

# Farm Safety Report Card 2008

Prepared by Farm Credit Canada Research, September 2008



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## Executive Summary

### A "B" grade overall

Although Canadian producers report that safety is important, they may not practise all safety measures regularly, resulting in an overall grade of **B** (74 per cent) on the 2008 Farm Safety Report Card<sup>1</sup>. However, there is also an appetite for additional training, which would improve the safety on their operations.

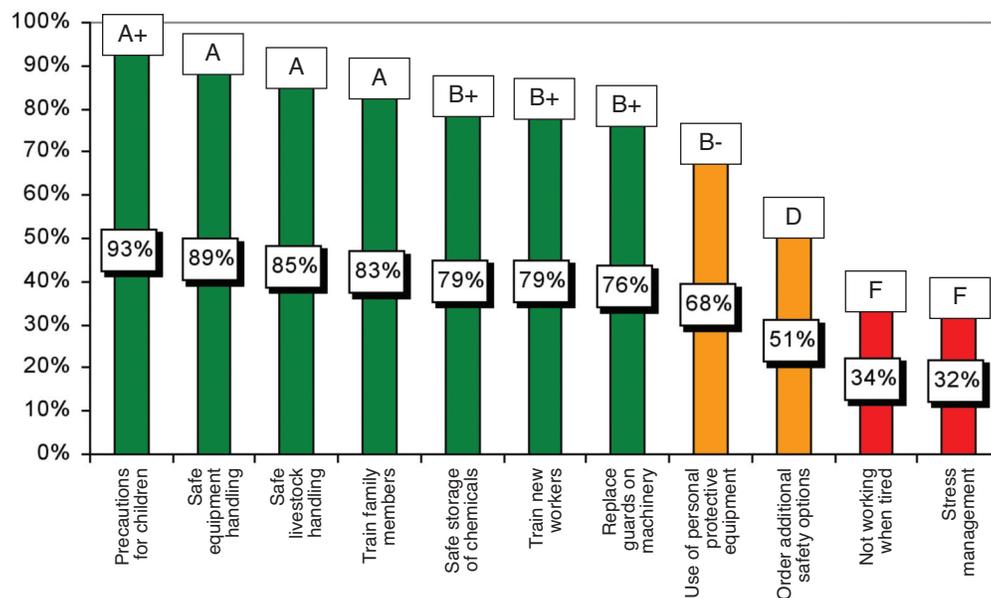
### What is going well?

Taking precautions for children is the general safety measure most frequently practised, and has been graded an **A+** on the Farm Safety Report Card. Safe equipment handling, safe livestock handling and training family members each scored **A**'s – more than eight out of 10 respondents (89 per cent, 85 per cent and 83 per cent, respectively) state they practise each of these measures on a regular basis.

### What is not going well?

Only half of the respondents (51 per cent) replied they order additional safety options such as cages, ladders and monitors regularly. This has been graded a **D** on the Farm Safety Report Card. Not working tired and managing stress are used the least by respondents. Less than a third of respondents (34 per cent and 32 per cent respectively) cited that they practise these safety measures regularly and have each been graded an **F** on the Farm Safety Report Card.

## How often do you practise the following safety measures?



<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this study, each of the actionable safety measures has been assigned a grade in the form of a report card based on their use. The graph depicts the number of respondents who replied they use each safety measure most or all of the time (4 or 5 on the scale). The overall grade was calculated by taking the total responses and dividing it by the number of times each safety measure was graded a 4 or a 5 on the scale by the number of respondents.

### Potential for injury

Eight in 10 respondents (83 per cent) indicate that safety is a priority on their farms or ranches. They practise many safety measures on a regular basis. However, they acknowledge that they are not practising *all* safety measures *all* of the time, which could result in the potential for accidents or injuries on the farm.

