



# Canada FarmSafe Plan



CanadaFarmSafe

The Canada FarmSafe materials have been developed by the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association to be reflective of the best practices recommendations for establishing and maintaining a safe and healthy farm work environment. These recommendations also take into consideration the general occupational health and safety requirements imposed by regulation across Canada. However, if your provincial health and safety regulations apply to your farming operation, please check your provincial legislation to confirm you are meeting local requirements.

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*Cover photo: Henry and Laura Holtmann hold a safety meeting with workers at Rosser Holsteins dairy farm in Manitoba. Photo by Grant Blahey.*

# Canada FarmSafe Plan

*In this publication, terms in the masculine form used to designate people pertain to both women and men. The term farm is used throughout this publication to refer to all forms of production agriculture, including ranching, horticultural operations, aquaculture and on-site value-added practices.*

Farm owners, operators and managers are responsible for knowing and applying best management practices and laws to ensure the health and safety of everyone who lives on, visits or works on their farms. Everyone on the farm needs to know that the farm's health and safety standards apply to them and how these standards will be followed.

The Canada FarmSafe Plan provides recommendations on best management practices that will help you protect the health and safety of everyone on your farm. This guide outlines the steps needed to implement effective farm health and safety practices for your operation.

The Canada FarmSafe Plan guide includes:

- A detailed explanation of the four steps you need to take to help protect yourself, your family and your employees from injuries and illness on your farm
- Sample forms
- Examples of how to develop your plan
- A list of publications and websites to help you develop your farm health and safety plan

For additional information, contact the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association 3325-C Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3V 02A, Telephone 877.452.2272, Fax 877.261.5004, E-mail [info@casa-acsa.ca](mailto:info@casa-acsa.ca).

Information for this document was compiled from published and online public domain sources, including:

- *Agricultural Safety Audit Program, Ontario Farm Safety Association*
- *Canadian Agricultural Injury Report*
- *Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Risk Management Planning Guide*
- *Canadian Standards Association Z1000, OSH Management System*
- *Farm And Ranch Safety & Health Association, British Columbia*
- *Farm Safety: Standards of Practice for Farms in Nova Scotia*
- *Farm Stewardship Association of Manitoba, Emergency Farm Planning Kit*
- *Federal, provincial and territorial occupational health and safety legislation*
- *National Occupational Research Agenda (2008) Draft Preliminary Public Comment Version*
- *Prince Edward Island Farm Safety Code of Practice*
- *Practical Guide for Assessing Basic Health and Safety Practices, WHSCC New Brunswick*
- *Safe Farms Check Program, Government of Manitoba*

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# 1. Business Risk Management

These best practices recommendations are intended to provide you with guidance on developing an effective health and safety program for your farming operation. The program should meet or exceed the legislated health and safety requirements in your province.

If you are in doubt, please consult your provincial regulator to verify local requirements. Remember, there is nothing wrong with voluntarily exceeding health and safety standards.

There are four areas of health and safety business risks for you as farm owner/operator:

1. Prosecution
2. Economic loss
3. Commodity loss
4. Human resource loss

## 1. Prosecution

Should a work-related injury or illness occur on your farm, you potentially could face legal action at three levels:

- Regulatory  
In most provinces, occupational health and safety laws are based on a reverse onus principle that assumes you are responsible for the occurrence of an incident, unless you can prove you took preventative measures and actions, yet circumstances beyond your control resulted in the incident occurring
- Civil  
An injured party can take legal civil action against you if they believe you were negligent in providing a safe work environment or failed to fulfill your responsibilities in exercising due diligence in taking reasonable care to protect the people on your farm (if you are not covered by workers' compensation)

- Criminal

In 2004, an amendment was made to the Criminal Code of Canada setting new legal duties for workplace health and safety and imposing penalties for violations that result in injuries or death. These new rules can attribute criminal liability to organizations, including corporations, their representatives and those who direct the work of others

## 2. Economic Loss

The Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting program (CAIR) conducted an analysis of the average costs of incidents to a farm's economy. They determined the following average costs in the mid-2000s:

● Workplace fatality	\$275,000
● Permanent disability	\$143,000
● Hospitalization	\$ 10,000
● Non-hospitalized injury	\$ 700

## 3. Commodity Loss

The production of agricultural commodities requires continual monitoring and management. For instance, should you or one of your workers suddenly be unavailable to work, determine the impact on your farm's production cycle.

## 4. Human Resource Loss

There is a limited pool of available farm workers in most regions. The sudden loss of a worker, as a result of a workplace injury or illness, has a significant impact on the worker, the operation of the farm and also on the social well-being of the people living and working on the farm.

## Budgeting for Health and Safety

To make your plan effective and workable, you need to identify a budget for your health and safety work. Initially, the size of your budget may be difficult to establish. 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.

You can anticipate expenditures in two areas: **time** for training, meetings, record keeping and routine inspections; and **repairs and or replacement** of hazardous equipment, materials and facilities. Although the costs will be immediately measurable, you will also realize savings in efficiency and reductions in lost time resulting from preventable incidents.

If you use your farming income tax return forms as a template for identifying or categorizing budget line items, machine guarding and safety modifications would probably be categorized under the equipment repair line. Similarly, structural changes might be placed in the building and fence repair line. Items such as personal protective equipment, gas monitoring equipment, and retrieval tripods and winches would be identified as small tools or other expenses.

## Injuries in the Agriculture Industry

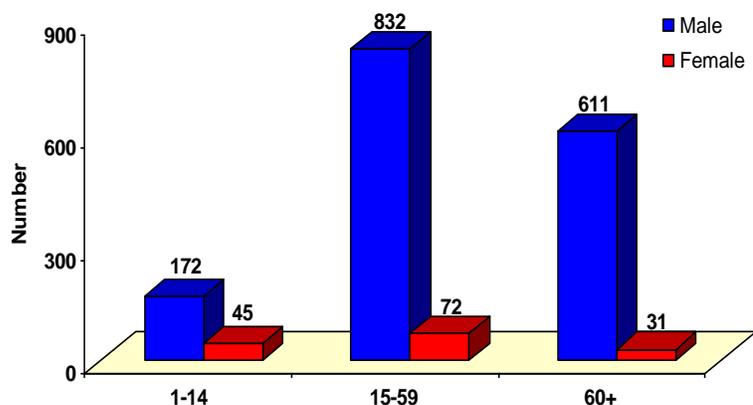
Agriculture is one of Canada's key primary industries. It is also one of the most hazardous. Anyone who lives or works on a farm risks injury or illness from machinery, chemicals and work situations.

Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting (CAIR) shows that 1,769 farm-related deaths occurred between 1990 and 2005. Additionally, during an 11-year period, from April 1990 to March 2000, 12,305 males and 2,525 females were admitted to hospital because of agricultural injuries.

