

**Canadian
Agricultural
Safety Week
Mar. 11-17, 2009**

FACT SHEET #4

THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE
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Farm Safety – Put your best foot forward

There is an old adage that says, “When your feet hurt, you hurt all over.” This is true for all workers, especially those in agriculture who at times work long hours in extreme temperatures and in a variety of conditions. Proper footwear not only protects your feet from possible injuries, it also prevents the pain and fatigue that can lead to injuries due to distraction, slower reactions and unsafe shortcuts.

“*PPE only works if you use it!*” is the theme of this year’s Canadian Agricultural Safety campaign with a focus on the use, fit and access of personal protective equipment (PPE) in agriculture. The yearlong campaign will be launched with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW), from March 11 to 17, 2009. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) deliver CASW in partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC).

“Agricultural producers work in diversified conditions,” says Laurent Pellerin, CFA First VP. “Proper footwear and foot care are essential for the comfort, safety and productivity of everyone working on a farm.”

There are two major categories of work-related foot injuries. The first is trauma injuries from punctures, crushes, and lacerations, which account for 10 per cent of reported disabling injuries. The second is injuries resulting from slips, trips and falls – accounting for 15 per cent of reported disabling injuries, reports the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS).

These two categories of foot injuries, however, do not exhaust the whole range of foot problems at work. There are also other conditions such as calluses, ingrown toenails or simply tired feet that are common among workers. Footwear that fits poorly or is in need of repair also contributes heavily to foot discomfort.

Although these may not be considered as occupational injuries in the strictest sense, they can cause discomfort, pain and fatigue. Fatigue sets up the worker for further injuries affecting the muscles and joints. Also, a worker who is tired and suffering pain is less alert and more likely to act unsafely. An incident of any kind may result.

The best way to involve workers in programs to protect their feet is to provide: training and information on the health hazards of wearing improper shoes; the principles for selecting proper ones; and the simple rules of general foot care. In addition, protective footwear should conform to CSA Standard CAN/CSA-Z195-02 or appropriate standards for your jurisdiction.

Good footwear should grip the heel firmly; allow free movement of the toes; have a low wide-based heel; and have a fastening across the instep to prevent the foot from slipping when walking.

The type of flooring used in the workplace has an important influence on comfort. Hard, unyielding floors like concrete are the least comfortable surfaces to work on. Slippery floors are hazardous for slips and falls that can result in sprained ankles or broken bones. Additional hazards for foot injury exist in outdoor jobs that involve freezing temperatures, or wetness in low temperatures, frostbite and trench foot.

Job and workplace designs also have the potential to increase foot safety.

- Keep mobile equipment away from areas usually used for foot traffic.
- Ensure guards are installed properly on all machinery.
- Keep walkways and work areas tidy.
- And keep stairs, ramps, walkways and work areas clear of debris and well lit to reduce slips, trips and falls.

The CFA along with FCC, CASA and AAFC want to remind Canadian farmers that “*PPE only works if you use it!*”

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*** Free photos and cartoons are available to accompany this article at www.casa-acsa.ca .







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To download a copy of this article, visit web sites www.casa-acsa.ca or www.cfa-fca.ca

Side bar on “*Selection of Safety Footwear*” below.

Selection of Safety Footwear		
Marking	Criteria	Use
	Green triangle footwear has sole puncture protection with a Grade 1 protective toe (withstand impact up to 125 joules).	Any industrial or heavy work environment, including construction, where sharp objects are present (such as nails).
	Yellow triangle footwear has sole puncture protection and Grade 2 protective toe (withstand impact up to 90 joules)	Light industrial work environments that need both puncture and toe protection.
	White rectangle with orange Greek letter "omega" footwear has soles that provide electric shock resistance.	Any industrial environment where accidental contact with live electrical conductors can occur. (REMEMBER: Electric shock resistance is greatly reduced by wet conditions and with wear)
	Yellow Rectangle with green letters "SD" and grounding symbol footwear has soles that are static dissipative.	Any industrial environment where a static discharge can be a hazard for workers or equipment.
	Red rectangle with black letter "C" and grounding symbol footwear has soles that are electrically conductive.	For any industrial environment where low-power electrical charges can be a hazard for workers or equipment.
	White label with green fir tree symbol footwear provides protection when using chainsaws.	For forestry workers and others who work with or around hand-held chainsaws and other cutting tools.
<p>Note 1: The ® symbol indicates the preferred position for the identifying logo or mark or the certifying agency. Note 2: Labels are on the tongue of the right shoe at ankle height. They may also appear at ankle height on the shoe itself (for electrical protection footwear) From: "Z195.1-02 Guideline on Selection, Care and Use of Protective Footwear" , Canadian Standards Association, 2002.</p>		

Protection Code

An "internal protection code" is also required. This code will be permanently marked on the outside or inside of at least one shoe/boot.

Position:	1	2	3	4	5
Mark:	1	P	M	E	X

Position:

- 1 -- level of toe protection (1 for Grade 1, 2 for Grade 2, 0 for neither)
- 2 -- presence of puncture-resistant sole (P if present, 0 if not)
- 3 -- presence of metatarsal protection (M if present, 0 if not)
- 4 -- type of electrical protection (E if shock resistant, S if static dissipative, C if conductive, 0 if no protection)
- 5 -- chainsaw protection (X if present, 0 if not)

From: "Z195.1-02 Guideline on Selection, Care and Use of Protective Footwear", Canadian Standards Association, 2002.