

The 15 minute **FARM SAFETY** **CHECK**

It's working

**WORKPLACE
SAFE**

**15 minutes of your
time could ensure
the health and safety
of you, your family
and the workers on
your farm.**

How safe is your farm?

Every year, more deaths and injuries occur on farms than in almost any other workplace (source: *Workplace Standards Tasmania statistics*).

Too many farmers and agricultural workers are injured or killed on farms in Tasmania. Children and family members are also injured.

These injuries can be prevented.

- Geoff, a farm worker, received a painful eye irritation after rubbing pesticide into his eyes. He did not wash hands after using the chemical, and he was not wearing gloves, either.
- Steve, the 14-year-old son of a farmer, was killed when the tractor he was driving overturned down an embankment. Before the accident, the tractor had been deemed unroad-worthy due to uneven braking on the back wheels.
- Sally was clearing an obstruction in a potato harvester when another person started the machine, not realising Sally was at work. She was carried along the harvester's conveyor belt into the machine and suffered serious head and chest injuries.

These accidents are so easily prevented that they might seem unlikely to really occur — but unfortunately, these and other accidents still happen.

What you can

do to ensure safety on your farm

By working through this *15 Minute Farm Safety Check* you are taking the first step in ensuring health and safety on your farm.

This easy to follow guide will help you quickly check your farm for hazards. It won't cover all possible hazards but it will help you identify, assess and control those that may cause injury, illness or death to you, your family and your workers.

After identifying these hazards, you need to assess their risk. Then you need to make sure effective procedures are applied to control those hazards and risks. Training, supervision, instruction and information are important ways to do this.

You should be familiar with the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* and *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998*. Understanding the Australian Standards, codes of practice and guides that are relevant to your industry can also help you protect health and safety on your farm.

By law, you and your workers must identify any foreseeable hazards that may arise and that have the potential to harm the health and safety of anyone on your farm.

Getting started

To make your farm a safer place, here is a checklist of common hazards found around the farm. This is not an exhaustive checklist but a starting point.

Step 1

Inspect the locations listed under each subject heading and answer the questions by ticking the yes or no column in this checklist.

STEP 1		STEP 2		STEP 3	
	Yes	No	Rating 1–6	Control Measure Required	Completed
Tractors and equipment					
1. Is the tractor fitted with an approved rollover protection structure (ROPS)?					
2. Are guards fitted to equipment where there is a risk of limbs, hair or clothing being caught (eg power take offs (PTO), auger, unguarded belts and pulleys)?					
3. Are children and adults prevented from riding on tractors or towed implements that do not have a seat/hand and foot holds?					
4. Do vehicles such as all terrain vehicles (ATVs) carry loads in accordance with manufacturer's recommended limits?					
5. Are vehicle operators familiar with the manufacturer's instructions?					
6. Is hearing protection worn when using noisy equipment?					
7. Is equipment such as guards regularly inspected and maintained?					
8. When inflating tyres, are precautions taken to prevent injury from a tyre blowout?					
9. When moving equipment, do you watch for power lines and maintain safe distances?					
10. Are tractor brakes functioning correctly?					
11. Is the tractor only ever started from the operator's seat?					
12. Are all installed safety devices (eg clutch or gearbox cut-out switches) in good working order?					
Silos and field bins					
1. Are augers and/or conveyors guarded to prevent limbs, hair or clothing from getting caught?					
2. Are silos and field bins regularly inspected for structural damage or wear?					
3. Do you secure access ladders and hatches to prevent unauthorised access to the silo or field bin?					
4. Is fall protection provided and worn when working on top of the silo or bin?					
5. When moving equipment, do you watch for power lines and maintain safety clearances?					
6. Are confined spaces procedures followed when entering silos or field bins?					
7. Are appropriate respirators worn when loading dusty grains?					
8. Are respirators kept clean in accordance with manufacturer's instructions?					

