



TALK LEADER INSTRUCTIONS

This is background information ONLY. Be sure to customize your talk 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

Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) is a serious condition that is painful and often debilitating. RSI is a more common farm injury than one may think, particularly among fruit and vegetable pickers, graders and packers. RSI is not a condition that is age-specific, however, it is most frequently found in adults of working age, with common symptoms being strains of the hands, wrists, arms, shoulders or neck.

BACKGROUND

RSI is not one diagnosis, but rather an umbrella term for disorders such as Bursitis, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, tennis elbow, tendonitis, and trigger finger. Also known as Cumulative Trauma Disorder, RSI is caused by constantly repeated physical movements, awkward postures and sustained force, among other risk factors. These repetitive motions damage the soft body tissues (tendon, cartilage, nerves, ligaments, and muscles) that are involved in producing the motion.

List and discuss the jobs on our farm that might cause RSI:

Key Points

We have Standard Operating Practices for all the manual tasks you do on our farm.

If you don't remember them, review them—you can find them:

and shift positions frequently. Sit with your back straight. Bring tools within easy reach to help create fewer awkward positions for your body. Take frequent breaks that allow you to adjust, stretch and relax your muscles.

Our break schedule is:

REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURIES CAN BE PREVENTED BY THE FOLLOWING GOOD WORK PRACTICES

Practice good posture. Anything that creates an awkward reach, position, or angle of the body can create problems. When sitting, standing or performing other activities for a considerable time, relax, move around

Stay warm and stretch. Keeping your body warm, including your hands is very important. Cold muscles are less flexible and much more susceptible to injury and strain from overuse.

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CAUTION

Symptoms of RSI include: tingling, coldness or numbness of the joints; clumsiness and loss of strength and coordination; pain that prevents you from getting to sleep or that wakes you up at night; tightness, stiffness, discomfort and soreness in the hands, forearms, elbows, shoulders, neck or back.

If you are experiencing any of the symptoms of RSI, go to your doctor or health care provider. Don't wait! A combination of early diagnosis and a few changes can reduce the damage to your body, minimize pain, and maximize the enjoyment you get from life.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES / CONTACTS

In case of incident or injury, call 911 or your local emergency services and me / your supervisor.

MORE RESOURCES

Simple Solutions: Ergonomics for Farm Workers, by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2001-111/pdfs/2001-111.pdf>.

Use caution when lifting. Position yourself close to the object. Keep your back straight and lift with your leg muscles—don't bend over to lift. Do not twist your body while lifting.

Reduce your stress. Stress results in high blood pressure, restricted blood flow and muscle tensions, which all increase your risk of RSI. Minimize stress by exercising three times a week for 30 minutes, stop smoking, and reduce your caffeine intake.

Listen to your body. Pain is your body's way of telling you it is in trouble. Listen! Pain, if ignored, can result in a reduction of your range of motion, restriction of activities and even surgery. Repetitive strain injuries are preventable.

COMMENTS / SUGGESTIONS

(Use extra pages to write further comments or suggestions)

Operation Name _____

Location _____

Meeting Leader _____

Date _____

TOOLBOX TALK PARTICIPANTS

Print name _____

Signature _____



CanadaFarmSafe
SécuriFermeCanada

This Producer Tool was developed by the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA). Conducting regular Toolbox Talks, or safety meetings, with farm workers is one component of establishing a comprehensive farm safety plan as outlined in the Canada FarmSafe Plan, CASA's business-risk management tool for health and safety on the farm. To download the core Canada FarmSafe Plan, visit www.casa-acsa.ca/CanadaFarmSafePlan, or contact CASA to learn more at 1-877-452-2272.

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