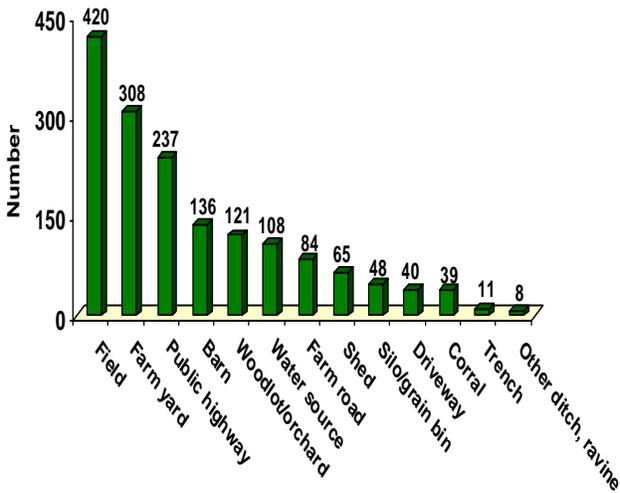
Following are two excerpts from a recent CAIR report:

### Fatal agricultural injuries by age group and gender, 1990-2005

91.6% of the persons who died in agricultural injury events were male. The ratio of males to females was highest for the 60+ age group and lowest for the 1-14 year age group.



## Fatal agricultural injuries by location of injury occurrence, 1990-2005



The most common locations of injury in Canada were fields and their adjacent ditches (25.8%), farm yards (19.0%), public roads and their adjacent ditches (14.6%) and barns (8.4%).

## Who is Responsible for Health and Safety?

Everyone working on a farm is responsible for preventing injuries and illness and maintaining a safe workplace. This includes self-employed farmers, family members, supervisors, workers, contractors, owners and suppliers. Safe farm work environments are created when everyone co-operates to prevent occupational injuries and illnesses.

This is the basis for the concept of an Internal Responsibility System (IRS) for occupational health and safety. In Canada, occupational health and safety legislation places the primary responsibility for health and safety on employers and employees in the workplace. If they are unable or unwilling to manage their own health and safety, then a regulatory agency will compel them to do so.

The person at the top is ultimately responsible for the health and safety of everyone in a business. For instance, a self-employed farmer has the most authority in his workplace and therefore, the greatest responsibility for keeping the workplace safe. The goal of a good health and safety program is to get everyone working on or visiting the farm, involved in protecting themselves and others from injury or illness. Everyone is accountable.

Remember that even if there is no provincial legislation requiring you to follow specific health and safety standards on your farm, you may, in addition to the moral obligation you hold, face civil or criminal charges if it is believed that you willfully ignored the safety and/or health of your workers or persons on your farm.

**Due diligence** requires anyone with responsibility for the health and safety of others to take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances to avoid an injury or illness, and hold everyone accountable for their actions and errors. It requires everyone to meet the highest possible standards while doing their jobs, to act in a responsible manner and to take reasonable care. The higher the risk involved in performing a job, the greater the need to take appropriate safety measures.

The criteria for due diligence requires each person in a position of control with health and safety responsibilities to:

- **Write a plan** – Identify the hazards and assess their risks. Develop a plan to manage the hazards and reduce the likelihood of them causing harm
- **Ensure the plan is adequate** – The plan must meet the needs of the workplace and the workers, and must be measurable against industry standards. Industry standards are a practice or procedure commonly carried out and considered acceptable within that industry, for instance bio-security practices used in the livestock sector
- **Monitor and evaluate the plan's effectiveness** – The plan must include a system to regularly measure how well it's being used and how effective it is

**Insurance** for lost wages or “pain and suffering” as a result of a work-related injury or illness is available in several forms:

- **Workers' compensation** – is a provincially managed system with three basic objectives:
  - To provide income continuance to the injured worker
  - To have collective liability – all employers within an industry classification collectively assume the liability for the injury claims in their sector. Employers with poor claims experience may be assessed additional premiums

- To protect the employer from liability claims by an injured worker who has accepted compensation for an injury or illness

Each provincial workers' compensation board has different coverage requirements for agricultural workers and the farm owner.

- **Commercial carrier** – is an insurance company that offers various types of protection for premiums based on a variety of factors specific to each farm operator purchasing the coverage. Coverage is available in two formats:
  - **Disability insurance** provides benefits to the injured individual upon satisfactory acceptance of nature and circumstances of the claim
  - **Liability insurance** provides the farm owner with protection from claims of liability for the occurrence of an incident to another person

## 2. Making Your Farm a Safer Place

Farmers can use this guide to develop an effective health and safety plan for everyone who works on the farm. Inviting those who work on your farm to help develop the plan will increase its effectiveness and may lead to increased use.

1. **General Policy Statement**

Develop and communicate an overall policy on health and safety with supporting operational policies.

2. **Identify Hazards**

Identify existing and potential hazards in all aspects of your operation.

3. **Control Strategies**

Follow a series of basic practices to control the health and safety risks in your farming operation.

4. **Communicate Responsibilities**

Clearly establish responsibilities for everyone visiting and working on your farm and ensure that you have a communications process for sharing health and safety information amongst yourself and the people on your farm.

5. **Review**

Review and revise your program to ensure employee, equipment and process changes are reflected in your plan.

1. **General Policy Statement**

There are two types of policies:

- A general health and safety policy that states the overall guidelines that govern health and safety on your farm. It tells workers, suppliers, contracted employers, self-employed people and clients about your commitment to safety and health
- Operational policies that specify work processes and operational practices

Your **general policy** should include:

- The health and safety philosophy of your operation
- A statement that substandard health and safety performance will not be accepted
- Your commitment to preventing occupational injuries and illnesses
- The objectives of your health and safety program
- List of those responsible and accountable for all parts of the program
- List of responsibilities of farm workers to protect the health and safety of themselves and their co-workers

To be effective, your policy must be made known to all employees, and where appropriate, to suppliers, contracted employers, self-employed workers and clients. New workers should be made aware of the policy during orientation. The policy must be kept current, and it should influence all work activities. You, as the owner or person in charge of the operation, should sign the policy and post it where everyone can read it.

Your **operational policies** should include:

- Standard operating practices
- Training requirements and records
- 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

## 2. Identify Hazards

Identifying hazards is key to preventing illnesses and injuries on the farm. Hazardous situations may be created by:

- Animals, machines or processes
- Chemical and biological materials
- Environmental conditions
- Personal lifestyles

Hazards may cause physical injuries or adversely impact your health.

- **Lifestyle hazards** – ranging from smoking and being overweight to nutrition and stress management
  - **Workplace stress** – caused by long work periods, many work demands, physical or psychological harassment
- **Chemical hazards** – such as solvents, pesticides, welding fumes and fuel vapours
- **Biological hazards or bio-hazards** – such as bacteria, viruses, dust, molds, animal-borne diseases
  - **Confined spaces** – asphyxiation or poisoning from gases in manure storage pits, grain bins, septic tanks and other confined spaces; drowning in tanks, wells and cisterns
  - **Biological** – grain and feed dust, infected animals and veterinary supplies
- **Physical conditions strong enough to cause harm** – such as electrical currents, heat, light, mechanical movement, vibration, pressurized liquids, noise, livestock, radiation (welder’s flash)
  - **Noise** – loss of hearing from sustained exposure to high noise levels from farm equipment, livestock and maintenance processes
  - **Machines** – most frequently involved in farm deaths
    - Transporting workers (rollover, run over after falling,) on tractors, trucks, all-terrain vehicles, other farm equipment
    - Starting equipment/fuelling up (bystander/operator run over, explosion)
    - Using PTO (Power Take Off) driven implements (entanglement)
    - Using farm equipment on public roadways (rollover, collision)
    - Using machinery around power lines (electrocution)
    - Using loaders (electrocution, entanglement, crushing, falls)

- Working with animals – injuries from large, irritable, protective or aggressive animals
- Extreme terrain and weather – illness or higher risk of injury as a result of extreme temperatures or dangerous terrain
- Working alone or in isolated places –delayed or increased response time in an emergency
- **Ergonomic** – poor posture or work position, repetitive motion
  - Work design or ergonomic hazards – such as lifting, moving, repositioning heavy loads or machinery

**Inspections** are one of your key methods of identifying hazards present on your farming operation. Additional tactics that will help you identify hazards include:

- Review of pre-operational inspection checklists
- Review of first aid logs
- Review of operator instructions for new equipment
- Review of new product labels and Material Safety Data Sheets

Regularly conduct health and safety inspections of your operation. Systematically inspect specific areas one at a time to assess the entire operation regularly.

