

National Farm Safety 18th-22nd July Week 2011

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National Farm Safety Week aims to raise awareness of farm safety issues in rural communities across Australia. The Farm Safety Week theme for 2011 is "Quad Bike Safety". Over the past 10 years there have been 140 quad bike related deaths. Sadly, for the first six month period of 2011, there has already been 12 such incidents. Farmsafe Australia members are united in efforts to reduce the deaths and injuries associated with quad bike use. This theme continues to highlight the importance of business and industry working together to achieve the Farmsafe mission / vision statement of improving the well-being of Australian farmers through improved attention to health and safety.

The "Quad Bike Safety" theme is reflected in the membership of Farmsafe, by the wide range of work that is being conducted in research, education and extension of farm health and safety.

Farm Safety Week has been running successfully for the past ten years and has provided an opportunity for the Farmsafe network to utilise the media and address farm safety with a national focus. This year, Farmsafe would like to continue its alliance with the media by putting farm safety in the minds of the community and policy makers.

Farm Safety Week Objectives:

- To increase the awareness and knowledge of rural communities, particularly farmers about the hazards and appropriate solutions which exist in their industry
- Promote a risk management approach to health and safety in agricultural business utilizing Managing Farm Safety Program
- To develop positive attitudes towards safety in agricultural workers
- To encourage the adoption of safe farming practices in the rural community
- To develop a stronger network with media of promoting farm safety issues to the community

Farmsafe WA Alliance have a selection of resource material on most farm safety risks and hazards, including easy to follow check lists to help you control and prevent the risk of serious injury or disease.

Visit www.farmsafewa.org or call our office on 9359 4118

Farm related injuries reported in Australian Print Media

Over the past 20 years we have seen a major drop in non-intentional farm related injury deaths per year. This reduction of 44% has meant that the average number of deaths has reduced from 146 deaths per year to 82 per year. This is encouraging news, however we know many more deaths can be prevented.

For the first six months of 2011, information sourced from media monitors illustrates that 29 farm deaths have occurred.

Over this period quad bike incidents (8), have now overtaken tractors (4) as the leading cause of on-farm injury fatalities. Additionally, there were another 4 quad bike deaths not on-farm.

Non-fatal incidents are also reported in the media and as a general rule, tend to be relatively serious incidents. Overall there have been 37 incidents reported.

Again quad bikes (10) and tractor (8) incidents were most frequently cited, however there were a further six quad bike incidents where location could not be determined and a further 10 that occurred off farm. Of all the injuries reported, (6) 16% involved children.

Agriculture has the unwanted record of ranking only second behind road transport as Australia's most dangerous industry. However, the striking factor from this information is that there are effective solutions already available to reduce deaths from the major causes – specifically quad bikes, tractors, farm utilities, farm motorcycles and to prevent drowning. While reductions in deaths over the past 20 years is encouraging, there really is a need to fast-track improvements.

Improving health and safety has a human face, as each death or serious injury prevented means that individuals, families and whole communities don't have to cope with and manage the negative social, emotional and financial consequences that arise from these events.

A copy of the media report for the first six months of 2011 is available from the Farmsafe Australia web site- www.farmsafe.org.au or call the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety on 02 6752 8210 for further information.

QUAD BIKE SAFETY

Quad bikes are a common sight on Australian farms, however between 2001-10 there have been an average of almost 14 per year. Tragically, in the first six months of this year, 12 people have died as a result of quad bike incidents.

“Information from the National Coroner’s Information System compiled by the University of Sydney’s Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (ACAHS), indicate that quad bikes are now a leading cause of deaths on farms, second only to tractors. Almost half of these deaths are the result of the machines rolling over and crushing the victim” said Sheila Payne, Executive Officer of Farmsafe WA Alliance.

Key Facts - Deaths on quad bikes 2001-10

- ☑ Total number of deaths = 134
- ☑ Rollovers were responsible for 47% of the deaths
- ☑ Overall 90% of rollover deaths occurred on a farm
- ☑ Rollovers were responsible for 59% of on-farm and 18 % of non-farm deaths
- ☑ Children account for 21% of these deaths. Children under 16 years of age do not have the physical size, strength, coordination and maturity to handle such a dangerous piece of equipment. NO CHILD under 16 years should ride a quad bike.
- ☑ Carrying passengers also significantly impacts on the stability of quad bikes. Passengers should NEVER be carried.

While quad bikes appear large and stable, their instability is well known to those that ride them. Because of this instability quad bikes are often not the best or safest vehicle for the jobs that need to be undertaken on the farm. In many cases a small ute, side by side vehicle or two wheel motorbike will be a better alternative and while these carry their own risks, we know they are less than that of quad bikes. Indeed, many farmers and other organisations have moved away from using quad bikes at all because the risk of rollover has been seen to be too high.