STEP 1		STEP 2		STEP 3	
	Yes	No	Rating 1-6	Control Measure Required	Completed
Chemicals					
1. Is there a register of all hazardous substances used on the farm?					
2. Are Material Safety Data Sheets available on the farm for those using hazardous substances?					
3. Are the users of farm chemicals trained in the safe use of those chemicals?					
4. Are appropriate respirators, gloves, safety glasses and clothing provided when using chemicals?					
5. Is safety equipment regularly inspected and maintained as recommended by the manufacturer?					
6. Are chemicals stored in a secure location?					
7. Are procedures in place to handle chemical spills?					
8. Are all flammable liquids (Class 3) stored away from ignition sources?					
9. Are fire extinguishers located near chemical/fuel storage areas?					
10. Are chemical containers labelled correctly, eg not in soft drink bottles?					
Manual handling					
1. Do employees know how to prevent a manual handling injury (eg using mechanical aids, proper lifting techniques, team lifting, warming up and stretching before work and maintaining physical fitness)?					
2. Are safe handling procedures used by minimising handling, twisting and reaching movements?					
3. Are mechanical aids such as trolleys, hand trucks, wheelbarrows and conveyors used, inspected and maintained regularly?					
4. Are smaller size and lightweight materials, loads, containers and bags used wherever possible?					
5. Are heavy materials, containers, bags and bales delivered as close as possible to a work area?					
6. Are heavy containers, materials and bags stored as close as possible to waist height on shelves or racks and within easy reach?					
7. Do you plan ahead when you have to lift, carry or move heavy loads and live animals?					
8. Do you encourage early reporting of manual handling injuries?					
General					
1. Are electrical leads, cables and equipment regularly inspected and maintained?					
2. Have you replaced/repared any exposed electrical wires, damaged electrical switches, power points, conduits or appliances likely to cause an electric shock/death?					
3. Is a safety switch or residual current device (RCD) or an earth leakage protection device used when using portable electrical equipment (eg tools, irrigation pumps)?					
4. Is hearing protection worn in areas where you need to raise your voice to talk to others?					
5. Are your firearms and ammunition stored in a safe place and out of reach of children?					
6. Do you adopt correct handling techniques when working with animals?					

Step 2

Use the rating table below to rate the hazards that received a NO. Ask yourself these questions and enter a rating from 1 to 6 in the rating column (in step 1's checklist). For example, an accident involving an unguarded PTO could kill or cause a permanent injury and could happen any time the PTO is being used — therefore this hazard would receive a rating of 1.

How severely could it hurt someone or make them ill?	How likely is it to occur?			
	Could happen at any time	Could happen sometime	Could happen but but very rarely	Could happen probably never will
KILL or cause permanent ill health or disability	1	1	2	3
Long-term illness or serious injury	1	2	3	4
Medical attention, days off work	2	3	4	5
First aid needed	3	4	5	6

Step 3

Now prioritise the hazards from 1 to 6: the hazards with a rating of 1 require immediate attention. Then list what is required to control the hazard in the control measure column. When you have applied this control measure, tick off the hazard in the completed column.

STEP 1			STEP 2	STEP 3	
	Yes	No	Rating 1-6	Control Measure Required	Completed
1) Is the tractor fitted with an approved ROPS?		✓	1	Have ROPS fitted to the tractor	✓
2) Are guards fitted to equipment where there is a risk of limbs, hair or clothing being caught (eg PTO, auger, unguarded belts and pulleys)?		✓	1	Replace broken PTO guard and repair broken belt guard on air compressor in machine shed	✓

Congratulations

By completing the checklist and putting in place the necessary control measures you have made your farm a safer place. You should now perform a broader check of your farm using the same principles of identifying the hazards, assessing the risks and putting in place control measures to control the risks.

For further advice or information on how to improve safety on your farm, contact Workplace Standards Tasmania on 1300 366 322.

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