An effective farm health and safety system will include regular inspections for hazardous conditions— you should do a formal inspection at least four times a year.

Those most familiar with overall operations should do the inspections. However, encourage everyone to regularly inspect their tools, equipment and machinery, and to carry out a pre-operation safety check every time they begin to operate any machine or before beginning a work process. Refer to the sample Risk Assessment Tool that accompanies this document to assist you in making your inspection as effective as possible.

## Types of Inspections

**Formal** – Planned, systematic examinations of the workplace will help you evaluate the safety of all work areas, tools, machinery, equipment, jobs and work processes. Inspect animal handling and housing facilities as well as chemical storage facilities, application equipment and handling processes. Formal inspections should use a checklist to make sure everything is covered. The more you check, the safer and healthier your operation will be.

**Informal** – Random checks on specific tasks or jobs will also help you stay on top of all potential hazards or problems. Before starting a job, check tools, equipment, machinery and personal protective equipment. Everyone working on the farm should do informal inspections daily. For example, when you teach one of your workers to do a new task, you should evaluate the hazards of the task first. Then you must make sure the worker is aware of those hazards as you train him/her to do the job.

Responsible farmers and workers should always know the hazards and the condition of every piece of equipment or process used. Typical situations where a pre-operational safety check is essential include: using a tractor, loader, power take off-driven equipment, refueling, preparing to use livestock handling facilities, preparing to handle chemicals, hitching a load and using farm equipment on public roads.

To identify procedural or operational hazards, it may be necessary for you to conduct a Job Hazard Analysis. This will help you identify each specific step of work process and establish the level of the degree of risk that may be presented to the operator during specific activities. Refer to the Sample Forms accompanying this document for a sample of a Job Hazard Analysis.

*Remember that the information you collect during your inspections, reviews and Job Hazard Analysis provides you with a strong basis for developing your standard operating practices.*

### 3. Control Strategies

There are several actions you should undertake to develop an effective hazard control system for your operation:

- A. **Wellness** - Take the time to assess your personal level of wellness and encourage everyone on your farm to recognize that maintaining optimum health brings dividends, including lower stress levels and safer behaviour.

To have a positive impact on the health of the people on your farm, provide your workers with information and encouragement to increase their awareness of the negative effects tobacco use, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and being overweight have on both their personal well-being and their long-term ability to work effectively and productively.

- B. **Standard operating practices** - As you conduct your inspections, keep a running list of necessary jobs or tasks. Consider the hazards in each step of each job. Once you have done this, you can begin to effectively develop standard operating practices for each task and incorporate health and safety practices into all work activities. Select the most hazardous tasks, and as time progresses, build to having standard operating practices (SOPs) in place for all hazardous work.

Consider using a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) or Job Safety Analysis (JSA) to help identify the hazards in a specific job. See the accompanying resources for a sample Job Hazard Analysis.

SOPs then become your training tool for refreshing those who have previously performed the task or for explaining the processes and your health and safety expectations to those who will be doing the job for the first time.

- C. **Emergencies** - Consider potential emergencies that might occur at your operation and the actions you and others would need to take. Include these plans in your SOP training.

All Canada FarmSafe plans should include processes to handle an emergency effectively. To prepare for medical and other emergencies, write an emergency plan and review it regularly with everyone who may have to deal with an emergency on the farm. Regular reminders about processes and responsibilities will reduce confusion and mistakes when handling a real emergency. Go over your emergency plan with your local emergency responders (local fire, police, ambulance workers).

A fast, co-ordinated response in an emergency can lessen the impact of an injury and may even save a life. Several organizations offer emergency response and first aid courses as a public service or for a fee. Contact your regional health office or your local fire department to find out about courses in your area.

### **Basic Components of an Emergency Preparedness Plan**

List possible emergency situations: Identify any emergencies that could occur, such as a chemical spill, machinery or livestock injury, someone collapsed in a confined space, bad weather, fire, explosion, etc.

- **Plan for action:** Write out a plan for each potential incident, clearly noting the role of each person. Because injured workers won't be able to do their part, make sure everyone knows what the process is and that they can step in to take over any of several roles in the plan. For example: Make sure everyone knows how to shut off machinery and how to drive a vehicle. Make sure everyone knows the address or location of the farm and the best access routes. Plan possible ways to evacuate a person who may be difficult to reach, for instance in muddy fields, a bio-security area, a chemically contaminated area or a pen with aggressive livestock.
- **Identify resources:** List everything needed to deal with possible emergencies in all areas of the farm, for instance the location of fire extinguishers and neutralizers for chemical spills. Have adequate first aid supplies and restock them periodically in all work locations and field vehicles. Provide a foolproof way to call for emergency help. Have more than one worker trained in basic first aid and CPR, and make sure others know who has the training.
- **Create a communication system:** When people are working alone or in isolated spots, two-way radios or cell phones are a good idea. Check in with each other regularly or go and physically check the worksite out at regular intervals throughout the day. Create a working alone plan and follow it.

D. **Training** - Now use your SOPs as the basis for training or re-training everyone who works for you. Remember to include casual helpers, including family members who are

brought in to help occasionally. Casual help is most at risk of injury because of lack of experience and lack of familiarity with the work.

Farmers are not only responsible for being knowledgeable in every aspect of their farming operations, they are also responsible for ensuring that everyone who works on their farm is competent and properly trained to do their work.

### **Hiring tips**

When you hire workers, ensure they understand the importance of working safely. Ask them to discuss their previous training and work experience. Check their references to see if they have a positive safety record. Have them explain their understanding of your expectations for the safe completion of hazardous tasks. Confirm that any certification or accreditations they claim to have are valid.

### **Orientation and training**

Use appropriate and approved standard operating practices to provide adequate training to all employees for every task they are required to do. Give every worker a thorough workplace safety orientation at the start of every season or work period. The orientation should include how to identify and control their personal exposure to hazards. If they can't effectively control the hazard, they should immediately report it to a supervisor.

Explain your commitment to safety when you bring someone into your operation. Orient your workers and use this time to find out what training they need. Make sure you train them in the skills needed to deal with hazards present in the task. Make it clear that they should not do a job until they know how to do it safely – do not encourage risk taking. You should let all workers know that you have a disciplinary process for non-compliance with your health and safety standards. This should prompt everyone to ask for help before they tackle unfamiliar or hazardous tasks.