A key to reducing the number of deaths from rollovers is fitting a suitably tested crush protection device. These devices will limit people being crushed by quad bikes when they rollover and have recently been recommended by all state Work Health Authorities in the Trans-Tasman quad bike

safety strategy. Importantly, the devices are lightweight (8kg), don’t interfere with normal safe riding practices, nor hamper getting on or off the quad bike. No seat belt is required and the devices can be fitted to most bike models through a simple tow ball fitting.



Fitting these devices will save lives and prevent many serious injuries in the event of a rollover. By fitting these devices you are making the quad bike significantly safer for all people that will ride it, whether they have lots of experience or are novices.

Having made the quad bike safer we then need to turn our attention to ensuring provision of relevant training, instruction and safe work practices /systems are followed and that suitable protective equipment including a helmet are worn.

The impact of deaths and serious injuries from quad bikes is significant and I am sure everyone in rural communities would like to see a decrease in these incidents. Based on current evidence we reinforce the message that all owners and operators of quad bikes should take steps to protect riders in the event of a rollover by fitting a crush protection device, ensure adequate training instruction and wear a helmet.

Further information on quad bike safety including a new policy, crush protective devices and rider guide can be obtained from the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (02 6752 8210) or by visiting the website www.aghealth.org.au

Zoonoses

Zoonoses, or diseases of animal origin, affect thousands of people each year in Australia. Those at high risk include abattoir workers, veterinarians and farmers who have regular and close contact with animals. Examples include Q Fever, cryptosporidiosis and Leptospirosis. Symptoms may be mild or lead to serious illness with long term health effects.

Q FEVER

Q fever infection is the most common zoonotic disease in Australia. The bacteria responsible (Coxiella Burnetti) can survive for long periods in animal environments. People are generally infected by inhaling air or particles contaminated with the excreta or birth fluids of infected animals. Cattle, sheep, goats, domestic pets, rodents and kangaroos are known carriers of the disease. Whilst some cases are limited to mild, flu-like symptoms, others progress to affect the heart, lungs or liver. Chronic fatigue can also develop, with disabling consequences

For further information please contact Farmsafe WA Alliance on (08) 9359 4118

FARM VEHICLES, 2 AND 4 WHEELED MOTORBIKES

Farm vehicles including cars, utilities, trucks, aircraft, two and four wheeled motorbikes, accounted for around 35% of all injury deaths on farms from 2001-2004. A further 70-100 farmers and farm workers are killed each year from road accidents in vehicles on public roads.

FOUR WHEELED MOTORBIKES (QUAD BIKES)

Four wheeled motorcycles, are the leading cause of on-farm vehicle-related deaths in Australia, with around 12-15 quad bike related deaths each year. The main causes of severe injury and death are head and neck injury; as well as crush injury and asphyxia associated with quad bike rollover. Quad bikes are also the leading cause of fatal injury in children aged 5-14 years on farms. Quad bikes are sometimes used for tasks beyond their original design limits. Lack of formal training, excessive loading (eg. Spray tanks). Inappropriate attachments, carrying of passengers, and use by children not mature enough to control the machines, increase the risk of quad bike collision and rollover. Poor use of helmets also increases the risk of head injury.



CHOOSING THE RIGHT MACHINE FOR THE JOB

The farm ute or the newly marketed small utility vehicles, have safety features that provide protection for operators in the event of a rollover or collision. These include a wider wheel-base, roll-bars (ROPS), seats for passengers, seat belts and trays for carrying loads.

- Check that the quad bike is the safest machine to do the job. If you need to carry passengers, use a ute.
- Do not carry any passengers on a quad bikes.
- No riders under 16 years on quad bikes - either as passenger or operator.
- Set speed limits and establish 'no go' areas on the farm, such as hills and slopes, dam banks or anywhere the quad bike is at high risk of roll over.
- Do not use attachments that may interfere with operator control and stability.
- Do not modify quad bike wheels and maintain the tyre pressures at the level advised in the manual.
- Do not overload the quad bikes. Check the operators manual before carrying or towing loads.
- Check with your local dealer about operator training courses for quad bikes.

CARS, UTES AND TRUCKS

A number of accidents have involved vehicles colliding with an object or rolling, with unrestrained passengers being thrown from the vehicle or crushed. This is a common problem involving young people 15-24 years and includes passengers riding in trays of utes, trucks and trailers during recreational activities such as hunting, mustering or skylarking. Young children under five years are also at risk of being runover, falling from utes or as pedestrians.



