

## Lookout for this logo!

Throughout the summer the Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development Farm Safety Team will be traveling to rodeos, trade fairs and other agricultural events throughout



Alberta to help promote the Safety Up campaign. The goal of the Safety Up campaign is to create and improve awareness for the farm safety and ensure safety remains in the back of everyone's mind. "The Safety Up" campaign is targeted towards new and young workers aged 17 to 25 and reminds them of the importance of safety on the job so they can enjoy life off the job! The most recent events that the team has attended include the Leduc Dairy Congress, and Brazeau County Fair in Drayton Valley.

Why focus on new and young workers? Young workers have been identified as having a high risk of injury and death on the job. According to the Workers Compensation Board, young workers in general are one third more likely to be injured on the job than those over age 25. New workers are often unaware of the potential hazards of their jobs. In fact, over 50% of accidents involving young workers occur during the first six months on the job. It is important that new workers be aware of the risks they face on their new job and of the need for training to prevent injuries and fatalities.

In recent years there have been far too many fatalities occurring on farms throughout Alberta. There are approximately 14 to 24 deaths that occur per year on farms throughout the province. These accidents range from ATV crashes and rollovers to farmers being crushed or trapped by their equipment. Animal handling and water sources such as dugouts, and irrigation ditches have also resulted in many devastating injuries and fatalities. These injuries and fatalities typically peak around harvest time during periods of increased stress and longer working hours.

A series of "Safety Up" fact sheets have been created and can be accessed on our website at [www.agriculture.gov.ab.ca/farmsafety](http://www.agriculture.gov.ab.ca/farmsafety). These fact

sheets will also be handed out at various events throughout the summer along with other promotional items such as bumper stickers, air fresheners, farm orientation and safety training guides, farm survival guides and farm safety CD's and many more promotional products to ensure safety remains in the mind and farmers remain aware of the risks they face.

Anyone who attends the summer events has a chance to win one of many farm safety door prizes including backpacks, first aid kits and t-shirts. All names will be entered to the Safety Up year-end draw for some incredible prizes including great Safety up logo wear. The draw will take place September 30 and the winner will be posted on Ropin the Web. If you haven't entered yet, go online to [www.agriculture.alberta.ab.ca/farmsafety](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ab.ca/farmsafety) and look for the Safety Up Contest.

If you miss us at the many rodeos and summer fairs this summer, check out our website and remember to **Safety Up. Save yourself for the good times.** Stay safe on the farm so you can enjoy all that life has to offer, whether that is good times with friends, sports, music or dating.

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We're on the web:

[www.agric.gov.ab.ca/farmsafety](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/farmsafety)

Sign up for our new 4-H & Ag Education Branch E-Newsletter at: [www.agriculture.alberta.ca/greencertificate](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca/greencertificate)

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Alberta Farm Safety Program

Alberta

# Farm Safety Newsletter

Summer 2009

## New Green Certificate equine specialty emphasizes safety first

The long-anticipated Equine Technician specialty of the Green Certificate Program is set to launch in Alberta schools this fall. By enrolling in the specialty, students will get a large, comprehensive manual full of horse husbandry and stable management tasks – and on nearly every page, important safety points.

Almost everything about horses - from handling them to operating and storing the equipment needed to keep them - has the potential to be dangerous. By outlining the safe and proper ways of working around horses, students can first read and learn how to do a task and then they are coached by a trainer while they apply and develop that skill.

In the same format as other Green Certificate specialties, students participating in this program will apprentice with a trainer at their facility of choice.



They will receive hands on learning from the trainer that will cover topics such as handling a horse in stressful and emergency situations, operating and maintaining common equipment, understanding horse defense mechanisms, facility maintenance—with safety being central to all tasks.

The program goes beyond the basic safety messages (ie wear protective footwear and don't coil the lead rope around your hand) and requires students to assess potential hazards to create a plan which will eliminate or significantly reduce them. Among other topics, students are taught to recognize common "flight or fight" triggers in horses, assess facility layout and condition, and properly operate equipment such as tractors, trucks and ATVs.

Successful program training and testing is rewarded with a certificate of completion. Potential employers will know they can expect an applicant who has completed a well-rounded course covering safety and the fundamentals of horse care.

For more information, contact the Green Certificate Program Coordinator or a Regional Coordinator at [www.agriculture.alberta.ca/greencertificate](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca/greencertificate).