Training is more than providing information. Successful training requires a demonstration that the worker has the required knowledge or skills and can do the job safely. It's your responsibility to establish and communicate safe work practices for each task that an employee or family member may be expected to perform.

Key elements of this training include:

- How to perform each task safely
- Hazard identification and control procedures
- Rights and responsibilities of workers
- How to introduce and talk about concerns and who to ask for help
- Where to go for first aid
- What to do in case of an emergency
- what to do if there's an incident

E. **Investigation** - Should an incident occur, regardless of whether there was any damage or injury, consider it a warning and learn from it. Conduct an investigation to determine the root cause of the incident and then adjust your standard operating practices and training accordingly.

To understand why an incident or near-incident has occurred, you need to find out:

- The immediate events leading up to it
- What contributed to the incident, such as unsafe actions or conditions, maintenance, training, external influences (weather, distraction, stress, etc.)
- The root causes that set the stage, such as inadequate safety policies, procedures, maintenance or attitudes

*Note: Near misses are free warnings. Learn from them and take action to ensure they don't happen again.*

Carefully look at what happened and try to understand why. Consider all possible influencing factors, such as weather, operator training, maintenance and inappropriate use of equipment. Talk to anyone who saw the incident or was involved. Use these six questions to get the basic information about the incident:

- *Who* was involved?
- *Where* did the incident happen?
- *When* did it happen?
- *What* were the immediate causes?
- *Why* did the incident happen (root cause)?
- *How* can a similar incident be prevented?

Once you have answered these questions, you need to correct the process, facility, equipment or level of training to reduce the risk of future incidents.

Factors to think about include:

- adequacy of planning, training, orientation or supervision. For example, repairing hydraulics on a front end loader without blocking the arms or bucket
- poorly designed work areas or job procedures
- inadequate, defective or obsolete tools, machinery and equipment
- unusual circumstances, such as an emergency that requires workers to perform jobs they normally don't do
- jobs that are rarely performed, such as silo repairs
- instinctive behaviour of animals, chemical reactions, quality of tools or supplies

#### 4. Communicate Responsibilities

You can enhance everyone's health and safety on your farm by clarifying their 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 their jobs responsibly and to protect the health and safety of every person on the farm.

##### **Accountability**

As the farm owner and employer, you must set an example for everyone on the farm. Be clear about your responsibilities and live up to them. As the person in charge, you must take on your

own duties and assign duties to all the workers. You must make sure the duties of each worker are clearly explained to them. You must also make sure employees are clear about their responsibility for their own health and safety, as well as that of all the other workers. Additionally, you must ensure everyone is trained to do their jobs safely and that all the appropriate protective systems are available for use at all times. You must also monitor your workers regularly and correct any errors or problems that come up.

Typical responsibilities of farm owners and supervisors include:

- Knowing and following best practices for health and safety
- Providing a safe, healthy workplace
- Providing and maintaining safe buildings, tools, machines and equipment
- Setting up an effective health and safety management system
- Providing close supervision where needed
- Training and supporting supervisors to meet health and safety standards
- Identifying hazards and training workers to recognize potential hazards
- Ensuring proper steps are taken to control risks
- Ensuring family members are as trained and competent as all other workers
- Providing necessary personal protective equipment
- Ensuring routes, entrances and exits to buildings and work areas are safe
- Ensuring hazardous products and chemicals are moved, handled and used safely
- Providing adequate first aid equipment and training for your operation
- Inspecting work areas regularly and making immediate corrections or adjustments before there's an incident
- Understanding and using proper emergency processes when needed
- Involving 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

- Giving 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
- Discussing 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 SOPs

Workers will invest in farm health and safety if they have the opportunity to:

- Raise questions as they arise
- Openly discuss their safety concerns and receive support in finding and implementing solutions
- Discuss incidents and near-misses
- Do safety inspections with you
- Do pre-operational checks on tools, machines and equipment before they begin work
- Read tool and equipment guides and learn safe procedures
- Take safety training and help apply it on the farm

**Typical responsibilities of workers:**

- Understanding and following health and safety standards as set out by the employer and required by legislation, if it applies. Note: Employer's safety practices may exceed those minimum standards required by law.
- Knowing and using appropriate health and safety practices, including knowing how to operate machinery and tools, and how to safely handle chemicals and livestock
- Following standard operating practices at all times
- Using safety equipment, machine guards, safety devices and personal protective equipment whenever they're needed
- Reporting unsafe situations, machinery, tools, gear, etc. to owner or supervisor immediately

- Reporting incidents or illness immediately
- Co-operating with other workers in working and acting safely at all times

### **Typical responsibilities related to contracted work (service providers):**

Farmers often hire outside companies or self-employed people under a contract and then direct their activities on the farm. For example, you may hire someone to do custom spraying, install a grain bin or do welding or electrical work.

It is generally your responsibility, as the owner/manager, to ensure that anyone coming onto your farm to work is made aware of and agrees to follow your health and safety policies and standards.

Your Canada FarmSafe plan sets out a process to deal with the health and safety risks associated with the work of contracted employers or self-employed people.

As the farm owner, you should:

- Before any work starts, clarify with the service provider the responsibilities each of you will have in protecting the health and safety of everyone on the farm
- Control any health and safety hazards over which you have direct control. The service provider is responsible for hazards under his/her own direct control. For example, the condition of service provider's own equipment
- Work with the service provider to control hazards that are not within your direct control as the farm owner
- Give the service provider necessary information about your operation that could affect their health and safety
- Monitor the service provider to ensure compliance with your health and safety standards, and take action to correct any mistakes or problems. For example, ensure a service provider does not take a child in the cab of mobile equipment

## **Responsibilities of suppliers:**

Farmers rely on many different suppliers to provide products, machinery and tools for the farm operation. Farmers have a right to expect their suppliers meet generally accepted health and safety standards when supplying products or services to the farm.

Suppliers should be advised that the conditions for products being supplied to the farm include:

- supplying products that are safe when used according to instructions
- providing instructions for the safe assembly, use, storage and distribution of products they supply (sell, rent or lease)
- ensuring all their products comply with current legislation, such as ROPS being designed and installed to an accepted Canadian standard
- providing specific transportation and handling requirements for hazardous materials or oversize equipment

You are responsible for using suppliers' products properly and safely, according to suppliers'/manufacturers' instructions. You must also ensure your workers all understand and follow instructions for the assembly, use, storage and distribution of all products.

If you buy a controlled product such as a hazardous substance, including pesticides, from a supplier to use on your farm, you should get a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for that product. Make sure you train every person who could be in contact with hazardous substances to protect themselves. Closely supervise new workers who will be working with dangerous substances.

Develop an overall purchasing policy to purchase new or replacement tools, equipment and products that will minimize the risk of health or physical hazards to the operators / handlers of those products.

## 5. Review

Reviewing and revising your health and safety plans regularly is a solid business practice. Ask your workers to participate in the review process. Agricultural work is always changing. New technologies and/or problems may require you to:

- re-examine workplace hazards
- update supervisor/worker training
- change how supervision is done
- re-assign responsibilities for safety
- review your workplace inspection procedure and conduct safety inspections differently

Make health and safety an integral component of your farm business management. A safe farm can be a successful farm.

