



#2 FARM SAFETY – WRITE IT RIGHT

Talk Leader Instructions:

This is background information ONLY. Be sure to customize to your operation and facilities.

- ✓ Print copies of this sheet for yourself and each of the participants.
- ✓ Lead a discussion with your workers about the materials on this sheet at a location that is appropriate to the topic. Be sure to give real life examples whenever possible.
- ✓ Be open to questions.
- ✓ Conclude with a brief review of the main points or a summary based on the discussion.
- ✓ Fill in your operation name, location and the date on your sheet. Have each worker sign your sheet to confirm their attendance.
- ✓ File your sheet in your worker training records to document the training experience.

WORK ACTIVITY

Whether it is reporting a farm-related incident or covering a 4-H Achievement Day, the words expressed by media have a huge influence on their audience. This makes media a key messenger of good or bad safety practices, whether they realize it or not.

BACKGROUND

Words shape attitudes and a picture is worth a thousand words, so the words used by media are a key influence on their audiences – and that includes farm safety. With this in mind, there are several things that media can do to create good and accurate messages for farm safety.

KEY POINTS - Wording DOs and DON'Ts

- DO** use the word 'incident' rather than 'accident'. 'Accident' implies an 'act of God' or 'bad luck'; however, evidence confirms that most injuries are both predictable and preventable.
- DO** make your story a 'teachable moment' by explaining safety violations and/or preventative measures that should have been taken. Include safety resources and programs available to farmers.
- DO** show production agriculture for what it is – an intense, high-risk industry made even more stressful by unpredictable factors such as weather.
- DO** say it like it is. For example, "the tractor drove off the road" is incorrect and should be phrased as "the driver lost control of the tractor and veered off the road".
- DO NOT** say that a child killed in a farm incident, "died doing what he loved," or that he, "loved to help daddy." This implies that it is acceptable to allow children into agricultural worksites.
- DO NOT** attribute incidents to the unpredictable nature of animals, failure of machinery or the existence of rough landscape. These are all known hazards and are to be addressed safely with human decisions.
- DO NOT** use the phrase "freak accident" when describing a traumatic event. While each incident is unique, injury data will likely reveal that many similar events have occurred.
- DO NOT** suggest that unsafe practices are acceptable just because they are family "tradition".
- DO NOT** use the phrase "down on the farm" as it subordinates farming to other industries and suggests that normal rules don't apply because farmers don't know any better. *(cont'd on page 2)*



#2 FARM SAFETY – WRITE IT RIGHT PAGE 2

Talk Leader Instructions:

This is background information ONLY. Be sure to customize to your operation and facilities.

- ✓ Print copies of this sheet for yourself and each of the participants.
- ✓ Lead a discussion with your workers about the materials on this sheet at a location that is appropriate to the topic. Be sure to give real life examples whenever possible.
- ✓ Be open to questions.
- ✓ Conclude with a brief review of the main points or a summary based on the discussion.
- ✓ Fill in your operation name, location and the date on your sheet. Have each worker sign your sheet to confirm their attendance.
- ✓ File your sheet in your worker training records to document the training experience.

DO NOT say that “farming is a lifestyle” as it suggests decision-making based on personal choice whereas in fact, farming is a regulated commercial industry with specific legal obligations to workers and working conditions.

ADVERTISING

One can argue that journalist report reality, right or wrong. This argument does not hold true for advertising, which is entirely staged leaving no excuse to suggest unsafe practices or to perpetuate antiquated images of agriculture.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES / CONTACTS

If you are wondering whether a child is doing an age appropriate task, refer to the North American Guidelines for Children’s Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) www.nagcat.org. NAGCAT describes more than 60 hazards associated with farm work and other activities in which children sometimes take part.

If you want more information or to contact someone with specific farm safety questions go to www.planfarmsafety.ca or www.cfa-fca.ca or email info@casa-acsa.ca or farmsafety@cfafca.ca

MORE RESOURCES

Media Guidelines for Agricultural Safety

<http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/proxy/MCRF-Centers-NFMC-NCCRAHS-CASN-Media-Guidelines-7-19-10.1.pdf>

“Keeping a safe eye on what we write, say and show in agriculture,” by Scott Heiberger.

http://www.ifaj.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Press_Releases/IFAJFarmSafetyFeature03%2011.pdf

COMMENTS / SUGGESTIONS:

Operation Name _____

Location _____

Meeting Leader _____

Date _____

TOOLBOX TALK PARTICIPANTS

Print name _____ Signature _____

Print name _____ Signature _____

Print name _____ Signature _____

Print name _____ Signature _____

Print name _____ Signature _____