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## Horse Safety 101

Taken from Safety Up – On Safe Horse Handling  
For this complete fact sheet and others, visit  
[www.agriculture.alberta.ca/farmsafety](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca/farmsafety)

### Safe Handling Tips Leading:

- The safest way to lead is with a properly-fitted halter and lead rope. Don't try to lead a horse without the rope.
- Stay to the side of the horse – alongside the neck – to prevent getting stepped/trampled on.
- Give the horse enough head room so that he doesn't panic, but not so much he can jerk free.
- Never coil the end of the lead shank around your hand – neatly fold it in your free hand

### Safe clothing and equipment

If you are going to work with horses, you need to wear clothing that is appropriate for the activity and use the proper equipment:

### Handling:

- Gloves
- Closed-toed/protective boots
- Long sleeved shirt
- Durable pants.

### Riding:

- ASTM/SEI or BSI approved HELMET!
- Boots with a heel to prevent foot from getting caught in the stirrups
- Tall boots or durable pants to prevent chaffing
- Properly fitted and well-maintained tack.

### General:

- Tie the horse no lower than the height of his withers. Give the horse some slack to free his head, but not so much that he can get tangled up in the rope.
- Learn to use a quick release knot. Always use this type of knot when tying a horse.
- Never duck under the horse's neck when he is tied up.
- Don't put yourself in a position to be squished between the horse and a wall. Always stand the horse perpendicular to the wall while working around him.
- Never stand directly behind a horse, as this is the horse's blind spot. To pass around behind, keep your hand on his rump, stay close to his body and quickly and calmly walk from one side to the other.
- When working around or with the horse's legs or feet, do not kneel. Always stay on your feet, ready and able to push yourself away in case the horse jumps or kicks.

## Important tips for safe ATV handling

Taken from Safety Up – On ATV Use  
For this complete fact sheet and others, visit  
[www.agriculture.alberta.ca/farmsafety](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca/farmsafety)

ATV-related injuries and fatalities are more likely if you don't use the vehicle properly. Experience demonstrates that some particular factors are more likely to lead to ATV crashes.

### To prevent incidents, follow these hazard-prevention guidelines:

- Take an ATV operator training course to learn how to properly handle and maintain the machine for optimum safety
- Driver error and loss of control commonly cause ATV crashes. Plan your route, drive at a reasonable speed for the terrain, and pay attention.

### Atv cont'd...

- Avoid tight turns and, when driving downhill, drive straight down rather than at an angle. Climb hills in low gear to avoid the chance of a back flip. Do not turn suddenly, pop the clutch or rev the throttle, as the ATV will pivot on the back axle and flip over, crushing the rider.
- Always wear a helmet approved for ATV or motorcycle use (by the Canadian Standards Association, Department of Transportation/ Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard, Snell or American National Standards Institute for motorcycle use, not for bicycle use).

- Wear proper protective clothing, including boots, gloves and long pants, along with proper eye protection, while travelling on an ATV.



## Most farms found to lack formal safety plans

By Jason Contant

Originally published in OHS Canada, April/May issue

The good news is the majority of Canadian primary producers believe farm safety is important; the bad news is that less than a fifth have a formal safety plan in place, a new study has found.

More than 750 primary producers—from various provinces and representing crop, dairy, hog, poultry and beef farming operations—took part in the online survey from Farm Credit Canada (FCC) in conjunction with the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA). Survey results, release in February, show that 83 percent of respondents said safety is a priority, but only 15 per cent have a formal safety plan in place.

“They practise many safety measures on a regular basis,” notes the survey report. “However, they acknowledge that they are not practicing all safety measures all of the time, which could result in the potential for accidents or injuries on the farm.” Of all the provinces, Quebec fared the best, with 44 per cent of respondents reporting they have a farm safety program in place. That compares to the provincial low of eight per cent in Manitoba and 21 per cent in both Ontario and the Atlantic provinces, notes Tanis Goski, manager of research for the FCC.

In all, the report notes that 89 per cent of respondents reported regularly practicing safe equipment handling and 83 per cent cited regularly training family members. Of concern, however, was the fact that two-thirds of those polled say they regularly work when tired and only 32 per cent say they are managing job stress.

The two latter findings, Goski says, “could override a lot of the other good intentions with the other safety measures.”

The report points to “old habits” and “time” as two major barriers to practicing safety measures. “In short, producers take shortcuts so they can get the job done.”

Taking precautions during farm renovations is also important, says CASA executive director Marcel Hacault. “If we can include that safety lens in what we do and how we do things, we’re probably going to improve our performance,” Hacault suggests. CASA officials are currently exploring a number of measures. These include creating a program that would encourage farmers to develop and implement a safety plan on their farms, and reviewing the possible benefits of incentives, such as insurance premium reductions, Hacault adds.

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