

The Economic Burden of Injury within the Agricultural Population in Canada

Farm-related preventable injuries cost the Canadian economy \$373 million dollars and 184 lives in 2004, according to a report that builds on and expands SMARTRISK's economic burden study, *The Economic Burden of Injury in Canada* (SMARTRISK, 2009).

SMARTRISK produced the report for the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA). CASA's executive director Marcel Hacault says "the costs that emerge from this analysis are the costs of inaction – the price we all pay for failing to address injuries that are, in large part, both predictable and preventable".

Hacault explains that economic burden studies enable calculation of the broader societal burden that injury imposes on the agricultural community. He says "the report takes into account cost pressures on our health care system and foregone human potential in terms of years of life lost and diminished labour market productivity and earnings."

SUMMARY:

In 2004: within the Agricultural Population in Canada:

- **184 deaths**
- **\$373 million in total economic costs**
- **almost 4,000 hospitalized**
- **over 72,000 emergency room visits**
- **over 1,000 permanently disabled**

The direct costs of agricultural injury in 2004 were \$208 million. The indirect costs were \$165 million.

Falls were the leading cause of overall injury costs within the agricultural population in 2004, accounting for \$130 million or 28% of total costs, followed by other unintentional injuries at \$97 million (21%), including transport incidents at \$91 million (19%).

Overall, per capita injury costs for males in agriculture were more than twice the costs for females. In all cases, overexertion was the greatest contributor to injury.

MOST OF THESE INJURIES ARE PREDICTABLE AND PREVENTABLE

Hacault says "research and experience have shown that the vast majority of the injuries described in this report are both predictable and preventable". He points out that CASA proactively works with ag safety organizations and business across the country to help farmers better manage safety risks. "We're all aiming for a Canada where no one is hurt farming," he says.

CASA keeps track of ag injury numbers and trends through its Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting program (CAIR). For up to date reports and analysis, go to www.cair-sbac.ca.

To request a copy of the report "The Economic Burden of Injury within the Agricultural Population in Canada", call 1-877- 452-2272 or email info@casa-acsa.ca.