

SafeFARM

Health and safety information for Alberta farmers

Fall 2011

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New helmet policy for Alberta 4-H

Agri-News

Many 4-H equine clubs throughout the province already have a mandatory helmet policy in place at the club level. As of October 1, 2011, a mandatory helmet requirement was implemented for young and inexperienced members of all clubs province-wide.

“We wanted to be more progressive in the areas of risk management and injury prevention for our equine 4-H members,” says Stacy Price, President of the Alberta 4-H Council about the new policy. “It is important young riders become comfortable with a helmet requirement at 4-H events so they will also choose to wear a helmet when they are riding at home or on their own.

We hope equestrian helmets will just become part of the proper clothing 4-H members don before mounting a horse, regardless of where they are riding.”

Under the new policy, 4-H members in Horsemanship Levels I, II, and

III, or those born after December 31, 2000 will be required to wear an approved equestrian helmet while mounted. “Parents, guardians, 4-H leaders and 4-H members all need to be on board for the new policy implementation this fall to be successful,” says Price.

“Even with experience and a docile animal, horseback riding has the po-



Alberta 4-H aims to be more progressive in risk management with the introduction of a mandatory helmet policy.

tential to be dangerous,” says Kenda Lubeck, farm safety co-ordinator with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD). “The most skilled horseperson on a well-trained horse can’t possibly predict every move, especially on an animal that is

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Farm safety tips

- When transporting farm equipment on public roads, take caution. Don't move farm equipment anytime between sunset and sunrise. Light your farm equipment properly. Have turn signals, headlights and tail lights that work correctly. Ensure that all attachments are secure and properly mounted. And always watch out for overhead powerlines.
- Head trauma is the number one cause of serious injuries and fatalities from horseback riding. Approved equestrian helmets are proven to help reduce the severity of head trauma. Make sure the helmet fits properly and is secured to the rider's head. Wear a helmet. Every time. Every ride.
- The key to safe and efficient bale handling is an operator who knows the hazards. Always make sure the loader tractor is large enough for the job and the tires can handle the weight. Be sure to counter weight the tractor when handling large bales, and keep the load as low as possible to avoid a roll over.
- When working with livestock always ensure you have an escape route planned. Never put yourself in a compromising situation. Also, be sure to wear the appropriate gear for the job. Gloves and sturdy boots with a hard toe are standard gear for working with animals.
- Most farms have an assortment of tools for the many jobs at hand. Make sure all stationary power tools are grounded and have safety shields properly installed. Switch off and unplug power tools before changing blades or servicing. Be sure to service tools according to manufacturer's instructions, and wear the gear for the job. Always use personal protective equipment such as gloves and eyewear.

Canadian Agriculture Safety Association congratulates Cargill on SafetySense™

Source: *CASA*

Cargill Limited has released SafetySense™, a new safety plan based on the Canadian Agriculture Safety Association's (CASA) Canada FarmSafe Plan.

Developed with the health and safety expertise of the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, SafetySense™ is a safety system to be distributed to customers by Cargill. It is intended to bring process and structure to farm managers in allowing them to develop their own unique safety program. Through detailed safety enabling support, Cargill will guide their customers through comprehensive step-by-step processes that will assist them in assessing the safety aspects of their farming operations.

Marcel Hacault, executive director of CASA, says, "We are pleased to work with Cargill on this exciting new program. SafetySense™ is a unique Cargill tool to assist producers in managing their safety risks, and CASA's Canada FarmSafe Plan served as a great platform from which to start developing the program. We look forward to working with provinces, research and teach-

ing institutions, commodity groups and agri-business who might wish to develop Canada FarmSafe for their markets."

CASA's agricultural health and safety specialist Glen Blahey led the development of Canada FarmSafe and worked with Cargill on the creation of SafetySense™. "This program completes the linkage CASA has been establishing with all the players involved in primary agriculture," says Blahey.

For an outline of Canada FarmSafe, go to www.planfarmsafety.ca. To learn more about Cargill, visit www.cargill.ca.

The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) is a national, non-profit organization that provides national leadership and direction for agricultural health and safety to reduce injuries and lessen their negative impact on farmers, their families and workers. CASA is primarily funded through Growing Forward, a federal, provincial and territorial initiative, with support from Canadian agri-business.

FCC Ag Safety Fund back by popular demand

Source: *CASA*

For the second year, the \$100,000 FCC Ag Safety Fund is accepting applications from charitable and non-profit organizations in Canada providing agricultural safety training.

