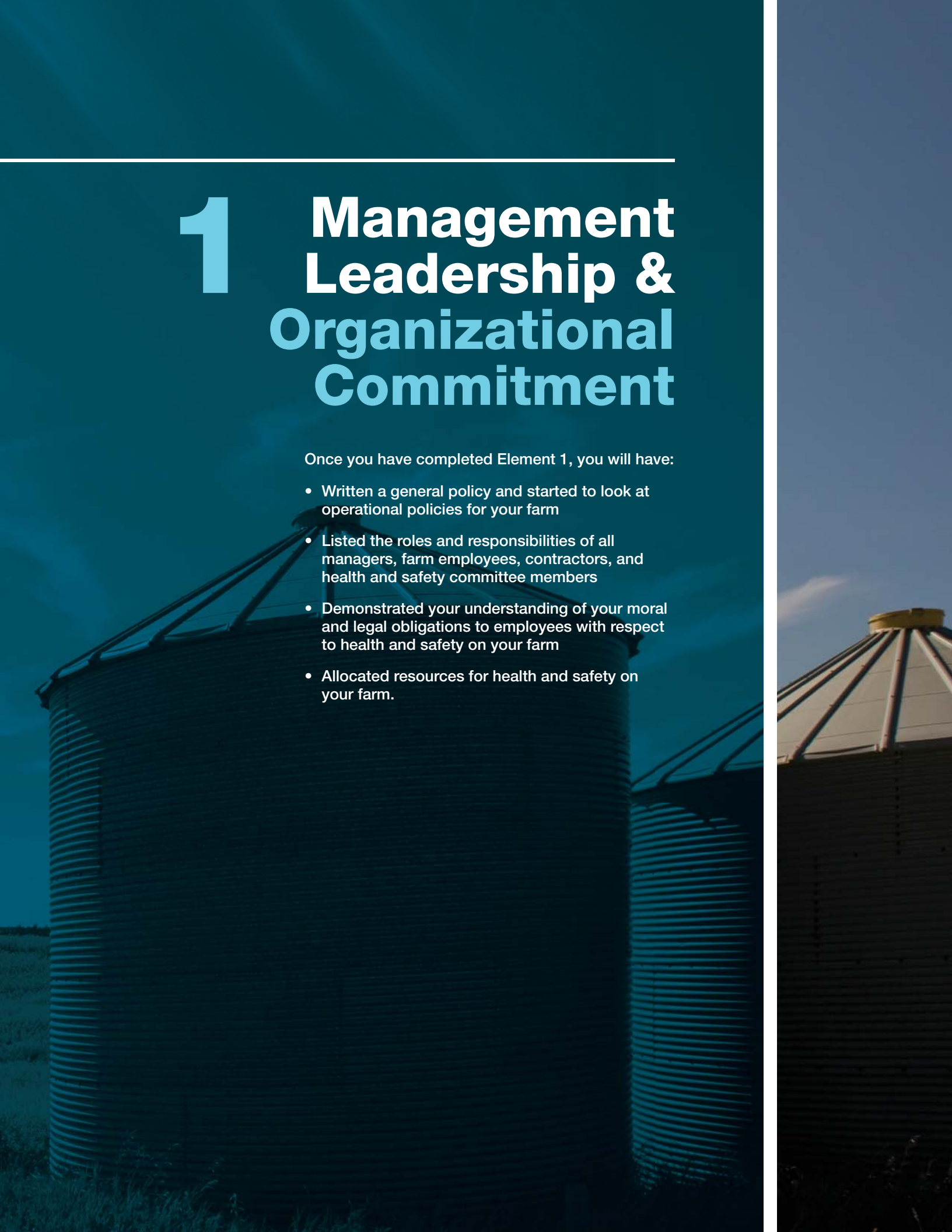


1 Management Leadership & Organizational Commitment

Once you have completed Element 1, you will have:

- Written a general policy and started to look at operational policies for your farm
- Listed the roles and responsibilities of all managers, farm employees, contractors, and health and safety committee members
- Demonstrated your understanding of your moral and legal obligations to employees with respect to health and safety on your farm
- Allocated resources for health and safety on your farm.