## 3. Resources

### Definitions and Terms\*

**Accident:** An unplanned or unintended event or series of events that may result in death, injury, loss of or damage to a system or service; cause environmental damage; or adversely affect an activity or function. Note: Many public health and injury prevention professionals prefer alternate terms such as injury incident or unintentional injury.

**Adolescents:** Individuals from the age of 13 through 17 years.

**Age-appropriate Work:** Work activities that are suitable based upon physical and cognitive capabilities deemed to be typical by age demarcations.

**Agriculture:** The industry that involves the production of crops and livestock (farming; production agriculture) as well as agricultural services, fishing and horticulture.

**Agritourism:** Includes any attraction where the general public is invited to a farm, ranch or agribusiness operation for the purpose of enjoyment, education or active involvement in farm activities.

**All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV):** a vehicle that: a) travels on low pressure tires; b) has a seat that is straddled by the operator; c) has a handlebar for steering control; and d) is meant for off-road use. An ATV can be either a three-wheeler or a four-wheeler.

**Authorized person:** An individual who has been assigned by the employer or the employer's representative to perform a specific duty or duties.

**Ballistic nylon:** A nylon fabric of high tensile properties designed to provide protection from lacerations.

*\* These are general terms intended to present a concept; regulatory agencies may be more prescriptive. Users should also consult provincial regulations.*

**Bump cap:** Protective headgear that is lightweight with a thinner shell than a hard hat. A bump cap does not have a suspension system to absorb impacts.

**Bystander:** A person who is present at or near an agricultural work site but does not participate in the work.

**Child (pl. Children):** Individuals in the age range of birth through 12 years of age.

**Childhood:** The period of life from infancy to adulthood (birth through 17 years of age).

**Competent (Safety & Health) person:** A qualified person who has been authorized by the employer or the employer's representative to:

- Identify existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions that are hazardous or dangerous to employees
- Eliminate the hazard or take corrective action

**Cumulative trauma:** Bodily injury from mechanical stress that develops gradually over weeks, months or years from repeated stress (force or exertion) on a particular body part.

**Critical injury:** An injury of a serious nature that: places life in jeopardy; produces unconsciousness; results in substantial loss of blood; involves the fracture of an arm or leg, but not a finger or toe; involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand or foot, but not a finger or toe; consists of burns to a major portion of the body; or causes the loss of sight in an eye.

**Designated person:** An individual who has been assigned by the employer or the employer's representative to perform a specific duty or duties. Also see Authorized Person.

**Developmentally-appropriate tasks:** Tasks that are suitable based on demarcations noting achievement of physical and psychological maturity. Developmentally- appropriate task guidelines are applicable outside of enforceable work standards. Also see Age-appropriate Work.

**Direct supervision:** Supervision by a competent person who watches over and directs the work of others who are within sight and unassisted natural voice contact.

**Emergency care:** Care provided by a person who is trained in first aid and CPR.

**Emergency medical service:** Care provided by a medically trained person, such as in a hospital, clinic, ambulance or rescue vehicle.

**Emergency scene:** A site that is:

- Immediately threatening to life, health, property or environment
- Has already caused loss of life, health detriments, property damage or environmental damage; or
- Has a high probability of escalating to cause immediate danger to life, health, property or environment

**Escape route:** A planned and understood route to move to a safety zone or other low-risk area.

**Experienced person:** A person who has sufficient knowledge, training, experience and skill in all aspects of a given process or procedure.

**Exposure:** Contact or proximity to a condition or event that may produce injury, disease, illness, property or environmental damage.

**Farm:** An area of land, including various structures, devoted primarily to the practice of producing and managing food, fibers and, increasingly, fuel.

**Farm vehicle:** Any motorized vehicle used for agricultural operations either on or off the agricultural work site. This definition includes, but is not limited to, trucks and automobiles.

**Farm worker:** A person employed by a farm owner to conduct agricultural work. This term includes migrant and seasonal labourers.

**Farm/ranch work-related injury:** An injury occurring during the business of operating a farm or ranch and which resulted in four hours or more of restricted activity. See Restricted Activity.

**Firefighting equipment:** All portable and fixed fire suppression and control equipment.

**First on the scene:** Training for farm families and workers that incorporates decision-making when discovering a farm injury victim, reporting an emergency, attempting emergency first aid and taking other actions.

**FOPS (Falling Object Protective Structure):** Overhead cover installed on a protective frame or enclosure of off-road equipment to reasonably protect operators from falling objects such as trees or rocks.

**Grounded (Machines):** The placement of a machine component on the ground or a device where it is firmly supported.

**Guard:** A protective device designed and fitted to reasonably minimize the possibility of inadvertent contact with machinery hazards, as well as to restrict access to other hazardous areas. There are four types of guards: shield or cover, casing, enclosure and barrier.

**Hazard:** Any existing or potential condition that by itself or by interacting with other variables can result in injury, illness, death or other losses.

- **Biological hazards** - caused by organisms such as viruses, bacteria, fungi, parasites, dusts, molds or other living organisms.
- **Chemical hazards** - caused by solids, liquids, vapours, gases, dust, fumes or mists, such as battery acids or solvents.
- **Ergonomic hazards** - caused by anatomical, physiological, psychological demands on the worker, such as repetitive and forceful movements, vibrations, temperature extremes, awkward postures arising from improper work methods and improperly designed workstations, tools and equipment.

- **Physical hazards** - caused by energy sources strong enough to harm the body, such as noise, vibration, energy, weather, heat, cold, electricity, radiation pressure and illumination (light).
- **Workplace stress** - caused by harassment, fatigue, shift work or other chronic effects.

**Health:** A state of positive physical, mental, and social well-being to include the ability to lead a socially and economically productive life, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

**Health care provider:** A health care practitioner operating within the scope of their license, certificate, registration or legally authorized practice.

**High-visibility colours:** Bright or fluorescent white, lime green, orange, yellow, red or aqua colours that stand out from the surrounding background colour so as to be easily seen.

**Injury:** Physical harm or damage to some part of the body resulting from an exchange of mechanical, chemical, thermal, electrical or other environmental energy that exceeds the body's tolerance.

**Injury control:** Incorporates multiple activities to reduce frequency and/or severity of injury, including prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

**Injury prevention:** Attempts to reduce the incidence of injury, usually through educational, engineering, administrative, environmental and enforcement interventions.

**Injury severity:** Describes the seriousness of injury to a victim. Categories include:

- **First-aid injury** – An injury requiring first-aid treatment only; less than four hours of lost time or restricted activity
- **Temporarily disabling** – Injury results in four hours or more of lost time or restricted activity
- **Permanent disability** – Injury results in loss or use of one or more body parts, e.g., amputation, blindness, spinal column injury.
- **Fatal** – Loss of life.

**Migrant farm worker:** An individual whose principle employment is in agriculture on a seasonal basis, who has been so employed in the last 24 months, and establishes for the purposes of such employment a temporary abode.

**Lockout/Tagout:** a safety procedure that is used to ensure dangerous equipment is properly shut off and not started up again prior to the completion of maintenance or servicing work.

