

Farm Safety Planning

What is a farm safety plan?

A farm safety plan is a hard copy document of policies, procedures, rules, diagrams, maps and contact information for anyone working on a farm. It is also an agreed and communicated way of doing things which create a safe and productive environment for those working and living on a farm.

Objectives:

- Reduce farm injuries and fatalities on your farm.
- Reduce liability of the farm entity:
 - all workers will have ongoing communication and training on safe practices
 - a dependable farm worker is responsible for safety issues
 - all safety rules have been posted at a specified location.

Safety rules reduce fatalities and serious injuries if farm workers understand the rules and the overall concept of safety. There are two categories of rules: general and specific. General rules apply to all farm workers, while specific rules apply to certain tasks, such as operating a tractor or working in the shop. Some workers will need to heed all the rules, and others assigned to more specialized tasks will only follow the rules that apply to those tasks.



Designing a farm safety plan

- Should be customized by each farm owner or manager. Each farm is different.
- Develop a safety policy statement. Encourage employees/workers to participate in its creation.
- Appoint someone as the safety director. It may be the owner, a member of the family or a trusted employee. This person's job is to make sure everyone knows what to do in case of an emergency. They should also be in charge of safety training exercises.
- Create a communication plan to ensure vital messages get delivered in a timely manner and to encourage discussion on safety.
- Post the safety director's phone number in a prominent location. Also post emergency contact numbers. Display maps or diagrams of the locations of landline telephones, fire extinguishers and first aid kits. Also make sure each farm vehicle has a fire extinguisher and first aid kit. This includes tractors and combines. Plan to re-stock first aid kits and fire extinguishers periodically.
- Make sure everyone knows their responsibilities in case of an emergency. All employees should know how to use the fire extinguishers. If possible offer training in first aid, including CPR.
- Rules should be reviewed once or twice annually, or after any big change in equipment or farming procedures.
- Create incentive for workers to be safety conscious.
- Keep records of safety issues. Make it possible for employees to record any safety problem that might occur. Correct the problem as soon as possible and make note of its correction.
- Stress the importance of safety on a daily basis. Require everyone to use the proper safety equipment to do his job. When performing repairs and routine maintenance, make sure all safety shields are in place.
- Promote a zero tolerance policy of alcohol and drug use on the job. Also do not tolerate horseplay around farm equipment or farm animals.



Ideas for farm safety plans:

Name of Farm: ABC Farm

Date of Enactment: November 9, 2010

Statement of purpose:

To prevent the loss of life, property and revenue on ABC Farm.

Statement of commitment

All employees will be trained on safe use of equipment, proper attire, and proper work environment to reduce risk of fatality and serious injury to all works on ABC Farm.

The farm safety director, _____, is responsible for training all farm workers about safety on the farm. See _____ for help or questions about all safety issues on or pertaining to this farm.

Signed:

Farm Owner

Date

Worker

Date

1. Smoke only in designated areas. (Or better yet, create a non-smoking environment.)
2. Do not consume alcoholic beverages and nonprescription drugs on the job.
3. Report all on-the-job injuries promptly to the farm owner or designated safety director.
4. Maintain order in your work area.
5. Report hazardous conditions promptly.
6. Always follow all safety precautions.
7. Do not enter confined spaces without permission and a standby person.
8. Know where you can get help if needed.
9. Do not horseplay on the job.
10. Always bend your knees when you lift objects and get help with heavier loads.
11. Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) if the job requires it.
12. Wear hats, long-sleeved shirts, and trousers for outdoor work.
13. Know where first aid equipment is located.
14. Do not perform emergency repairs unless authorized to do so.
15. Wear clothing appropriate for the temperature and weather conditions.
16. Secure all gates and doors properly.
17. Report unusual animal behaviour.
18. Secure equipment and go inside during electrical storms.



1. Make sure electrical power tools are grounded properly.
2. Inspect power cords for safety and serviceability before use.
3. Do not attempt electrical repairs unless you are qualified to do so.
4. Unplug electrical equipment using the plug, not the cord.
5. Know the location and proper use of electrical disconnects or breakers.
6. Keep equipment far away from overhead power lines. Use nonconducting ladders when working near electrical energy sources (power lines, transformers, etc.).
7. Tag faulty electrical tools and place them in the repair basket.
8. Ensure proper clearances when moving machinery under power lines.
9. Enlist the help of a spotter if equipment, such as an elevator, must be raised near power lines.
10. Never use electrical power tools while standing in mud or water.
11. Ask if unsure about electrical safety.