Introduction

In this element you look at the following topics that provide the foundation for your health and safety management system:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Business Risk Management
- Accountability and Monitoring

Health and Safety Policy

For any health and safety management system to be effective, as farm owner or manager, you should show leadership and commitment to the program. The first step in accomplishing this is to put your expectations around health and safety into writing by developing a health and safety policy.

An organization's health and safety policy has two components:

- General policy statement
- Operational policies

General Policy

A general or overarching health and safety policy states the overall guidelines that govern health and safety on your farm. It tells workers, suppliers, contracted employers, self-employed workers and clients about your commitment to safety and health.

Your general health and safety policy should contain the following components:

- A declaration of your commitment to health and safety
- Overall goals and objectives of your health and safety program
- General health and safety responsibilities of management, workers, contractors and visitors while at the work site
- A requirement to comply with the organization's own health and safety standards
- A statement showing your compliance with the spirit of applicable legislation whether it applies directly or not to your operation
- A statement that substandard health and safety performance will not be accepted

Involve employees in writing the policy, and show your commitment as the farm owner or manager by signing and dating the document. To be effective, make your policy known to all employees and, where appropriate, to suppliers, contracted employers, self-employed workers and clients. Make new workers aware of the policy during orientation. Keep the policy current; it should influence all work activities. Post the policy where everyone can read it.



See Appendix 1.1
“General Policy
Examples” for
examples of general
policies.



STEPS FOR COMPLETING YOUR GENERAL SAFETY POLICY

- **Step 1:** Use Worksheet 1.1 “General Health and Safety Policy” to help you write a general health and safety policy for your farm operation.
- **Step 2:** Review the policy with all workers and allow them to have input.
- **Step 3:** Once the policy is finalized, print and sign the policy.
- **Step 4:** Post the policy in a high traffic area to remind workers of your agreed commitment to health and safety. It is a good idea to add a copy to your binder.
- **Step 5:** Review and revise the policy annually with workers. Ensure any new staff review the policy prior to starting work.

Operational Policies

Your operational policies establish and communicate your expectation for compliance with every aspect of your health and safety plan. Examples of the types of policies may include the following:

- Training requirements and records
- Standard operating (safety) procedures (SOP)
- Emergency plans
- First aid records
- Working alone procedures
- Incident investigation processes and follow-ups
- Responsibilities of all persons working on the operation, including contractors
- All other health and safety matters related to the operation of your farm

Your policies should meet the requirements set out in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* whether or not that legislation applies.

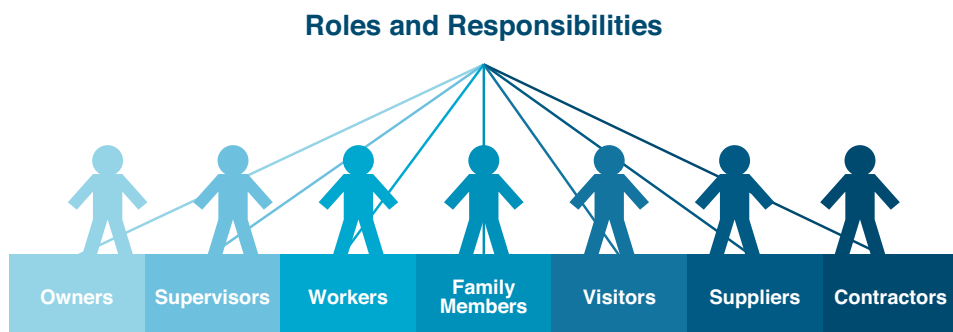
Each of the above operational policies are discussed in subsequent elements. By the end of the course, you will have developed your own operational policies.

Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are detailed written instructions to achieve uniformity of the performance of a specific function (or a “how to” document).

SOPs will include safe work procedures, a specific defined set of activities intended to minimize the risk inherent in performing specific jobs.

Roles and Responsibilities

If you have clearly documented and communicated health and safety roles and responsibilities for all levels of the organization, you create an expectation of a standard level of performance among employees, contractors and visitors. Everyone living, working or visiting the farm should be aware of his or her roles and responsibilities for health and safety. As a manager, you can build specific health and safety responsibilities and goals into job descriptions and contracts. Clearly communicate to all employees your expectations and the consequences of not adopting health and safety responsibilities.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safe farm work environments are created when everyone co-operates to prevent occupational injuries and illnesses. This is the basis for an internal responsibility system (IRS) for occupational health and safety. Throughout most Canadian workplaces, the IRS is considered an industry standard when it comes to health and safety. In workplaces (regulated by occupational health and safety legislation) that are unable or unwilling to manage their own health and safety, a regulatory agency will compel them to do so.

As a self-employed farmer, you are ultimately responsible for the health and safety of everyone on your farm. You have the most authority in your workplace and, therefore, the greatest responsibility for keeping the workplace safe. However, the goal of a good health and safety program is to get all people working on, or visiting, the farm involved in protecting themselves and others from injury or illness. Everyone is accountable.

If there are children on the farm, ensure you consider their supervision when determining roles and responsibilities of family members.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FARM OWNER/MANAGER

- Set an example for everyone on the farm. Be clear about your responsibilities and live up to them.
- As the person in charge, take on your own duties and assign duties to all the workers.
- Make sure the duties of all workers are clearly explained to them.
- Make sure employees are clear about their responsibility for their own health and safety, as well as that of all other workers.
- Ensure all workers are trained to do their jobs safely and that all the appropriate protective systems are available for use at all times.
- Monitor your workers regularly and correct any errors or problems that come up.

You can enhance everyone's health and safety on your farm by clarifying responsibilities during routine work and during an emergency situation. Make sure your workers understand the immense importance of accountability. Everyone on the farm must be able to rely on each other to do jobs responsibly and to protect the health and safety of every person on the farm.



Refer to Appendix 1.2 "Example Roles and Responsibilities" for examples of typical health and safety responsibilities of people involved in farming operations.

*Consider safety-related legislation that may apply to your farm: go to www.qp.alberta.ca. Click on **Laws Online/Catalogue** in the menu to review related legislation including: **Occupational Health and Safety Act**, including the **Environmental Code of Practice for Pesticides**, **Safety Codes Act** (electrical, gas, fire, plumbing, pressure, etc.), **Traffic Safety Act**, **Public Health Act** (housing, sanitation, etc.).*



STEPS FOR COMPLETING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Step 1:** Use Worksheet 1.2 "Roles and Responsibilities" to create the roles and responsibilities of each person involved in your farming operation.
- **Step 2:** Review the roles and responsibilities with all workers and allow them to have input.
- **Step 3:** Print the roles and responsibilities.
- **Step 4:** Add these roles and responsibilities to your health and safety binder. Add responsibilities to job descriptions. You can also post in a high traffic area so that everyone has a constant reminder that health and safety is everyone's responsibility.
- **Step 5:** Review with workers on an annual basis and all new workers prior to starting work.

Business Risk Management

A good risk management plan considers the costs associated with incidents involving disability and liability. Insurance is available to help mitigate these risks. There are several options to consider when you want to protect your business and provide income in the case of illness or injury.

Workers' Compensation

Workers' Compensation is provincial legislation that provides income to injured workers and access to medical and rehabilitation services. It also protects the employer and employees from any liability claims. For more information on Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) coverage in Alberta visit www.wcb.ab.ca.