- Do not allow children, young people or adults to ride in the tray of utes, trailers or trucks.
- Ensure seatbelts are fitted and used in all cars, utes and trucks and that everyone is instructed to use them.
- Set speed limits for all vehicles on farm and for areas near the house where children may be located. A securely fenced house yard can help prevent young children wandering into vehicle areas.
- Keep all farm vehicles, motor bikes and quad bikes well maintained . Many accidents have been caused by non functioning brakes, suspension and worn tyres.
- Check the tyre pressures regularly. Do not over inflate tyres. Check the operators manual for proper inflation.
- Have a "No drink and drive" policy that includes drugs.

SAFETY BEHAVIOURS

Vehicle safety checks, skills development and use of safety equipment needs to be second nature.

- Make sure all riders are trained to safely operate farm motorbikes and vehicles.
- Conduct a safety check on all farm vehicles and motor bikes before starting work.
- Always wear an approved helmet and sturdy work boots when riding farm motorbikes (including quad bikes).
- Always wear seatbelts in vehicles on the farm and follow speed restrictions.
- Make sure children are trained and supervised when riding two wheeled motorbikes; and that these are an appropriate size (can they lift the bike from the ground unassisted and reach the ground with their feet when astride the bike?).

For Farm Safety Checklists and further information visit www.farmsafe.org.au or call 9359 4118

FARM WORKSHOP SAFETY

Serious injury and death from electrocution, crush injury, fire and explosion is occurring in farm workshops. Twenty percent (20%) of farm injury presenting to hospital Emergency Departments is caused by farm maintenance work. More than 30% of these are eye and hand injuries. Whilst these injuries are generally not life threatening, they result in significant downtime, workers compensation claims and reduced farm productivity. The following checklist can be used to help you identify and manage some workshop hazards and safety risks on your farm.

Replacing and maintaining guards on workshop equipment, particularly bench grinders, is one way that farmers can reduce the risk of eye and hand injury to people working in farm workshops.

- Replace bench grinder guards and broken/ pitted spark deflector shields
- Check and replace all power tool guards. Keep them well maintained
- Guard the air compressor belts and pulleys
- Wear eye protection when grinding and using cutting power tools

SAFEGUARDING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT



Workshop electrocution is caused by faulty wiring, electrical installation, damaged power leads and water in the workshop.

- Fit a Residual Current Device (RCD) to the electrical circuit board to prevent electrocution
- Routinely test the RCD to check that it is working
- If no RCD is fitted to the electrical circuit board, use a portable RCD

- Check and test all electrical cords and extension leads regularly for wear and damage
- Use a licensed electrician to carry out all electrical work

MAINTENANCE

Workers and visitors to the workshop are at risk of slip and trip injury if access to the workplace is cluttered. Serious injury and death can be caused being crushed under farm machinery and vehicles during service and maintenance.

- Clean and tidy the workshop. Keep floors free of slip/ trip hazards including oil, tools, extension cords and rubbish
- Support vehicles and machinery with stands before working under jacked vehicles, utes, tractors and machinery
- Inflate split rim tyres in a safety cage
- Store fuel, oil and flammable material away/outside the workshop from welding and grinding to prevent fire and explosion

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

There is a wide variety of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) currently on the market to help protect against hazards in the workshop.

- Make sure personal protective equipment (PPE) is available for all work including eye goggles, welding helmet, hearing protection, gloves and work boots
- Wear hearing protection where there is loud noise
- Train and instruct all farm workers to use, store and maintain PPE
- Have a complete First Aid Kit in the workshop



Farm Noise Levels, Exposure and Hearing Protection

Machinery or activity	Average noise levels in dB (A) at operators' ear	Typical time period before hearing damage (no hearing protection)	Min. protection level ear muffs or ear plugs class/ (SLC80 rating)*
Firearms	140 + (C)	No safe exposure	Class 5 (26dB+)
Pig handling - suckers	109	1-2 mins	Class 5 (26dB+)
Chainsaws	106	3 mins	Class 5 (26dB+)
Irrigation pumps	(diesel) 100	15 mins	Class 4 (22-25 dB)
Circular saws	99	18 mins	Class 3 (18-21 dB)
Angle Grinders	98	20 mins	Class 3 (18-21 dB)
Augers	93	1 hr	Class 2 (14-17 dB)
Tractors without cabins	92	1.5 hrs	Class 2 (14-17 dB)
Ride-on lawn mowers	92	1.5 hrs	Class 2 (14-17 dB)
Shearing	86	7 hrs	Class 1 (10-13 dB)

TRACTOR SAFETY

Between 2001 – 2004, 35% of traumatic deaths on Australian farms were associated with plant and equipment. Two-thirds of these were tractor related. Tractor deaths and injury occurs from tractor runovers, rollovers and entanglement in power take-off shafts (PTOs). Design features for tractors, such as rollbars, neutral start switches and safe operator access have improved the situation, but injury events continue to occur.

