarily to engage men and women aged 55 and over, who live and /or work in agriculture, to discuss and address the issues that affect their ability to continue to carry



out tasks as they age . The campaign will be conducted as a pilot project in the Southwest region, to determine how best to further deliver on a wider scale, and to test the existing resource material produced by Farmsafe Australia. Workshops will be conducted during March and include a presentation from Regional Mens Health Initiative, Independent Living Centre, St. John Ambulance and Primary Safety about men's and women's health and encourage discussion on how to work smarter, not harder on their farms and rural properties.

The entire family is invited to attend these workshops as we aim to create discussions across generations. We intend to include all perspectives on farm work and discuss and

address the issues affecting work ability as we get older. By engaging the younger farmers, this will, we believe, allow for a broader discussion and a more united injury prevention approach.

Workshop schedule:

Cowaramup	Duggan Pavilion	28/3	9am - 12 noon
Nannup	St John Sub Centre	29/3	3- 6pm
Bridgetown	St John Sub Centre	30/3	2- 5pm
Donnybrook	St John Sub Centre	31/3	8.30 – 11.30am

(Complementary morning or afternoon tea will be provided)



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A Guide for Migrant Workers and Employers

Managing safety and health issues for migrant workers should be considered within the context of safety and health management for all workers. As an employer you have a general duty to provide and maintain, as far as practical, a working environment where workers are not exposed to hazards. This includes:

- Providing and maintaining safe workplaces, plant and systems of work so they do not expose workers to hazards;
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision so workers can perform their work safely;
- Consulting and cooperating with safety and health representatives (if any) and other workers regarding occupational safety and health at the workplace.
- Ensuring safe use, cleaning, maintenance, transportation and disposal of substances and plant used in the workplace; and
- Providing personal protective equipment—however, this should be considered only when other control measures are not practical or to increase protection.



Know your workforce and its needs

As an employer, you have an obligation under your duty of care responsibilities to adapt your work practices according to the different needs of your workers. The key to maintaining a safe workplace is matching job-task demands with an individual's abilities and skill sets. This can be achieved through various processes, including:

- Identifying workplace hazards and conducting risk assessments, which are appropriate to the cultural needs of the workers;
- Pre-placement discussions;
- Ongoing consultation and communication;
- Liaison with safety and health representatives; and
- Monitoring and reviewing workplace practices.
- Medical observation and/or assessment;

Specific issues for migrant workers

Issues to consider for migrant workers may include:

- Language barriers;
- Cultural or religious differences;
- Literacy difficulties;
- Limited knowledge of local legislation and safety standards; and
- Reluctance to engage with authority figures.

As an employer, therefore you may need to:

- Consider how to convey information about safety to those with a limited knowledge of English;
- Consider accessing English language support for workers;
- Arrange for any necessary support to be provided by others within the workplace; and
- Encourage supervisors to be understanding and approachable.

In Western Australia, the law requires that a high standard of safety must be provided at your workplace, and that you are not injured or harmed because of your work. Making workplaces safer relies upon the employer and employees working together.

Employers have a responsibility to provide, as far as practicable, a safe workplace. This is called a 'duty of care'. You as an employee, also have a duty of care to work safely and not affect the safety and health of others.

The law in Western Australia also requires the employer to consider how to convey information about safety to those with a limited knowledge of English, or those with other specific needs.

Participating in safety matters at the workplace

As an employee, there are different ways you can participate in ensuring safety and health at your workplace. You can do this by:

- Talking directly to your employer, supervisor and co-workers about any concerns you may have;
- Notifying the supervisor or employer of any hazards or injuries, or potential hazards or injuries;
- Participating in training on any procedures with which you are unfamiliar;
- Asking questions about any matters you do not understand;
- Where required, requesting information and training be provided in an appropriate format to suit your needs, for example through the use of an interpreter or translator; and
- Where there are safety and health representatives or a safety and health committee, raising issues with them.

There is information on the WorkSafe website on how to do this. WorkSafe is the Government agency with powers to enforce safety and health laws and investigate concerns about unsafe workplaces. WorkSafe also has an information centre, which you can ring if you have a concern or require information. You can ask that your enquiry remains confidential and that your details are not given to anyone.

