

# Hand Signals On The Farm

## The 'Universal Language'

Learn Them! Use Them!



Perhaps you have experienced the shouting and hand-waving that seems to accompany many chores on the farm.

All too often noise from machinery and/or distance between workers leads to a **communication breakdown**. This can lead to hazardous situations on the farm. Whether backing up to a farm implement, navigating an oversized load or working with livestock, hand signals are an ideal **communication tool**.

Using hand signals provides a way to **communicate the needed information effectively** and safely. The signals should be used by all the farm family, employees and farm visitors such as feed truck drivers, chemical salespeople and farm store delivery drivers.

**Post** the hand signals in an area where they will be seen on a daily basis. This will allow everyone to become familiar with the standard signals.

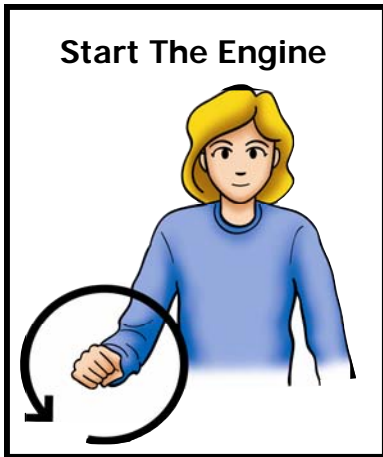
The **American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE)** has adopted the following uniform hand signals for agricultural safety. These hand signals help everyone to communicate in the same '**language**' which decreases the risk of injury.

### Using hand signals:

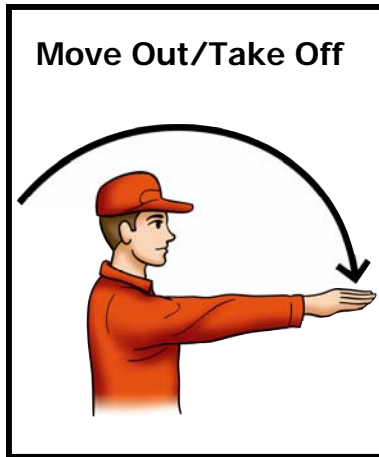
- Saves time
- Prevents accidents
- Prevents frustration
- Reduces severity of injuries
- Lowers the risk of accidental death

# Alberta Farm

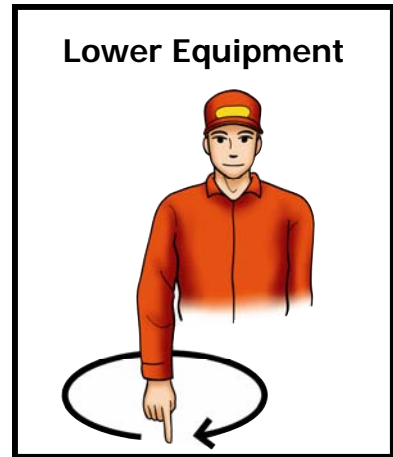
## Safety Program



**Example:** You need to signal the operator to start the engine after some adjustment has been made.



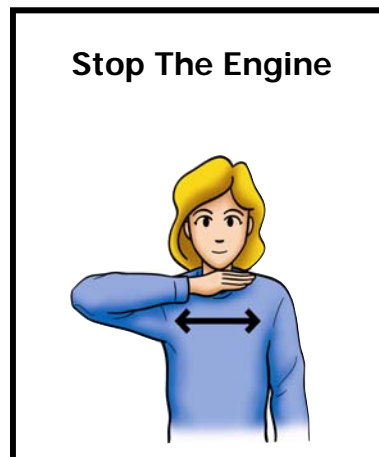
**Example:** You have hitched an implement for the operator and connected the PTO; signal the person to move out for field work.



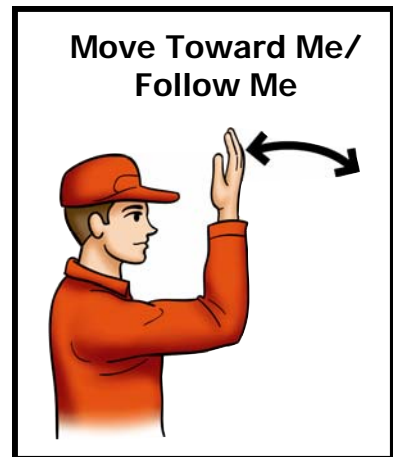
**Example:** Use this signal to have operator lower tractor bucket or machine header.



