



CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL SAFETY WEEK MARCH 11-17

SEMAINE CANADIENNE DE LA SÉCURITÉ EN MILIEU AGRICOLE mars 11-17

Fatigue can be fatal on a farm

Long hours are common during planting and harvest seasons on Canadian farms, and that's when fatigue can turn fatal. The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) offers work plans that can help prevent this.

To help producers manage their business risks, CASA has developed a new farm management tool called the Canada FarmSafe Plan. A free download of the core Canada FarmSafe Plan is available at www.planfarmsafety.ca.

The Canada FarmSafe Plan supports the theme *Plan • Farm • Safety*, a three-year focus for the Canadian agricultural safety campaign. In 2012, emphasis is on "Safety" including assessment, improvement and further development of safety systems. Last year, the focus was on "Farm" including implementation, documentation and training. In 2010, the campaign promoted "Plan" featuring safety walkabouts and planning for safety.

The yearlong "Safety" campaign will be launched with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW), March 11 to 17. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) deliver CASW in partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through Growing Forward, a federal, provincial, territorial initiative.

The 2001 Canadian Census of Agriculture found that fatigue is a major factor in causing farm related injuries.

"Too many farmers push themselves too far, especially during the really busy times," says Ron Bonnett, CFA President. "Too often, it's a case of 'I'm going to finish that field tonight even if it kills me'. Health and safety is a worker's most valuable asset – nothing should come before."

On average, 115 people are killed and at least 1,500 are hospitalized for farm-related incidents in Canada each year, reports Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting. In 2006 alone, a total of 13,801 Canadian farms reported one or more medically treated or lost time injuries, reports Statistics Canada.

"Safety is often about equipment and guards, but the most important safety tool a person can have is their attitude and subsequent decisions," says Bonnett. "That could mean taking a 20 minute snooze when you are exhausted. Just take a break and you'll go back to work with a clear head."

Although the human factor is a significant cause of farm-related hazards – humans are also the most important factor in farm safety solutions – your safety is about the choices you make. It just takes a moment to make a decision that could literally be the difference between life and death. Choose safety.

- 30 -

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