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/>



Email: safety@commerce.wa.gov.au

What are **EMPLOYERS'** responsibilities for workplace health and safety?

What are **NEW AND YOUNG WORKERS'** responsibilities for workplace health and safety?

To provide a safe and healthy workplace

To work safely

As an employer, you must ensure the work environment and the way workers carry out their work is safe and healthy, regardless of the type and terms of their employment. This includes protecting them from both physical and psychological workplace hazards, such as slippery floors, lifting heavy loads, faulty or unguarded machinery and equipment, chemicals, bullying, violence and fatigue.

Look after yourself and others by:

- Following all reasonable instructions for doing the job
- Following workplace procedures
- Not putting yourself or your work mates at risk
- Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) as required
- Reporting unsafe situations and injuries to your immediate supervisor, employer and/or health and safety representative.

Consider the tasks you give to new and young workers, given their skills, abilities and experience.

To provide training and supervision

To ask if you're not sure

As an employer, you must make sure the workers have enough information, training and supervision to enable them to work safely. This training should:

- Show workers how to do their job safely and how to recognise hazards on the job.
- Provide and show them how to safely use the necessary machinery and equipment.
- Provide and show them how to safely wear and use personal protective equipment, such as gloves, safety footwear and goggles.
- Show them how to report any safety concerns or hazards.
- Help them to get to know the workplace layout, their immediate supervisor, health and safety representative and workmates.
- Make it easy for new and young workers to ask questions—don't assume they will ask.

- Take induction and training seriously.
- Know and follow the health and safety requirements of your job.
- If you aren't sure how to do something safely, ask for help or training before you start the task.

Work is important, but your life is more important.

Some ways you could ask your immediate supervisor for help:

- *'I'm not sure how this works, could you spare a few minutes to show me again?'*
- *'I think I've got the hang of this, but can you watch me to make sure I'm doing everything right?'*
- *'I'm still a bit uncomfortable with this, would you mind explaining it/ showing me again?'*

As an employer, you are responsible for sharing information

Talking health and safety

To report your concerns

with workers about workplace health and safety matters, including:

- Asking for their input when looking at any workplace hazards and ways to control those hazards.
- Discussing new machinery and equipment when it is introduced into their work area.
- Discussions at team or toolbox meetings where health and safety concerns can be raised.
- Discussions with health and safety representatives.

If you are concerned about your own or your work mates' health and safety, talk to your immediate supervisor, employer and/or health and safety representative straight away. This might be about slippery floors, lifting heavy loads, faulty or unguarded machinery and equipment, chemicals, bullying, violence or fatigue.

If you work through a Group Training Organisation or Labour Hire agency, report your concerns to them as well.

If you are a work experience or structured workplace learning student, you should also speak to your teacher or trainer about your concerns.

4Thought Lunchtime session—What about me? Managing vulnerable workers

New workers, young workers, older worker and those non English speaking background present unique challenges in management of OSH in workplaces. This session provides information that may assist you to ensure your workplace is safe for everyone.

The sessions are free of charge however bookings are essential

Enquiries: worksafersvp@commerce.wa.gov.au

Date: Wednesday 16th March

Time: Sign in from 12 noon starts 12:15pm—1:30pm

Venue: Western Australian Land Information Authority (Landgate) Building
Cnr of Morrison Rd and Great Northern Highway
1 Midland square, MIDLAND

Limited parking (up to 2hrs) at front of building

Fuel storage on rural properties

The most significant safety problem with above ground fuel tanks on agricultural properties is the risk of falling. People most at risk are fuel delivery drivers and farm workers whilst engaged in filling and checking fuel levels in the tanks and in some instances the risk is also present during the dispensing of fuel.

Other issues related to above ground fuel tanks include, inadequate footings for the structure, eg wooden blocks, plough discs, the tank stand legs rusting and bent, broken and damaged structural members.

Control the risk

The most effective solution to reduce the risk of falling is to leave the tasks of filling, checking and dispensing conducted from ground level. This can be achieved by:

- Relocating or installing the fuel tank to ground level and dispensing the fuel with the aid of a pump

- Installing an external sight gauge to avoid the need to climb the ladder to determine the level of fuel
- Fitting a bottom load facility and sight gauge. These can be fitted following simple instructions and can be generally purchased through a farm fuel supplier or rural agent.

