

Canadian  
Agricultural  
Safety Week  
Mar. 14-20, 2007

# FACT SHEET #6

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## Guard your safety!

When it comes to farm safety, machine entanglements and being pinned or struck by machinery are the third most frequent cause of death on Canadian farms and ranches accounting for 14 per cent of all agricultural fatalities. This type of injury also accounts for almost a quarter (23 per cent) of farm-related hospitalizations, often resulting in severe injuries and dismemberment.

*“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).

“Farmers and farm workers have a dual role in risk management,” explains Bob Friesen, CFA President. “They can be a source of risk when they do things carelessly; and they are also the most important part of the strategy for dealing with risk. That’s why it is so important for owner-operators to lead by example and always insist that work is done in a safe way.”

The dynamics of risk management on Canadian farms is changing. In days gone by, the farmer and his family did most of the farm labour. In more recent years, as farms have gotten larger, more inexperienced farm labour is being hired creating a greater need for more formalized and structured strategies on farm safety training and expectations. For example, a young worker who was raised on a farm will know more about farm safety than a non-farming youth who is looking for a summer job on a farm. The non-farming youth will need specific safety training.

"Agriculture in Canada today is an advanced, highly complex and technological industry. That means farmers must approach employee orientation and training just like they do in any other industry," said Friesen. "You wouldn't put an inexperienced young person on an auto assembly line without safety training. Why would you do it on a farm or ranch?"

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## ***Guard your safety ...2.***

The bottom line is that management, not labour, shapes the workplace attitude towards safety. Therefore it is management that must be responsible, accountable, and ultimately liable for the safety of workers.

Another important factor in workplace safety is the worker's attitude towards safety. 'I didn't think it could happen to me' is a tragic understatement of personal responsibility. Again, management can set the standard of expectations with regard to safety by including it in: the job description, hiring process, orientation and training for the job, regular performance appraisal, compensation, and in disciplinary actions as necessary.

Keeping safety top of mind in the workplace is an on-going process. An excellent practice is to discuss various farm hazards and what can be done to prevent them, or alternatively what can be done to correct them – and then do it.

And finally, if a farm-related incident does occur, make sure all workers and family members know how to contact emergency services with detailed directions to the farm, are trained first aid, and have a first aid kit, fire extinguisher and personal protective equipment handy. When an incident occurs, every minute counts.

The CFA along with FCC, CASA, and AAFC want to remind Canadian farmers to “*Protect your moving parts!*” by being responsible for your own safety and that of your workers.

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### **For more information call:**

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