

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Farm safety is an attitude.**

**Ottawa**— On average, 115 people are killed and another 1,500 are seriously injured by farm-related incidents in Canada each year - and many more minor injuries are never even reported. Farms and ranches will never be totally risk or hazard free work environments, but steps can be taken to reduce many of the hazards that exist.

“*Farm safety is MY business.*” is the theme of Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW), March 8-14, 2006. The campaign examines various aspects of risk management in the agricultural sector with a special focus on young workers between the ages of 15 and 29. The message “*Farm safety is MY business.*” encourages farm owners and managers to make risk assessment and worker safety a priority in all aspects of their business. CASW is delivered by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) in partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC).

“We don’t expect that farmers can do everything - but we do expect them to do everything they can,” said Marcel Hacault, Executive Director of CASA. “Farm safety is about responsibility, accountability and liability.”

As a farmer and employer, recognizing hazards is an important part of overall farm safety. Reducing hazards not only makes the work site safer, but it also demonstrates to employees that the farm owner is willing to make a commitment to improve workplace safety. Without this commitment, employees may be less willing to change their work practices because this would place the total responsibility for work-site safety on them. To be effective, safety performance expectations must be integrated into productivity expectations.

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*“Farm safety is an attitude,” continued ...2.*

“Teaching by example is one of the strongest ways of communicating safety in the workplace,” said Bob Friesen, President of the CFA. “Whether it is your children or employees, workers will learn how to do things by the way the farmer does it. That is why it is imperative for farmers and farm managers to set a good example and work safely.”

Too often, employers assume that employees know how to accomplish tasks in an efficient and safe manner. However, research has shown that while most farm-related injuries and fatalities have multiple causes, human error involving a lack of knowledge and poor judgment continues to be a major factor.

“Employee safety training is an investment in the future of the business,” said John Ryan, President and CEO of FCC. “When farm owners embrace change in their own attitude toward safety, the results are positive employee behaviour changes and ultimately greater productivity.”

Establishing an ongoing successful safety program in any business requires a commitment by management to make safety an everyday priority. It involves providing opportunities and resources for employees to improve their knowledge and skills in performing assigned tasks efficiently and safely. This type of management commitment generally results in employees feeling more valued and motivated to contribute to the overall productivity of the farm. Recognition of a job well done often provides motivation to employees to continue to work in a safer manner.

More information on Canadian Agricultural Safety Week is available at [www.cfa-fca.ca](http://www.cfa-fca.ca) or [www.casa-acsa.ca](http://www.casa-acsa.ca) .

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