Other Insurance

- Commercial insurance from private insurance companies offer various types of protection. Be sure to discuss your specific needs to ensure you get appropriate coverage.
- Disability insurance provides benefits to injured individuals. This is often part of an employee benefits package.
- Liability insurance provides you, as the owner, protection against liability claims if there is injury or property damage to a third party (this does not include coverage for employees).
- Employers' liability insurance provides coverage for an employee injured on the job; however, the employee must sue the employer for the injuries and the coverage is often limited, leaving the employer responsible for court ordered payments in excess of the insurance payment.

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Workers' Compensation are two separate pieces of legislation. The requirements for safe and healthy working conditions fall under OHS. Workers' Compensation legislation is centered on protecting employers and employees from the financial impact of a workplace injury or death and does not require you to have a safety management system in place.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION

A current copy of the *Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act*, Regulation and Code and other health and safety information relevant to the operation must be available to employees at the work site. This provides workers with access to the minimum requirements for conducting activities covered by legislation and access to information about their rights and responsibilities. Official printed versions of the legislation are available on-line from Alberta Queen's Printers.

Accountability and Monitoring

For our purposes, the definition of an employer includes owners, supervisors or managers (anyone that directs the activities of workers).

Integrate safety into all operations and manage it like any other farm function.

Bring in the experts — the worker who does the job knows it the best!

Ensure equal representation from all levels of the organization on the committee.



See Appendix 1.3 “Example Health and Safety Committee Responsibilities” for a description of typical responsibilities of a joint health and safety committee representative.

To ensure compliance and effective performance of assigned roles and responsibilities, you need to establish systems to monitor, evaluate and provide accountability. Accountability and monitoring processes may include disciplinary processes, formal performance appraisals, incentive and recognition processes and compliance monitoring.

You should address non-compliance to health and safety requirements as you would all other performance issues.

MANAGEMENT INVOLVEMENT

For a health and safety management system to be effective, it is essential that management at all levels demonstrates support of the health and safety program. As manager, you can do this through your participation in health and safety leadership training, health and safety meetings, inspection tours and incident investigations. Managers should regularly tour the work site to communicate and reinforce healthy and safe practices and behaviours.

WORKER INVOLVEMENT

Successful health and safety management systems have high levels of worker involvement. Worker participation in the development of the system is particularly important to create ownership and overall buy-in to the system and helps ensure a better fit with the culture of the organization. To promote worker participation, actively involve workers in the development of hazard assessment, inspections, preventative maintenance, training, emergency response and incident reporting systems. Look for opportunities to get workers from all areas of the organization involved, and provide regular updates and encourage feedback.

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Consider establishing an on-farm working group to talk about health and safety issues on an ongoing basis. In other workplace sectors, this working group is generally referred to as a health and safety committee. This group of worker and employer representatives works together to identify and solve health and safety issues at the work site. The health and safety committee offers employees an opportunity to become more actively involved in creating and maintaining interest in health and safety.

The purpose of the committee is to address health and safety concerns that cannot be dealt with in the course of daily work, and to offer recommendations for improvement to site health and safety. The committee does not have the power to make changes but instead acts as an important communication link between the workers and management. Encourage workers to report their health and safety concerns to the committee; they should expect a response, but cannot expect action by committee members. The committee is responsible for recommending how health and safety problems might be solved, not for carrying out the necessary changes. Supervisors and managers are obligated to take reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of their workers. Communication from committee members through regular meetings, and by posting meeting minutes, allows everyone an opportunity to bring concerns forward for consideration.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Health and safety is part of the management system — just like inventory control or accounting. As manager, you need to give health and safety the same attention as you do other management systems. You are required to provide the health and safety resources needed to implement and improve the program.

Establish authority and approval processes for resource allocation. Consider legal compliance, risk exposure, operational benefits, cost effectiveness, ease of implementation (both short and long term) and other options.



Use Worksheet 1.3 “Health and Safety Committee Responsibilities,” to outline specific responsibilities.