**Occupational disease:** a condition produced in the work environment over a period longer than one workday or shift. Usually the illness is due to repetitive factors over a period of time. It may result from systemic infection; repeated stress or strain; exposure to toxins, poisons, fumes; or other continuing conditions of the work environment.

**Occupational illness:** Any abnormal physical condition or disorder, other than one resulting from occupational injury, caused by exposure to environmental factors associated with employment.

**Occupational injury:** An injury suffered by a person arising out of and in the course of employment involving a single incident in the work environment.

**Permanent disability:** A permanent impairment of a bodily function or loss of use of a body part due to an occupational injury or illness; an enduring, non-fatal physical or mental impairment as a result of an injury that prevents or restricts normal achievement.

**Permanent partial disability:** Injury other than death or permanent total disability that results in some loss, or complete loss, of any use of any member or part of a member of the body, or any permanent impairment of functions of the body, or part thereof, regardless of pre-existing disability of the injured member or impaired body function.

**Permanent total disability:** Non-fatal injury that permanently and totally incapacitates and prevents an employed person from following any gainful occupation, or which results in some loss, or the complete loss, of the use of any of the following in a single incident: (a) both eyes; (b) one eye and one hand, arm, leg or foot; (c) any two of the following not on the same limb: hand, arm, foot or leg.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Any material or device worn to protect a person's/worker's head, body, feet and extremities from exposure to or contact with any harmful substance or form of energy. Commonly used PPE in agriculture include steel-toed shoes, gloves, safety goggles, sunscreen, ear plugs and masks.

**Qualified first aid person:** Has evidence to show valid first aid and CPR training within the last two years.

**Qualified person:** A person who has:

- a recognized degree, certification, professional standing, knowledge, training or experience
- successfully demonstrated the ability to perform the work, solve or resolve problems relating to the work, subject matter or project.

**Risk:** A measure of the combined probability and severity of possible harm; mathematically, risk is the product of probability x severity.

**Risk acceptance:** The acceptance by an individual or organization of a level or degree of risk identified as the possible consequence of a course of action.

**Risk assessment:** The process of determining the degree of threat that is posed by one or more hazards.

**Risk control:** The process of minimizing unwanted loss by anticipating and preventing the occurrence of unplanned events.

**Risk evaluation:** A comparison of calculated risks, or public health impact, of exposure to an agent with risks caused by other agents or societal factors. Benefits associated with the agent must be factored into the risk calculation.

**Risk management:** The professional assessment of all loss potential in an organization's operations leading to the establishment and administration of a comprehensive loss control program.

**Risk perception:** The subjective assessment of the probability of a specified type of unwanted event happening and how concerned we are with the consequences.

**ROPS (Roll-Over Protective Structure):** A cab or frame for the protection of operators of agricultural tractors, forestry and construction equipment to minimize the possibility of serious operator injury resulting from accidental upset.

**Safety (for a lay person):** Freedom from those conditions that can cause danger, risk or injury.

**Safety (for a professional):** The control of recognized hazards to achieve an acceptable level of risk.

**Safety Factor:** The ratio of breaking strength to safe working strength or load.

**SCBA:** Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus.

**Seasonal farm worker:** An individual whose principal employment is in agriculture on a seasonal basis, who has been so employed in the last 24 months.

**Source of injury – Primary:** The object, substance, bodily motion or exposure that directly produced or inflicted a previously identified injury or illness. May also be referred to as the primary source of injury.

**Source of Injury – Secondary:** Identifies the object, substance or person that generated the source of injury or illness or that contributed to the event or exposure.

**Stability:** The capacity of a machine or vehicle or vessel to return to equilibrium or to its original position after having been displaced.

**Stability baselines:** Lines that can be drawn between the points where a vehicle's tires or tracks rest on the ground. This term is most often used in reference to location of a vehicle's centre of gravity in the context of vehicle overturn or rollover.

**Supervisory personnel:** Agent of the employer (such as a manager, superintendent, foreperson, hooktender, rigging slinger, or person in charge of all or part of the place of employment) who directs the work activities of one or more employees.

**Tractor:** A self-propelled machine of wheel or crawler design used to exert a push or pull force through drawn or mounted equipment to move objects or material.

**Traumatic injury**—A traumatic injury is any unintentional or intentional wound or damage to the body resulting from acute exposure to energy--such as heat or electricity or kinetic energy from a crash--or from the absence of such essentials as heat or oxygen caused by a specific event, incident, or series of events within a single workday or shift.

**Vehicle:** A car, bus, truck, trailer or semi-trailer owned, leased or rented by the employer that is used for transportation of employees or movement of material; any carrier that is not manually propelled.

**Work area:** Any area frequented by employees in the performance of assigned or related duties.

**Zoonotic diseases:** Diseases caused by infectious agents that can be transmitted between or are shared by animals and humans.

## 4. Health and Safety Principles

### Procedure for Identifying and Controlling Hazards:

1. Look for hazards in the workplace
2. Establish the level of risk to workers
3. Determine and implement appropriate control measures for each hazard
4. Develop written standard operating practices that identify the hazards and state the control measures required, including any emergency procedures
5. Train workers to identify hazards and to proceed with tasks using standard operating practices
6. Ensure worker participation and compliance

#### 1. Look for hazards in the workplace

Everyone is responsible for identifying potential hazards and risks to workers. Workplace hazards may be identified by information gathered through:

- Inspections
- Job Safety Analysis (JSA)
- Dangerous occurrences
- Incident reports (types and causes)
- Incident investigations
- Safety concerns raised by workers
- Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) claims
- Health and Safety Committee (WHS Committee) minutes
- Analysis of new or modified jobs
- New or modified equipment or job procedures
- New scientific information regarding hazards or risks
- Legislation (Health and Safety, Chemical Storage, Transportation of Dangerous Goods)

- Industry standards (food safety)
- Regulatory (codes of practice, American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Canadian Standards Association (CSA))
- Supplier or manufacturer information

## 2. Establish the level of risk to workers

Hazards need to be assessed by the degree of risk or harm posed to workers. When determining the degree of risk to workers, consider not only the likelihood or potential of the hazard causing harm to a person or process, but also the resulting impact of the harm.

$$\text{RISK} = \text{Likelihood} \times \text{Impact}$$

Hazards can be classed as:

**Class A (Major):** A condition or practice likely to cause permanent disability, loss of life or body part, and/or extensive loss of structure, equipment or material.

Example: a guard missing on the power take-off; a non-secured oxy-acetylene tank set in the workshop.

**Class B (Serious):** A condition or practice likely to cause serious injury or illness, resulting in temporary disability or property damage that is disruptive but not excessive.

Example: personnel using improper techniques when lifting, transferring and/or re-positioning a drum of oil.

**Class C (Minor):** A condition or practice likely to cause minor, non-disabling injury or illness or non-disruptive property damage.

Example: not wearing a particulate mask when sweeping out a dry grain bin.

**Class D (Substandard):** Any substandard condition or practice that is not likely to produce an injury or illness under normal conditions.

Example: there are no paper towels in the washroom.

Hazards that must be managed first are those with the highest degree of risk to workers.

To assess the degree of risk, ask the following questions:

- How likely is the hazard to cause harm?
- Under what conditions is harm likely to occur?
- How quickly could an unsafe condition arise?
- What type of harm is involved?
- How many workers could get hurt?
- Is there a history of problems, accidents or dangerous occurrences resulting from this hazard?
- What monitoring is required to evaluate the risk?