These solutions reduce the need to work at height and in turn reduce the risk of injury.

Ladders

Where a fixed ladder is used to access any above ground fuel tank, the risks can be reduced by adopting a risk management approach ensuring:

- The ladder meets the requirements of Australian Standard 1657; and
- A platform and adequate handrails are provided at the top of the ladder

Hazardous Substances

Lost time at work, illness and sometimes death are all outcomes of failing to store, use or dispose of hazardous substances properly. Great care is essential to reduce the risk of such serious outcomes.

Hazardous substances are any chemicals or other materials that may put people at risk. They include pesticides, acids, alkalis solvents, cleaners, paints, asbestos, wood dust and welding fumes.

Some substances may cause allergic reactions and other medical conditions of varying severity. Other substances may be corrosive, harmful or toxic.

Employers must identify any hazardous substances being used in their workplace and should question whether their use is essential.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) must be provided for each hazardous substance, identifying the ingredients, and giving health information and precautions for safe use and handling. Continual vigilance is essential.

Because of the high potential for hazardous substances to cause lost time injuries, disease and even deaths, Worksafe has designated their use in industry as one of the seven areas to be given priority when inspectors visit the workplace. During inspections, the departments' inspectors will be looking for the following six key elements:

- Register of hazardous substances – Is the list of hazardous substance complete? Is there a MSDS for each hazardous substance? Are all MSDS in the register and less than five years from date of issue? Is the register readily available?
- Labels – Do all original containers have the manufacturer's label? Are all decanted containers labelled with name, risk and safety phrases?
- Risk Assessment – Have you assessed the risk for all hazardous substances stored and used at your workplace? Is each assessment recorded in your register against the relevant hazardous substance? Are assessment reports available where the risks are significant?

- Risk Controls – Have steps been taken to adequately control risks? Have you considered the hierarchy of controls when selecting controls? Are controls regularly inspected and maintained (eg air flow on local extraction ventilation checked) Have you provided appropriate first aid and emergency facilities?
- Training – Have all people who may be exposed to hazardous substance received information and been trained (before starting work?) Does your record of training include:
 - a) Health effects
 - b) controls
 - c) safe work methods
 - d) personal protective equipment/clothing?
- Health surveillance – Have you initiated surveillance of your workers' health where there is a risk (eg. From lead, isocyanates- which are in many 2-pack paints and organophosphate insecticides)? If so, have you appointed a medical practitioner?



In looking at safety in relation to hazardous substances and all workplace safety matters, please remember the three

ThinkSafe steps:

- **Spot the hazard**
- **Assess the risk**
- **Make the change**

For further information contact Farmsafe WA on 9359 41 18 or visit

www.farmsafewa.org

Safe use of tractors with attachments (Continued)

Common causes of Injury:

Tractor Roll Over

was until recently the single most significant cause of farmer fatality throughout Australia. The gradual introduction of Roll Over Protective Structures (ROPS) has helped to reduce the number of tractor roll over fatalities. Tractors must have a compliant ROPS fitted. This requirement may not apply in limited circumstances. Since the early 1980s, all new tractors in Australia must be ROPS –compliant.

- Check all tractors to make sure the cabin or structure is ROPS compliant and not simply there for weather protection
- A ROPS must be fitted to the tractor by a competent person and the means of attachment must be as strong as the ROPS itself
- Some tractors with a cast iron rear axle might not be strong enough to fit a two-post ROPS. A four-post ROPS will better distribute the load when fitted to both the rear axle and chassis forward of the operator.
- Where overhead hazards limit the use of a standard ROPS, a fold down ROPS should be fitted
- To ensure the operator is not ejected from the tractor, it is recommended that a seatbelt is fitted at the same time as fitting the ROPS
- Ensure the ROPS meet Australian Standard, AS 1636:1996

Seatbelts

Tractors are often used in terrain where rocks, stumps, holes, ditches, embankments, depressions and crumbling or slippery banks exist, increasing the risk to the operator of being ejected from the tractor.