BUDGETING FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

To make your plan effective and workable, include a budget for health and safety. Initially, you may find it difficult to estimate the size of your budget; however, you do need to be prepared to invest both capital and time into making your farming operation safer. There is a direct connection between the physical safety of a farming operation and its economic viability.

If you communicate to workers that you have allocated resources to health and safety, you are more likely to have buy-in to the program.



You can anticipate expenditures in two areas:

- Time for training, meetings, record keeping and routine inspections.
- Repairs or replacement of hazardous equipment, materials and facilities.

The savings come from efficiency and reductions in lost time resulting from preventable incidents.

USE YOUR FARM INCOME TAX RETURN AS A TEMPLATE

You can use your farming income tax return forms as a template for identifying or categorizing budget line items:

- Categorize machine guarding and safety modifications under the equipment repair line.
- Place structural changes in the building and fence repair line.
- Identify items such as personal protective equipment, gas monitoring equipment, and retrieval tripods and winches as small tools or other expenses.

Conclusion

Before you move on to Element 2, check that you have drafted a general policy (Worksheet 1.1) and drafted roles and responsibilities (Worksheets 1.2 and 1.3) to ensure that you have taken the first step toward a health and safety management system.

Use the Self-Evaluation Checklist on the next page to determine what you have done and what still needs to be done before you move on to the next element.

Once you are able to answer yes to all the items in the checklist, you will know that you are COR compliant. This means you have met the industry standard for a health and safety management system for this element. Once you can do this for every element, you are ready to apply for your Certificate of Recognition (COR) and will be eligible to receive discounts on WCB insurance.

In Element 2, you take on the task of hazard identification and assessment. Hazard assessment forms the foundation of your health and safety system.

Element 1

Self Evaluation Checklist

	Yes	No
I have a written general health and safety policy for my farm.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have signed the policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have posted the policy so that all farm workers can see it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have made workers aware of the policy's content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have written specific health and safety responsibilities for each of the following (if applicable):		
• Managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Contractors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have made all of the above aware of their specific health and safety responsibilities covered by my farm policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have written health and safety committee responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I evaluate all employees on their individual health and safety performance:		
• Managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Supervisors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I communicate to employees, at least annually, the organization's commitment to health and safety.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tour the work site to reinforce health and safety practices and behaviours:		
• Every 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Yearly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have relevant and current health and safety best practices information (or legislation) readily available at the farm site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a process in place that addresses contractor health and safety while on site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a process in place that addresses visitor health and safety while on site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I provide the health and safety resources needed (workers, equipment methods, materials and money) to implement and improve health and safety.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 1.1

General Policy Examples

EXAMPLE 1

[Farm Name]

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

[Farm Name] is committed to the Health and Safety Management System that protects our employees, contractors and the public.

Employees at all levels are responsible and accountable for the company's health and safety. Active participation by everyone, at all times, and in every job is necessary for the health and safety excellence this company expects.

Management will set an example and provide leadership in health and safety, set health and safety policies and procedures, and provide training, equipment and adequate resources to perform the job safely.

Workers will follow all rules, safe work policies and procedures, and cooperate with the employer in working towards improved health and safety at work.

Workers and management at all levels will be familiar with the requirements of the *Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act* as it relates to their work.

Our goal is a healthy and injury-free workplace for all employees. By working together, we can achieve this goal.

Name and Title of Most Senior Manager: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

EXAMPLE 2

_____ [Farm Name] Health and Safety Policy

My Commitment to You

I am committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for everyone who lives, works or visits this farm.

I recognize the duties, rights and responsibilities of myself and all workers and am committed to ensure that all people on my farm are aware of these and other conditions necessary to protect their own and other's health and safety.

I am committed to establishing and maintaining a FarmSafe plan to ensure the protection of everyone on my farm. I am committed to supporting the practice of safe work procedures through the use of adequately guarded equipment, programs and training.