When looking for hazards for a specific task, consider the following:

- Can any body part get caught in or between objects?
- Do tools, machines or equipment present any hazards?
- Can the worker be harmed when in contact with objects?
- Can the worker slip, trip or fall?
- Can the worker suffer strain from lifting, reaching, pushing or pulling, or from repetitive movements?
- Is there a danger from falling objects?
- Is the worker exposed to extreme heat or cold?
- Is noise or vibration a problem?
- Is lighting adequate?
- Can weather conditions affect safety?
- Is contact possible with hot, toxic or caustic substances?
- Are there fumes, dusts, mists or vapors in the air?
- What are the job specific risks, such as infections, chemicals, heights, electrical, confined space or violence?

### 3. Determine and implement appropriate control measures for each hazard

The employer is responsible for determining and implementing control measures to reduce, eliminate or control the hazard(s). Controls may be implemented at the source of the hazard, along the path between the hazard and the worker, and/or at the worker level.

Often, more than one control method may need to be implemented in order to protect the health and safety of workers. Strategies used to reduce, eliminate or control hazards may include any one of the following:

#### **Controls at the source**

Engineering controls either reduce or remove the hazard at the source or isolate workers from the hazard.

- **Eliminate** the risk by getting rid of the hazardous tool, process, animal, machine or substance
- **Substitute** the hazard with a less hazardous process or material
- **Redesign** the layout of the workplaces, workstations, work processes and jobs to reduce the hazards
- **Isolate, contain or enclose the hazard** - often used for chemical or biological hazards
- **Automate** dangerous work processes using mechanical equipment. For example, the hazards associated with manual lifting can be eliminated by using mechanical lifts

#### **Controls along the path to the worker**

- **Relocate** by moving the hazard a safe distance from the worker
- **Create barriers** between worker and the hazard to block the hazard path. For example, use welding screens, chase boards or personal protective equipment.
- **Absorb** the hazard by using baffles to decrease noise; use local exhaust ventilation to remove toxic gases at the source where they are produced.
- **Dilute** the hazard, such as hazardous gases, by mixing with clean outside air

## Controls at the worker

Work practice controls alter the manner in which a hazardous task is performed, such as minimizing exposure or inspecting equipment.

- **Administrative controls**, such as implementation of new policies, improved and standardized work procedures, job rotations and good supervision
- **Train** workers in standard operating practices and inform them of workplace hazards
- Supervise workers to ensure compliance
- **Perform housekeeping, maintenance and repairs** to ensure cleaning, waste disposal and spill cleanup at the workplace, as well routine preventive maintenance and repair of equipment
- **Use hygiene practices** that can reduce the spread of infections, such as frequent hand washing and separate eating areas away from the hazardous work area
- **Provide and use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**, such as gloves, hearing protection and face shields, when other controls are not feasible, or where additional protection is required

### 4. Develop written safe work practices

Once hazards have been identified and control measures selected to reduce, eliminate or control the hazard, write down the safest way to perform the task. Outline the step-by-step method for performing a particular task, including any potential or existing hazards present and the control measures that must be taken to eliminate, reduce or manage the risk. In these safe work practices, outline any emergency procedures required in the event that control measures are insufficient to protect the worker from harm.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that any existing hazards, and the measure(s) to protect the worker, are included in the written safe work practices.

## 5. Train workers to recognize the potential hazards and use the required controls

Supervisors are responsible to ensure that prior to performing any hazardous task, workers are trained regarding potential and existing hazards and required safety measures. Workers should be trained in the proper use and care of safety equipment, work processes and emergency procedures.

## 6. Ensure worker participation and compliance

In farming operations employing non-family workers, there may be a legal requirement to have either a worker representative or a committee composed of workers and management who meet on a regular basis to discuss and address health and safety issues. Even if you are not required to have a health and safety representative or committee by law, sitting down with your workers to talk about health and safety issues will make your operation more efficient.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring workers comply with safe work practices. Practices are written to provide information and guidance to anyone performing a hazardous task or work process. Workers must comply with safe work practices by using equipment and/or tools provided in order to do the task safely. Non-compliance with safe work practices may result in disciplinary action of the worker. Working safely is a condition of employment.

## Procedure for Conducting On-Farm Health and Safety Inspections:

Hazards in the workplace are most frequently identified by their physical presence. However, the risks those hazards present to persons on the farming operation can often be reduced by the development and adherence to health and safety policies and clear communication of accepted work practices. Development of these policies can be supported by also considering the work practices of the people working on your farm.

### 1. Physical Conditions

Before you can do a physical condition inspection and hazard risk assessment, you have to understand what you are looking for. A physical condition inspection is an observation of hazards present throughout your farming operation.

## 2. Work Practices

While looking at the obvious physical aspects of the operation, it is critically important to understand the behavioural drivers of the workers. Some of the questions you need to answer based on fact, not belief, are:

- Has the worker been trained to do that particular job?
  - If so, did anyone test or verify that the worker understood the instructions and was competent in doing that job?
  - Do you verify certification of workers doing jobs requiring specialized training, such as fork lift operators, pesticide applicators, etc.?
- Are Standard Operating Practices (SOPs) adhered to and enforced?
  - Do your workers know there is an administrative consequence for not following established work practices?
- Are maintenance and pre-operational logs maintained and periodically reviewed?
- Are visitors, sales representatives, service providers and contractors informed of your health and safety policies?
- Have you and workers who are going to work alone or in remote areas have an agreed upon plan for periodic personal safety checks and an emergency response plan?
- Does everyone understand the importance of reporting health and safety hazards as soon as they are perceived?
- What safety housekeeping do you carry out?

## 3. Policies and Procedures

As with any quality assurance program for the farm operation, the quality of the commodity can only be assured if there is a prescribed and documented procedure for producing that commodity. Similarly, to achieve the greatest probability of securing the health and safety of everyone on your farm / ranch, you must establish policies for expected work practices and document that those procedures are followed.

Reviewing and updating policies and procedures on a regular basis are the final steps in identifying and controlling hazards on your operation.

a) **Planning for the inspection:** Plan and conduct inspections regularly.