**Example:** You have opened the gate for the cows to be brought forward. You will signal your co-workers to bring the cattle forward.



**Example:** You need to have the operator stop the engine for some adjustments to the machinery.



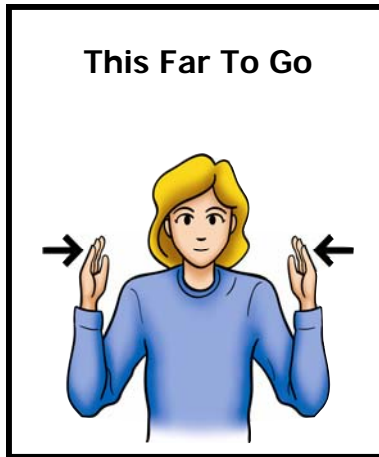
**Example:** Use this signal to motion an equipment operator to move toward you or move equipment in a crowded area where side visibility is poor.

## Alberta Farm

### Safety Program



**Example:** You want the operator in the tractor to increase the speed.



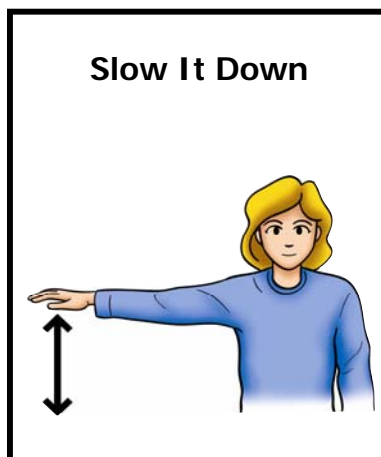
**Example:** Use this signal to assist a tractor operator in backing a loaded wagon or hitching to a wagon.



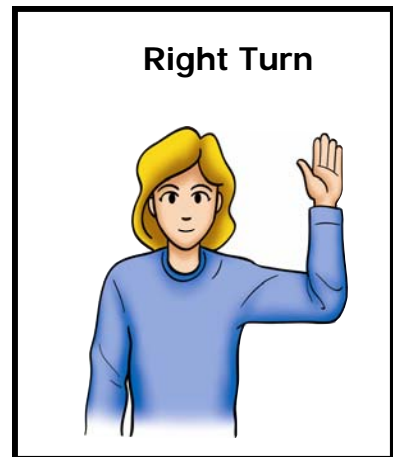
**Example:** The tractor and forage wagon are now positioned for unloading into the silage blower. You signal the operator to stop.



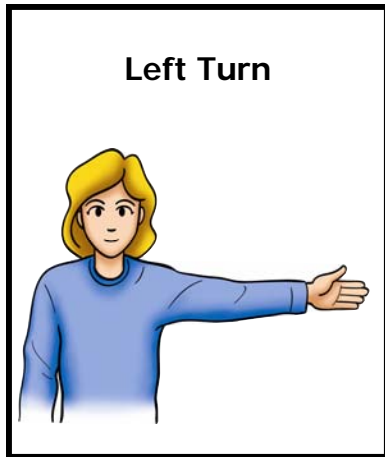
**Example:** Use this signal to have operator raise machine header or tractor bucket.



**Example:** You are going too fast; slow down.



**Example:** Use this signal for public roadway travel or anywhere others may be following you.



**Example:** Use this signal for public roadway travel or anywhere others may be following you.

Noisy equipment and distance between workers makes hand signals a necessity. How many of these hand signals do you use?



You are out baling hay. Someone approaching you on the ground to deliver a message would not be able to shout loud enough for you to hear.

What signals could they use?

### True or False

1. Only the farm owner needs to know the hand signals.    **T   F**
2. Using the standard hand signals can save time and prevent accidents.    **T   F**
3. To indicate that the equipment needs to be lowered, make a circular motion with either hand pointing to the ground.    **T   F**
4. The standard hand signals have been adopted by the ASAE.    **T   F**
5. Shouting as loud as you can is an effective communication tool when working around noisy farm machinery.    **T   F**
6. Hand signals are a great way to provide standard communication to all workers.    **T   F**

References: The Ohio State University and National Safety Council.