I have adopted the following safety philosophies:

- All people have a right to work in a safe and healthy workplace without fear of injury or illness, or threats of violence or intimidation.
- All people have a right to refuse unsafe work they believe may be injurious to themselves or other workers.
- All people have a right to know what hazards are present in the materials or processes they have to work with.
- Health and safety is everyone's responsibility and can only be achieved through everyone's participation.
- Working in a safe and healthy way is a condition of employment.
- Performing any work while under the influence of prescription medications, over-the-counter drugs, alcohol or other substances is not permitted. Modified work options are available.
- All hazards will be identified and controlled through regular inspections.
- Health and safety education will be consistent and ongoing.
- Health and safety meetings will be held regularly with worker input required.
- All incidents and dangerous occurrences will be reported and investigated.
- All employers, supervisors, workers, volunteers, contractors, self-employed persons and suppliers must provide evidence of safe and healthy practices in their dealings with _____ [Farm Name].
- Health and safety practices must work with other programs, such as Food Safety, Environmental Farm Planning and Quality Assurance.

The health and safety of every person on _____ [Farm Name] is important. To help you better understand the principles of health and safety, you must on a yearly basis, read, sign and date the FarmSafe Plan binder and ask for clarification of any aspects of the binder or policy manual that you do not understand.

Name and Title of Most Senior Manager: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix 1.2

Example Roles and Responsibilities

Review the following example roles and responsibilities and place a check mark beside the statements you would like to include in your FarmSafe plan.

Farm Owner

- Know and follow best practices for health and safety.
- Provide a safe, healthy workplace.
- Provide and maintain safe buildings, tools, machines and equipment.
- Set up an effective health and safety management system, including the creation of a joint health and safety committee or appointment of a worker health and safety representative, depending on the number of workers present on the farm.
- Provide close supervision where needed.
- Train and support supervisors to meet health and safety standards.
- Identify hazards and train workers to recognize potential hazards.
- Ensure proper steps are taken to control risks.
- Ensure family members are as trained and competent as all other workers.
- Provide necessary personal protective equipment.
- Ensure routes, entrances and exits to buildings and work areas are safe.
- Ensure hazardous products and chemicals are moved, handled and used safely.
- Provide adequate first aid equipment and training for your operation.
- Inspect work areas regularly and make immediate corrections or adjustments before there's an incident.
- Understand and use proper emergency processes when needed.
- Involve everyone who may work for you in jointly managing health and safety issues on the farm. Workers often have direct knowledge and experience of the workplace hazards present.
- Give serious consideration to the issues workers raise about safety and health. If they know you value their opinions and ideas, they're more likely to be involved in health and safety on the farm.
- Discuss the hazards before workers begin the task. To maximize risk reduction, make sure you and your workers agree on the safest way to perform all hazardous jobs before anyone starts working, and establish and follow standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- Ensure visitors and non-working family members understand safety rules of the farm.
- _____
- _____

Farm Supervisor

- Identify all potential health and safety hazards and risks to workers in your work area.
- Develop and implement measures to reduce, eliminate or control the identified risks.
- Develop procedures to respond to an emergency for each hazardous situation.
- Train workers about these hazards and the implemented control strategies.
- Include hazard identification and control strategies as part of the new-worker orientation process.
- Ensure worker compliance with standard operating procedures.
- Ensure that other persons who may enter the workplace are aware of hazards and follow proper preventative procedures.
- Co-operate with and assist the health and safety committee to plan and conduct workplace inspections.
- Keep workers informed of inspection results and follow-up actions.
- Ensure prompt correction of the unsafe conditions noted by the inspections.
- Conduct ongoing informal inspections of the work site to identify unsafe acts or conditions.
- Encourage and require workers to report safety concerns and hazards.
- Encourage and require workers to inspect their tools, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) prior to each use.
- Review and follow up on all incident reports.
- Investigate all incidents to determine the cause.
- Participate in the safety program review by taking the opportunity to review safe work practices and safety processes in your area.
- Update and revise any new work procedures or safe work practices as required.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Worker (including family members and visitors)