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) are once again partnering to provide support for safety training programs aimed at keeping

farmers, agribusiness operations and employees safe at work.

Applications will be accepted online from September 13 through to October 27, 2011.

"Last year's fund helped nine groups across Canada provide much-needed safety training to a variety of different audiences," says Marcel Hacault, CASA's executive director. "The projects supported by this fund

Learning new tasks safely

By Nicole Hornett

Sometimes it's hard for parents to know when their child is ready to take on more advanced chores and tasks around the house and farm. While there are tasks that require youth to be a certain age, such as driving a car or operating a full-sized ATV, there are many tasks that have no definitive measurement to tell us when a child is ready for more responsibility. Those tasks should be introduced to youth in stages with enough preparation to ensure adequate capabilities.

Before assigning any new task to a child, it is important to consider possible hazards, the child's abilities, pertinent training and proper supervision. Safety starts by applying all of the above at the same time. Dangerous situations form when someone thinks their child is capable of performing a task without the proper information and training!

Hazards

Before starting any task, it is essential to identify potential hazards. Having a child help identify hazards is an important way to implement training for the task. A hazard is a situation or item that could cause danger or injury. Hazard assessments help youth (or any worker) decide if a work area is safe. Hazard assessments can also help youth to understand the need for proper protective equipment (shoes, masks, gloves, etc), select suitable tools and plan the most effective way to finish the task.

Abilities

Assessment guidelines like those in the North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks can help adults match tasks to their child's abilities. Abilities are the capacity to move or think. Someone can be physically able to do a task, but not ready to think it through safely. This is why we don't see tall

eight-year olds driving cars — they may be tall enough to reach the pedals, but are not able to recognize hazards.

Training

Training is the action of teaching a person a particular skill or type of behaviour. With training, children and youth learn the details of a task, watch someone else complete it and then attempt it on their own with direct supervision. Training isn't always about the physical work; thinking is important too! For instance, when working with livestock, it is important to understand how animals think and to constantly survey the work area. These are important concepts to discuss with your child before they begin to handle the livestock.

Supervision

The right level of supervision is key to preventing injuries in youth taking on new tasks. Supervision requirements vary by task, age and abilities. The best way to for a child to learn through experience is to learn right alongside someone who knows their stuff and adheres to safety requirements. Once a child shows that she or he can do the task, the supervisor may begin to leave them at their task for short periods of time.

It takes time to master a new skill so patience is important. By honestly assessing a child's abilities, checking for hazards, providing training and adequate supervision, the child will gain the confidence and skills necessary to not only do the job, but do it safely.

For information about starting new chores or tasks, request a copy of the North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks from Alberta Farm Safety. Visit www.agriculture.alberta.ca/farmsafety.

Adult responsibilities

Before teaching youth new work skills, adults need to make sure:

- ➔ Implements are in good working order.
- ➔ All safety features are in place (roll-over protection structures, seatbelts, shields, proper lighting and marking).
- ➔ Work area has no hazards.
- ➔ Long hair is tied up.
- ➔ Basic service check is completed.
- ➔ Child and adult can communicate by cell phone, walkie-talkies or other method.
- ➔ Children are not expected to operate equipment or machinery after dark or in bad weather.
- ➔ Hydraulic lines are checked for signs of leaking or wear.
- ➔ Child has been fitted for a respirator and shown how to use it.
- ➔ Ventilation system is working before the child enters a closed building.
- ➔ Child knows an escape route.
- ➔ Animals have no disease.
- ➔ A barrier stands between the animal and the child.
- ➔ Hot water heater is set lower than 50 degrees Celsius.
- ➔ Child has at least one 10-minute break every hour.
- ➔ Where appropriate, child wears long-sleeved shirt, long pants, wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, sunscreen and gloves.

Farm safety is no accident!

Farming can be a dangerous occupation. As a farm owner, you try to eliminate and minimize as many hazards as possible. You are committed to safety. Your top priority is the safety of your family, your workers and yourself. You know that a healthy, safe farm is a productive one.

But are you prepared for every scenario? How do you train your people to be aware and ready for every hazard in any task they undertake? Farmers can have literally hundreds of different tasks occurring on any given day, which can be overwhelming.

With SafeThink Agriculture™, you and your workers learn a critical thinking strategy that allows you to predict, identify and prevent hazardous situations ‘on the fly’ throughout the work day.

The SafeThink strategy will teach you to automatically ask yourself a series of questions with each task. Those questions will create awareness of hazards whether it’s the possibility of a fall,

working in a confined space or using toxic chemicals.