Seatbelts on tractors can save lives by preventing operators being ejected from the tractor seat. Where there is a risk of roll over, the seatbelt keeps the operator within the protected ROPS area and prevents the operator from being thrown in front of the wheel or implements. If the tractor does not have a seatbelt, it is recommended that a seatbelt is fitted where reasonably practicable.

Many older tractors are not fitted with seatbelts or may not have provision to fit a seatbelt. There are commercial products available for older tractors that provide for the installation of seatbelts. In many cases, this involves replacing the seat and seat mount.

Ensure the retrofit uses compliant equipment and is attached to suitable points on the tractor by a competent person.

It is critical that the seatbelt is connected to components that are at least as strong and durable as the seatbelt itself and are anchored to the tractor in a way that allows the seatbelt to be effective for all seat adjustments

CASE STUDY – An Australian farmer was travelling in top gear when the tractor became unstable on rough terrain. He was thrown in front of the front wheel and crushed, suffering serious injuries. A seatbelt would have kept him on the tractor

Tractor Run Over

A large number of tractor related deaths and injuries involve tractor run over. These are often a result of poor practices, including starting the tractor from the ground, jumping off a moving tractor and getting off a tractor without engaging the handbrake or park.

Good cabin access can prevent slips and falls when getting on and off a tractor (particularly for less-agile operators) Many older tractors can benefit from some simple modifications to improve safe access.

When replacing an old tractor or purchasing a new tractor look for the following:

- Stair design access is preferable to ladder (vertical) access
- The steps should have adequate grip in all conditions and be made of materials such as wide grill mesh so that mud does not easily accumulate
- Step design – AS 1657-1992 Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders – Design, construction and installation recommends the steps be approximately 150-200mm
- When accessing the tractor, the operator should face the tractor when getting on and off, maintaining three points of hand and feet contact with the handrails and steps. There should also be a guard between the steps and the rear tractor tyre. This is effectively a wide mud-guard on the side of the vehicle
- To maintain sufficient ground clearance, the bottom step can be fold-up or spring loaded.

An electronic version of the “Safe Use of Tractors with



Attachments” handbook for workplaces, can be downloaded from www.commerce.wa.gov.au or phone Farmsafe WA Alliance on 9359 4118 for a hard copy.

New and Young workers

Agriculture and Horticulture enterprises produce commodities of more than \$35 billion in value per annum on around 138,000 enterprises spread across all the states of Australia. However, that production is associated with a high cost in terms of human injury to people who work, live and visit farms. High rates of serious injury and deaths on Australian farms are of concern to agricultural bodies, farmers, workers and farm enterprises and federal and state governments.

As family members or new employees entering the workforce, young people on farms may be involved with hazardous work and activities, often with little experience, training or supervision. Behavior characteristics may also increase injury risk for young people in farm work and living environments. The 15-24 year old age group is recognised as a significant at risk section of the community for fatal and non-fatal injury in most developed countries.

Farm adolescent and young adult study

A focus group study designed to investigate perceptions, knowledge and attitudes of young farmers aged between 15 and 24 years of age living and working on Australian farms was conducted in the North West Plains area of northern NSW. The survey involved discussions with 149 participants and covered perceptions of young people, as well as their parents and educators (Hartigan and Clarke 1994).

The research concluded that the nature of work undertaken by young people on farms was often dangerous and physically demanding and that inexperience, inadequate training, impatience and risk-taking behavior such as speeding further increased injury risk.

The major agents of injury risk were acknowledged as:

- Motorbikes and farm vehicles
- Tractors and machinery
- Augers
- Horses
- Livestock Handling (cattle in particular)
- Workshop equipment



A further key finding was that farm parents, particularly fathers, play the most important role in the safety education and work practices of young men on farms.

As a result of the studies' findings, motorbikes in particular were identified as key targets for injury prevention for this age group (research by University of Sydney 2008)

Farmsafe WA Alliance continues to receive support from



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health



Royal Flying Doctor Service
The furthest corner. The finest care.



ChemCert WA Incorporated
... training and accrediting farm chemical users



Department of Agriculture and Food