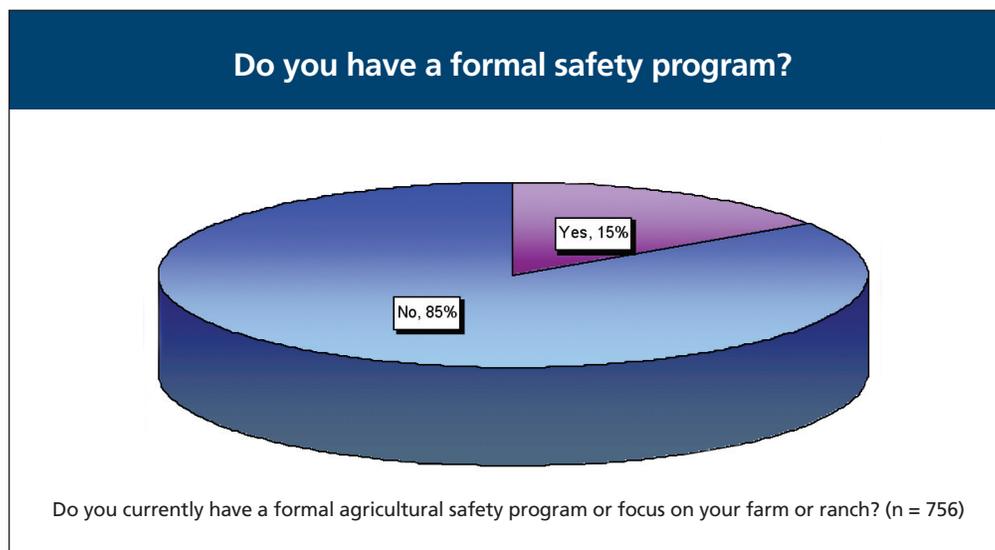
### Desire for improvement

Respondents revealed a desire to improve the safety practices on their operations, as nine in 10 respondents (87 per cent) expressed an interest in pursuing some type of agricultural safety training. The most popular topics include:

- first aid (46 per cent)
- agriculture safety for children (39 per cent)
- legal requirements (38 per cent)

### Formal safety program

Although 83 per cent of respondents believe safety is a priority on their farm or ranch, only 15 per cent of respondents have a formal safety program in place.



Operations with hired help (22 per cent) have more of an inclination to implement a formal plan than do those without hired help (10 per cent). Women (20 per cent) are more likely to have a formal safety plan in place than men (13 per cent).

Respondents in the horticulture sector (37 per cent) are more likely than those in most other sectors to have a formal safety plan in place. Additionally, respondents from Quebec (44 per cent) are more likely to have a formal safety plan than those in most other provinces.

Those who responded that they have a formal plan in place were asked to describe why they decided to implement a formal safety plan on their farm or ranch. There were a number of reasons cited, the most common reason being that they want to protect their family and employees.

#### **What producers said**

*"[We have a formal safety plan] for the health and safety of myself, my family and my employees, and for peace of mind."*

*"I want everyone involved on this farm to enjoy life with family and friends."*

*"Many years ago we decided to do so because we care about the people that work for us."*

#### **Why is safety important?**

Producers explain that safety has the priority it does on their farms for three key reasons:

- the potential for financial loss due to accidents, largely through lost productivity
- safekeeping of their family members
- the impact of first-hand exposure to farm accidents

#### **What producers said**

*"We cannot afford to lose the help we have (too hard to get good help!), so we do our best to make our processes safe."*

*"We want to protect our family members and want them to operate machines and work with livestock safely."*

*"We had a relative who was killed when a tractor rolled on him, so we take farm safety seriously."*

#### **What prevents producers from taking safety measures?**

Respondents report that the key barriers to practising safety measures are old habits (35 per cent) and time (31 per cent). In short, producers take shortcuts so they can get the job done.

### What producers said

*"Lack of money and shortage of time contribute to safety being pushed lower on the scale than it should be!"*

### Safety training

Nine in 10 respondents (87 per cent) indicate that they are interested in at least one agricultural safety training topic.

Respondents report that the following organizations are their top choices to offer agricultural training:

1. Canadian Agricultural Safety Association – CASA (54 per cent)
2. provincial agricultural safety associations (51 per cent)
3. provincial governments (41 per cent)



### **Background and Details**

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) is increasing their partnership with CASA by donating in-house research expertise. CASA is interested in measuring awareness and attitudes relating to a variety of farm safety topics.

The study's sample was taken from FCC's Vision Panel, a national research panel with more than 9,000 members of the agriculture community across Canada. The online study was randomly sent to 1,869 primary producers across sectors and provinces via email. There were 756 participants, giving the study a 40 per cent response rate. The margin of error is +/- 3.6 per cent, 19 times out of 20 on a sample of this size.

For the purpose of this study, respondents were asked to rate themselves as to the frequency with which they complete a number of safety measures.

The farm safety report card graph depicts the number of respondents who replied they use each safety measure most or all of the time (4 or 5 on the scale). Each of the actionable safety measures has been assigned a grade in the form of a report card based on their use. Each of the 11 safety measures has been graded in order to see what is going well and what is not when it comes to farm safety, based on how often they are practised. The overall grade was calculated by taking the total responses and dividing it by the number of times each safety measure was graded a 4 or a 5 on the scale by the number of respondents.