This practical safety course will not end up on your shelf gathering dust. Instead, the critical thinking strategy you learn in class is naturally applied the very next day on your farm. SafeThink will become a part of planning, as you do the work and as you move on to new tasks.

See how this day-to-day inclusion of safety into farm activities changes the culture of your farm business to one that walks the talk when it comes to putting safety first. The result? Safe and healthy farm families and workers!

For more information contact Laurel Aitken, Farm Safety Coordinator, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development by email: laurel.aitken@gov.ab.ca or phone: 780-980-4230 or Ed Masson, Course instructor, by email: emasson@astecsafety.com or phone: 780-753-4421.

Safety is always a top concern on the farm. Take your commitment to safety to the next level. Sign up for SafeThink Agriculture™ today!

- A course designed specifically for agriculture
- Developed with input from Alberta farmers and training specialists
- Learn to predict and prevent hazardous situations ‘on the fly’
- Four classroom sessions alternate with on-farm application of concepts
- Available at the subsidized cost of \$160 per person

Courses offered:

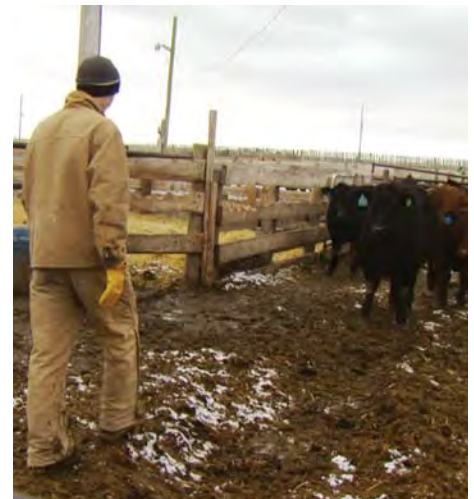
Leduc	Nov. 17, 24, Dec. 1 & 8
Vermilion	Nov. 18, 25, Dec. 2 & 9
Airdrie	Jan. 12, 26, Feb. 9 & 23
Raymond	Jan. 13, 27, Feb. 10 & 24
Provost	Jan. 20, Feb. 3, 17 & 29

To register contact Astec Safety:
Phone 780-753-2905
Email emasson@astecsafety.com

Sign up now for a course near you. Each course meets four times. Course numbers are limited!



Government of Alberta
Agriculture and Rural Development



Did you know that safe electricity clearance distances are subject to change? - Alberta's Joint Utility Safety Team

Electrical incidents can be avoided. Keep yourself and your equipment at least seven metres away from overhead power lines. If you must work closer, call your local electric utility company first.

Safe clearance guidelines provide general rules for working near—or passing under—power lines, but you may not know that these clearance guidelines can be affected by many factors:

- Clearance heights are reduced when off major highways; power lines can hang as low as four metres from the ground.

- Temperature changes.
- Wind-induced swing.
- Buildings, landscaping, ground conditions (like snow pack) and spoil piles.
- The increasing size and height of farm equipment.

Always contact your local utility for help setting safe limits of approach and developing a safe work plan around power lines.

Before excavating, always call Alberta One Call (1-800-242-3447) to locate any underground power lines.

New helmet policy continued from page 1

hard-wired to flee from danger. There is actually a higher rate of injury per hour of exposure in horse-back riding than in other notably high-risk sports like downhill skiing, motorcycle racing, and hang-gliding.”

“Head injuries are one of the most difficult injuries to recover from,” notes Lubeck. “Studies have shown that wearing a helmet while riding can reduce the potential for head injury by up to 80 per cent.”

However, not just any helmet will do. Equestrian helmets are designed to specifically protect riders from head injuries caused from horse-back riding scenarios; bicycle and ATV helmets are not. An equestrian helmet covers more of the head than either a bicycle or ATV helmet and has been tested and approved for the proper “crush rate” to provide riders with the optimum protection.

“The best helmet choice will fit snugly with no pressure points and



Approved equestrian helmets come in many styles and colors to suit all disciplines of horseback riding.

sit just above the eyebrows in front,” says Lubeck. “If you gently wiggle the helmet once it is on, the skin above the eyes should move when the helmet moves. This means the helmet is snug enough to stay in place when riding or during a fall.”

