

Canadian  
Agricultural  
Safety Week  
Mar. 14-20, 2007

# FACT SHEET #2

THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE  
1101-75 Albert Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E7  
Tel: (613) 236-3633 Fax: (613) 236-5749 farmsafety@cfafca.ca

## Entanglements are preventable

The average farm is full of machinery and devices that can grab, cut, smash, and entangle fingers, hands, toes, and feet causing injury to the extremities and even death. The sad truth is that most of these injuries can be avoided.

Entanglement in operating equipment is the leading cause of serious injury on Canadian farms accounting for 28 per cent of hospitalized machinery-related injuries, and 10 per cent of all work-related farm fatalities. Entanglement injuries involve many different types of agricultural machinery including: power-take-off devices (15 per cent), grain augers (11 per cent), harvesters (11 per cent), balers (8 per cent), tractors (7 per cent), and combines (6 per cent), among others.

*“Protect your moving parts!”* is the theme of this year’s Canadian Agricultural Safety Campaign with a focus on pinch points, crushes, entanglements, and the importance of guarding. The yearlong campaign will be launched with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW), March 14-20, 2007, when farmers across Canada will be encouraged to check and repair all the guards and shields on their machinery. The CASW campaign is delivered by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) in partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC).

“I’ve shaken hands with a lot of producers across this country and it didn’t take long to realize that a striking number of them don’t have a full complement of fingers!” said Bob Friesen, CFA President. “This is a sad reality of the dangers of farming, and further stresses the need to make safety part of every agricultural activity.”

Power take-offs (PTOs) account for a third of entanglement fatalities. A PTO is a device that transfers mechanical power from a tractor to a piece of towed equipment through a rod or drive shaft. The tractor makes the driveshaft turn and this drives the piece of equipment. A PTO is directly geared to the tractor and is designed to spin at either 540 or 1000 rotations per minute (rpm) depending on the machine that is being powered. It doesn’t stop until the tractor is shut down. Furthermore, because of the massive workload they must endure, PTOs are made of superior steel that does not break. When operating, a PTO is extremely dangerous – that’s why it should have a sleeve guard around the shaft and a plate shield over the connecting joint to protect things from getting caught in it. The power and speed of PTOs combine to make them the most lethal piece of farm equipment involved in entanglement injuries, followed by balers, tractors and augers. Most entanglement injuries result in partial or complete amputations.

*more...2.*

## ***Entanglements are preventable...2.***

Entanglement injuries peak over the fall and winter. Cooler weather results in more workers operating augers and PTOs while wearing loose jackets, sweaters and coats. Loose clothing is often the “lead point” in fatal entanglements. Sixty per cent of entanglement fatalities and 56 per cent of hospitalized injuries occur from October to March.

Some of the key entanglement prevention measures to implement when working with or near machinery are:

- Before operating any machine or equipment, ensure that all guards are in place and in good condition.
- Wear tight fitting clothing, such as overalls. Avoid wearing any items that could easily become entangled, such as long coats or scarves.
- Never perform maintenance on a machine or attempt to clear an obstruction while the machine is still running.
- Never step over a PTO shaft or conveyor belt while it is running.
- Ensure that anyone working with augers, PTOs, and other extremely hazardous machinery receives appropriate safety instruction and adequate supervision.
- Keep young children out of the farm or ranch work site, especially areas where there is moving machinery.

The CFA along with FCC, CASA, and AAFC want to remind Canadian farmers to “*Protect your moving parts!*” by practicing safe work habits.

- 30 -

For more information call:

Theresa Whalen–Ruiter, CFA Farm Safety Coordinator

Tel/Fax: (613) 731-7321 E-mail: [farmsafety@cfafca.ca](mailto:farmsafety@cfafca.ca)

To download a copy of this article visit web sites [www.cfa-fca.ca](http://www.cfa-fca.ca) or [www.casa-acsa.ca](http://www.casa-acsa.ca)