- If you have a worker representative or committee, they can help by identifying:
  - What must be inspected
  - Who should do the inspection
  - Required tools, equipment, supplies, training and knowledge
- Consult applicable Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) legislation and standards
- Clarify procedures that should be followed before, during and after the inspection.
- Use an inspection checklist as a guide for the inspection. The checklist should include items such as:
  - Observation of work activities and discussion with workers
  - Observation for standard operating practices
  - Equipment and tools
  - Use, handling, storage and disposal of chemical and biological substances
  - Materials
  - First aid procedure
  - Emergency plans
  - Personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - Workplace environment (air, temperature, lighting, noise, stress, etc.)
  - Musculoskeletal injuries
- Prior to inspection, review previous inspection reports, equipment records or incident files in order to clarify the points that require attention during the inspection
- Tell your supervisor an inspection will be occurring. Discuss the plan with the supervisor and review issues of concern

- Ensure the inspection team is aware of any safety procedures that must be followed during the inspection
- Bring checklists, pen and paper, and any other equipment that may be required

#### b) **Conducting the inspection**

- Do not expect to detect all hazards simply by relying on your senses or by looking at them during the inspection. You may have to monitor equipment to assess physical hazards or measure the level(s) of exposure to chemical, noise or biological agents
- Involve the supervisor, as well as any workers in the area, in the inspection.
- **Consider** all workplace elements including:
  - **Environment** - noise, vibration, lighting, temperature and ventilation
  - **Equipment** - materials, tools and apparatus for producing a product or a service
  - **Work process** - how the worker interacts with the other elements, including livestock, in a series of tasks or operations
- Shut down and “lock out” any hazardous items that cannot be brought to a safe operating standard until repaired
- Do not operate equipment. Ask the operator for a demonstration, so you can view the process
- It is cause for concern if the operator of any piece of equipment does not know what hazards may be present
- Never ignore any item because you do not have knowledge to make an accurate judgment of safety. Note it and find out.
- Look up, down, around and inside. Be methodical and thorough. Do not spoil the inspection with a “once-over-lightly” approach
- In your notes, clearly describe each hazard and its exact location. Record all findings before they are forgotten

- Ask questions, but do not unnecessarily disrupt work activities. Unnecessary interruption may interfere with efficient assessment of the job function and may also create a potentially hazardous situation
- Encourage employees to bring concerns to their supervisor
- Consider the static (stop position) and dynamic (in motion) conditions of the item you are inspecting.
- Conduct group discussion with the following question: “Can any problem, hazard or incident arise from this situation?”
- Determine what corrections or controls are appropriate
- Take photographs if you are unable to clearly describe or sketch a particular situation

### **c) Reporting the inspection**

- If the supervisor of the area does not accompany the inspection team, consult the supervisor before leaving the area
- Report to the supervisor all the positive observations noted during the inspection. Positive feedback can help reinforce good safety behaviours and prevent workplace inspections from becoming fault-finding exercises
- Report items that the supervisor can immediately correct. Note these on the report as corrected. This keeps the records clear and serves as a reminder to check the condition during the next inspection
- Document your final findings on the workplace inspection recording form (refer to sample forms):
- Name the area inspected, the date and the inspection team's names on top of the page.
- Assign a priority level to the hazards observed to indicate the urgency of the corrective action required. For example:

- A = Major – requires immediate action  
B = Serious – requires action soon  
C = Minor – requires action later
- After each listed hazard, specify the recommended corrective action and establish a correction date. Ensure someone is assigned to follow up on the recommendation
- The final workplace inspection report should be dated and signed by everyone conducting the inspection

## Training

Training is not a one-time event. Training should be ongoing with regular follow-up evaluation of performance. It should cover all relevant operating and handling information, including emergency procedures, first aid facilities, any restricted areas, precautions required to protect workers from hazards, and any other health and safety procedures, plans, policies and/or programs applicable to the worker.

Training should cover:

- Relevant content of the health and safety plan, including training on safe work practices and procedures in the plan
- Specific safety matters as set out in other standards, such as On Farm Food Safety or use of respiratory protective devices

Training must be provided prior to the worker's being exposed to hazards in the workplace. On-the-job training consists of the worker:

- Observing the task being done correctly by a trained and competent worker
- Performing the task under direct supervision
- If appropriate, being paired with an experienced buddy during the training period
- Being observed doing the task independently
- Being followed-up at a later date to determine if training has been effective

- Being retrained as required
- Receiving positive feedback from a supervisor that the task has been performed competently

### Documentation of Training

It is important to keep a record of training events, trainers and participants. Include participants' signatures to prove they did receive the training and understand what was taught.

## Identification of People and Resources to Deal with Emergencies

- Your Emergency Preparedness Plan should identify the individuals responsible for leading the emergency response process on this farm. The Emergency Preparedness Plan will identify specific resources required
- If there are any significant operational changes through the year that affect the EPP, the plan must be updated and revised.
- The plan will include, but is not limited to the following items:
  - Chemical/hazardous materials spills
  - Incident reporting
  - Medical emergencies
  - Violent personal threats
  - Fire, explosions, floods
  - Adverse weather

## Reporting and Documenting Incidents

Reporting workplace incidents allows the employer to monitor and track the frequency and severity of unusual incidents occurring on the farming operation. Incident reporting is part of an overall process whereby all incidents are documented, investigated, and follow-up action is taken in order to prevent further similar incidents from occurring. Incident reporting is not a blaming process, but a means to identify and correct root causes, thereby addressing the hazard to reduce the chance of reoccurrence.

## Reviewing the Effectiveness of your Canada FarmSafe Plan

The review may be conducted using a variety of evaluation processes:

- Observation
  - Direct observation of workers performing tasks
  - Conduct detailed workplace inspections (physical conditions)
  - Interview workers, supervisors and the employer
- Review Documentation
  - Written safety policies and procedures
  - Standard operating practices incorporating safe work practices
  - Incident trends and indicators
  - Preventative maintenance records
  - Safety committee meeting minutes

## Responsibilities

### Employer

- Identify, assess and properly control workplace health and safety hazards
- Prepare a current list of hazards in the workplace, including chemical and biological substances, physical agents, work design hazards and harassment problems
- Develop written safe work practices
- Inform all persons who may enter the farm work area about the hazards in the workplace
- Ensure workers are trained regarding required control measures to keep them safe at work
- Develop, maintain and regularly review and revise an Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) for the entire farming operation
- Ensure workplace inspections are conducted
- Provide the resources – including information, training, tools, equipment and time – needed to carry out inspections

- If the number of on-farm workers warrants, create a health and safety committee or identify a worker representative to:
  - Receive appropriate training to conduct workplace inspections
  - Conduct inspections during the workday
- Promptly resolve any problems and address any concerns raised through the inspection process
- Upon notification of an unsafe condition, take immediate steps to protect the health and safety of any worker who may be at risk until the unsafe condition is corrected
- Maintain a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) control system according to your jurisdictional guidelines
- Store MSDSs in a highly visible area to be readily available for staff use as required
- Update the MSDS files every three years
- Define and implement a process for reporting, documenting, reviewing and following up on serious incidents in the workplace
- Ensure all incidents described in your policy are reported to the health and safety committee (if present).
- Ensure the safety program is reviewed at least every year and/or whenever there is a change of circumstances that may affect the health and safety of workers
- Assign responsibility for conducting the safety program review. Determine who should be involved in the review
- Determine the process and means of evaluation for undertaking the review
- Ensure recommendations for updates and improvements are implemented

### **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 practices
- 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 their 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

### **Health and Safety Committee (HSC)/representative**

- 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, then ensure the corrective action has been taken

### **Service providers (contractors, trades people)**

It is the responsibility of the farm owner to work to protect the health and safety of all employers, self-employed persons, contractors and workers while they are working on the farm under a service agreement. The farm owner must :

- Provide workers and service providers with general safety guidance on his Canada FarmSafe Plan and accepted safety practices and work procedures related to the work to be performed

It is the responsibility of the service provider to:

- Comply with all applicable legislation and standards and accepted best work practices and procedures, specific to the work performed
- 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

- Comply with all applicable Canada FarmSafe Plan polices and provincial legislation
- Supply products that are without risk of injury or illness to end users when used according to instructions provide by the supplier

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