When buying an equestrian helmet, make sure to look for helmets that have been approved by one of the

following standard-setting organizations: the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM)/Safety Equipment Institute (SEI) or the British Standards Institute (BSI). Endorsement by these organizations means the helmet has been designed and built to a rigorously tested international safety standard. A sticker indicating which agency has approved the helmet and the date the helmet was manufactured should be attached to each approved helmet. “The styrofoam padding in helmets will also break down over time,” says Lubeck. “In order to ensure the helmet will protect to its full capacity, make sure it is less than five years old. And definitely replace the helmet if it has received a substantial blow of any sort – from a fall off of a horse or even if it has been dropped from a notable height. Treat your helmet like the fragile life saver it was designed to be.”

Ag Safety Fund back continued from page 2

aim to educate producers and organizations on how to manage risks in their operations. The FCC Ag Safety Fund is a terrific tool to help keep people safe on the farm.”

The fund is intended to help groups deliver agriculture safety training to producers in Canada or provide training for those who will train others in safe agricultural practices.

“FCC is committed to the success of the industry, and this fund is one example of that,” says Remi Lemoine, FCC Executive Vice President and COO. “From producer groups to agricultural safety trainers, we know many producers are working hard to keep their employees and families safe at work, and we want to continue to help them do that. Education and awareness are key to prevent accidents on the farm, and we’re proud to partner with CASA to

offer this fund.”

Applicants proposing programs or projects with a local or provincial scope are eligible to receive a maximum of \$10,000. Applicants proposing programs with a national scope are eligible to receive a maximum of \$25,000. The amount of funding awarded will be based on budgeted costs of the proposed project.

To receive funding, selected organizations must meet criteria before implementation of their program. The program must be completed by December 31, 2013.

Only online applications will be accepted, and successful applicants will be notified in early 2012.

More details are available online at www.planfarmsafety.ca.

**Luck
runs out
but
safety is
good for
life.**

Be prepared for winter on the farm

By Kenda Lubeck

While many of us are still wondering what happened to summer, we find ourselves fervently preparing for the winter months and the cold that it inevitably brings. For farm owners and workers, this usually involves a long list of seasonal chores.

As with anything on the farm, safety plays a key role in why and how we prepare for winter. Preventing a situation, such as repairing an electrical outlet that doesn't work, is much easier than reacting to a situation – needing that tractor and finding it won't start because the plug wasn't working.

Some things to check:

Be sure all equipment has been winterized.

- ✓ Winter oil in machinery, equipment and vehicles.
- ✓ Batteries are in good working order.
- ✓ Antifreeze is appropriate and topped up.
- ✓ Winter tires are on vehicles, particularly if you plan to tow

or haul anything.

- ✓ All equipment and machinery lights are working properly.
- Fix any lighting or electrical issues.
- ✓ Check all light fixtures and connections, particularly if they haven't been used all summer.
 - ✓ Turn on electric stock waterers to prevent them from freezing.
 - ✓ Inspect and repair any damaged electrical outlets.

Repair any fencing now before the ground freezes or ice and snow accumulate. Make sure animals have adequate feed so they do not lean on the fencing and damage it.

Make sure items such as animal feed are easily accessible when the snow comes.

Remove or relocate any equipment, tools, debris, etc. that may hinder snow removal in the coming months.

Arrange for any training such as equipment operation or First Aid courses during the winter months.

Take notes and record any issues



that could arise or be of help in the future such as recurring incidents or potential hazards that need attention. This could include faulty equipment, worn tools or items that need replacing.

Prepare for lack of sunlight when doing chores and jobs around the farm. This may mean adjusting your schedule or setting up more lighting in the yard or work area. As well, plan extra time for jobs in the winter.

Winter is a wonderful and enjoyable season; it just takes more time to get things done due to cold, slippery footing and the added bulk of extra clothing. A little preparation can go a long way to making farm chores safe and hassle-free this winter.

Alberta Farm Safety Program Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development

J.G. O'Donoghue Building
200, 7000 113 St
Edmonton, AB T6H 5T6

www.agriculture.alberta.ca/farmsafety

Kenda Lubeck, Editor
Farm Safety Coordinator
Grande Prairie
P: 780-538-5606
E: kenda.lubeck@gov.ab.ca

Nicole Hornett
Farm Safety Coordinator
Airdrie
P: 403-948-8524
E: nicole.hornett@gov.ab.ca

Cindy Kremer
Farm Safety Resource Orders
Edmonton
P: 780-427-4309
E: cindy.kremer@gov.ab.ca

Laurel Aitken
Farm Safety Coordinator
Leduc
P: 780-980-4230
E: laurel.aitken@gov.ab.ca

Raelyn Peterson
Farm Safety Coordinator
Grande Prairie
P: 780-538-5633
E: raelyn.d.peterson@gov.ab.ca

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