TRACTOR ROLLOVER

Tractor rollover deaths have declined in the past decade, with more widespread retro-fitting of rollbars (ROPS) to second-hand tractors. However, not every tractor has a roll-bar and rollover deaths still account for around 30% of all tractor deaths.

- ☑ **Fit a Roll Over Protection Structure (R.O.P.S.) to all tractors to help prevent injury to the operator in the event of a tractor roll-over**
- ☑ Where tractors are fitted with front end loaders, fitting a falling object protective structure will prevent injury to the operator from falling loads, such as round hay bales
- ☑ Do not allow passengers to ride on tractors
- ☑ Do not overload tractors. Check tractor User Manuals for correct tractor ballas

TRACTOR RUNOVER

Tractor runovers are the leading cause of tractor-related deaths, responsible for around 40% of fatal tractor injuries. Older farmers are at greater risk of tractor runover. Incidents are often associated with maintenance, jump-starting, checking or operating implements and alighting moving tractors. Some runovers involve children.

- ☑ Keep tractor steps and handrails in good repair or replace old tractor steps with safer tractor access
- ☑ **Fit steps which enable access outside the line of the rear wheel of the tractor.** A diagram and free guide is available at www.farmsafe.org.au
- ☑ Do not get on or off a moving tractor
- ☑ Do not jump start the tractor while standing on the ground or in front of the tyres
- ☑ Maintain the hand brake in good repair. Engage the handbrake or place the transmission in park before getting on or off the tractor

TRACTOR POWER TAKE OFF SHAFTS



Tractor operators and bystanders are dying and being severely injured after being entangled in tractor and implement PTO shafts – on post hole diggers, slashers, feed mixers and chaffers.

- ☑ Fit a guard to all machinery Power Take-Off (PTO) shafts
- ☑ Regularly check and replace old or worn PTO shaft guards

- ☑ **Make sure that the tractor master guard and implement guards are fitted before operating any PTO powered machinery**
- ☑ Keep all bystanders away from operating PTO powered machinery



MAINTENANCE AND TRAINING

Poor tractor maintenance and lack of safe tractor operator training contribute to tractor accidents.

- ☑ Always keep tractor brakes, lights and electrics well maintained
- ☑ Keep the engine free of rubbish. Clean the tractor regularly, especially during slashing or harvesting, to reduce the risk of fire
- ☑ Check and replace all guards after maintenance and before operating the tractor
- ☑ Ensure all tractor operators are trained in their safe operation
- ☑ Only tow loads attached to the tractor drawbar.
- ☑ Carry a fire extinguisher and a first aid kit on each tractor



For 'Safe Use of Tractors with Attachments' resources contact Farmsafe WA Alliance on 9359 4118

CHILD SAFETY ON FARMS

Around 20 children are fatally injured on Australian farms each year and around 500 are hospitalised for on-farm injury. For children under five years, the greatest risk is drowning in farm dams. This is followed by runovers or falls from vehicles, including quad bikes, cars and utes. Quad bikes are the leading cause of death to children 5-14 years of age; and for children who are visitors to farms. Farm motorbikes (for boys) and horse-riding (for girls), are leading causes of hospitalised injury. Children and young people continue to be seriously injured or killed on farms due to practices such as not using helmets or seatbelts; and riding in the back of utes and trailers.

A SAFE PLACE TO PLAY

A securely fenced house yard supported by close and active supervision can help prevent toddlers and young children wandering away un-noticed, accessing farm dams, roadways and other farm hazards.

- Is there a securely fenced house yard or play area for young children to play, separated from farm hazards?**
- Are house yard fences 1.2-1.5 m high; have less than 10cm ground clearance; and no foot holes for climbing?
- Are house yard gates self-latching and child resistant?
- Does the safe play area have shade and interesting things for children to do?