1. Post “NO SMOKING” signs in fire-sensitive areas.
2. Keep all signs visible and in good repair.
3. Keep vegetation away from fire-sensitive areas, such as fuel tanks and buildings.
4. Label all flammable materials.
5. Keep flammable liquids in approved containers during transport or storage.
6. Do not allow combustible trash to accumulate.
7. Make sure fire fighting devices are fully charged and conveniently located.
8. Never fill gas tanks so that they run over.
9. Keep combustible materials away from your clothes.
10. Stop engines before refueling.
11. Store oxygen and acetylene tanks separately and in a secured, upright position.
12. Keep safety caps in place on tanks until used.
13. Have fire protection available when welding or cutting.
14. Ask if unsure about fire safety.



1. Use the proper serviceable tool for the job.
2. Do not use cheater bars/pipes on wrenches.
3. Use the proper size wrench/socket if available; adjustable wrenches are secondary tools.
4. Never remove safety guards/shields from power tools.
5. Do not use a power tool you are unfamiliar with or one which you have not been trained on.
6. Place unserviceable tools in the repair basket and inform the correct person of your action.
7. Use only serviceable ladders, and inspect them before use.
8. Never lay a tool on the ground while in the field – it may be lost.
9. Keep power tools out of the path of vehicles.
10. Wear eye protection when grinding, sharpening or cutting.
11. Ask if unsure about the use of a tool.



1. Never operate equipment unless you have been trained to do so.
2. Do not allow others to ride on equipment you are operating at any time.
3. Make sure equipment is stopped before attempting to clean, unclog, service, or repair.
4. Keep all guards in place.
5. Read and follow equipment manuals.
6. Always use the equipment manual or lubrication order when servicing equipment.
7. Lower all attachments before working on a machine.
8. Use safety blocks and jacks when suspending parts of machinery; using a jack alone is unsafe.
9. Perform a safety check before using equipment.
10. Use care when mounting or dismounting equipment.
11. Check on-board fire fighting devices.
12. Use extreme care when operating around ditches and embankments.
13. Make sure rollover protection structures (ROPS) are properly secured.
14. Use the operator seat belt only when ROPS are present.
15. Check behind vehicles before backing up.
16. Use the safety cage when changing tires.
17. Shut equipment down and lower all ground engaged devices before leaving.
18. Do not wear loose or ragged clothing near rotating shafts or gear trains.
19. Modify equipment only with the manufacturer's approval.
20. Use extreme care when moving equipment on public roads.
21. Keep machinery off public roads at night unless equipment is lighted in accordance with provincial law.
22. Be watchful and maintain full control when entering a public roadway or when entering or leaving a field through gates.
23. Make no sudden turns while operating in road gear and stay on the traveled portion of the roadway.
24. Ask if you have questions about machinery safety.



1. Remember that animals may be friendly but they are extremely strong and spook much easier at night than in the daytime.
2. Stay out of corners and area from which escape is difficult when working with animals.
3. Remember that friendly bulls or stallions can be very unpredictable when cows or mares are in heat.
4. Be wary of newly acquired livestock.
5. Make sure all stock enclosures are in good repair.
6. Close gates securely.
7. Always report unusual animal behaviour that could signal illness.
8. Request veterinary assistance for sick livestock.
9. Remove dead livestock as soon as possible.
10. Handle vaccines, medicines and sharps with care.
11. Work cattle with two people when possible.
12. Ask if you are unsure about anything dealing with livestock.



1. Collect, store and refer to the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) which are shipped with most chemical compounds.
2. Make sure all workers who handle chemicals read the appropriate MSDS before using.
3. Read warning labels on containers and do not remove them.
4. Wear recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when handling or applying agricultural chemicals and pesticides.
5. Be mindful of wind direction when preparing and applying chemicals, so that people and animals are not exposed.
6. Inventory leftover chemicals yearly and dispose of unwanted pesticides properly.
7. Notify neighbors when you are about to use chemicals.
8. Avoid windy days when applying agricultural chemicals.
9. Dispose of veterinary items properly.
10. Keep all pesticides in their original containers and store them in locked and approved storage facilities.
11. Never store animal vaccines or medicines in the family refrigerator.
12. If you have questions about toxic materials safety, ask.