- Comply with safe work practices as directed or identified on the particular operation.
- Inform your supervisor of health and safety hazards encountered in the workplace.
- Work with your supervisor to resolve hazardous situations.
- Co-operate and assist the health and safety committee by participating in the planned inspection process.
- Inspect all tools, equipment and PPE immediately prior to use to ensure good working order.
- Take care to protect your health and safety so as not to harm yourself or those around you.
- Report all incidents to your immediate supervisor, including incidents:
 - Resulting in medical attention.
 - Resulting in a minor injury that does not require medical attention.
 - Where no injury occurred but could have (dangerous occurrence).
- Complete the required incident reporting form.
- Learn and follow safe work practices.
- Report any concerns to your supervisor regarding the safety program in the workplace.
- Participate in the safety program review process.
- _____
- _____
- _____

Contractor

- Comply with all applicable legislation and standards and accepted best work practices and procedures specific to the work performed.
- Confirm to the farm owner that you have Workers' Compensation Board coverage, if required for your sector, or if compulsory coverage is not required, then have proof of disability and liability insurance.
- Provide competent and sufficient supervision for the work performed under the contractor's control.
- Co-operate with the employer to identify and control the hazards associated with the work being performed.
- Co-operate with the employer to develop and implement a safety orientation for workers of both parties geared toward the hazards specific to the workplace and the work being undertaken.
- Give notice of intent to perform work where municipal or provincial law requires, such as work in close proximity to overhead power lines.
- _____
- _____

Suppliers

- Supply products that are safe when used according to instructions.
- Provide instructions for the safe assembly, use, storage and distribution of products supplied (sell, rent or lease).
- Ensure all products comply with current legislation, such as rollover protection being designed and installed to an accepted Canadian standard.
- Provide specific transportation and handling requirements for hazardous materials or oversize equipment.
- Supply safety data sheets (SDS or MSDS) for controlled products.
- _____
- _____

Appendix 1.3

Example Health and Safety Committee Responsibilities

Review the following example health and safety committee responsibilities and place a check mark beside the statements you would like to include in your FarmSafe plan.

- Assist the employer to identify, assess and control hazards.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the implemented controls.
- In co-operation with the employer, plan and schedule inspections of all work areas.
- Develop workplace inspection checklists and reporting forms.
- Conduct regular planned inspections of the workplace, work processes and procedures.
- Identify and report hazard(s) found during inspections and other activities.
- Assist the employer to set hazard control priorities.
- Recommend general types of corrective action that will prevent hazards from causing harm.
- Discuss concerns with workers, supervisors and the employer.
- Document inspection results on a workplace inspection recording form.
- Follow up to ensure corrective action is effective.
- Provide a copy of the inspection report, as appropriate, to the employer and/or supervisor.
- Assist and co-operate with the employer to identify and control risks from conditions and circumstances associated with contracted work.
- Review and investigate all incident reports in accordance with legislation and internal policy.
- Ensure all incidents are investigated and that recommendations are put forward to management for corrective action, and then ensure the corrective action has been taken.
- _____
- _____
- _____

For further information on Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committees, check the Alberta Labour website for information bulletins and other resources at <http://work.alberta.ca>

Worksheet 1.1

General Health and Safety Policy

Available online at: www.agriculture.alberta.ca/farmsafety

Farm or Ranch Name:

Commitment:

Goals and Objectives:

Safety Responsibilities:

Compliance:

Disciplinary Action:

Worksheet 1.2

Roles and Responsibilities

Available online at: www.agriculture.alberta.ca/farmsafety

Owner/Employer:

Supervisor:

Worker:

Others (e.g., contractor, service provider, visitors):