WATER

- Are swimming pools, effluent ponds, channels or dams near the house securely fenced?
- Are tanks, wells and troughs near the house fitted with lids/mesh – and are unused dips and ditches filled in?
- Have those who look after children been alerted to 'keep watch' when children are near water or can wander off into water?
- Do you know how to resuscitate a drowning child?**



HORSES



- Are children only allowed to ride horses suited to their age and riding ability?
- Are children appropriately instructed and supervised when riding and handling horses?
- Do children always wear a well fitting equestrian helmet and smooth-soled boots when riding horses on the farm?**

FARM MOTORCYCLES

- Are children appropriately trained and supervised when learning to ride two-wheeled motorcycles?
- Do children ride bikes of an appropriate size? Can they lift the bike off the ground unaided; and can their feet touch the ground when astride the bike?
- Do riders always wear a correctly fitted motorcycle helmet, long pants, and sturdy footwear?**
- Does the farm adopt manufacturers' recommendations to:
 - Prevent children under 16 yrs riding quad bikes?
 - Prevent passengers riding on quad bikes?



FARM VEHICLES AND MACHINERY

- Are drivers careful when moving vehicles near the house in case children are present?
- Are keys kept out of reach of children when vehicles are not in use?
- Do children always use seatbelts or proper restraints in vehicles; and never ride in the back of utilities?**
- Do you prevent children from riding as passengers on tractors and mobile plant?
- Are children generally encouraged to keep clear of tractors and machinery on your farm?

OTHER HAZARDS AND 'OUT OF BOUNDS' RULES

- Are 'out-of-bounds' rules regularly reinforced with children who are not with a supervising adult?**
- Do 'out-of-bounds' areas include hazardous places such as water storages, machinery and vehicles, silos, workshops and areas where stock are yarded?
- Are hazards such as stockyards, firearms, chemicals, electricity, noise and silos that children could access on your farm, been identified and addressed?

For further information visit www.farmsafewa.org or call 9359 4118

FARM MACHINERY SAFETY

Between 2001 – 2004, around 35 % of traumatic deaths on Australian farms were associated with plant and equipment, including workshop equipment. Australia-wide, there are around 1,000 workers' compensation claims made each year for injury associated with powered machinery and equipment in the agriculture and horticulture industries. This represents 24% of all claims in these industries.

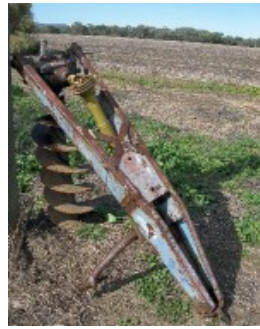
GRAIN AUGERS



Grain augers cause many injuries, especially to arms, hands, fingers and feet being caught in unguarded, belts, pulleys and flights. Moving raised augers around overhead power lines is causing electrocution. Augers are also toppling and collapsing causing crushing injuries, because they are being moved before they are emptied and lowered.

- ☑ **Guard auger hoppers and exposed flights.**
- ☑ A grain auger industry standard for the retrofitment of auger guards is available at www.workcover.nsw.gov.au
- ☑ Guard all auger pulleys, drive belts and shafts
- ☑ Check for overhead power lines before raising or moving augers
- ☑ Consider placing overhead power lines around silos and grain handling areas underground
- ☑ Empty and lower augers before moving them

POST HOLE DIGGERS



- ☑ Consider replacing older posthole diggers with a post driver
- ☑ Guard all PTO drive shafts
- ☑ Wear close-fitting clothing to avoid entanglement in the posthole auger
- ☑ Keep all bystanders away from operating posthole augers
- ☑ **Do not operate posthole diggers alone**

MOTORS, PUMPS AND MAINTENANCE

- ☑ Drive shafts on pumps, motors and machinery cause many farm injuries.
- ☑ Keep operator manuals readily accessible for safe machinery operation and maintenance
- ☑ Turn off and chock all machinery and motors before performing any maintenance
- ☑ Build a guard for all exposed drive shafts
- ☑ **Replace all guards after maintenance and before operating any machinery**
- ☑ Have a first aid kit and fire extinguisher close by – in the workshop or in the vehicle / tractor

For further information please visit www.farmsafewa.org

ASTHMA MANAGEMENT ON FARM

Asthma is a condition of inflammation and spasm of the airways, which can be triggered by a range of factors. In particular, organic dusts such as grains and pollens, can trigger asthma in susceptible people. Farmers with a family history of asthma, can also be at greater risk. As farm families are often long distances from medical help, awareness and treatment of asthma is especially important. Acute asthma is a life threatening condition, but asthma attacks can be prevented.

Anyone with Asthma who lives or works on a farm should speak with their doctor about a personal Asthma management plan.

...also, employees with Asthma need to tell their employer, so that an on-farm management plan can be worked out.

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MEMBERSHIP

Contact Farmsafe WA to become a member and strengthen the relationship between Farmsafe WA and your community.

