

Checklist for Safety

Take some time this season to look for farm hazards. Safety specialists recommend getting family and farmhands together for this. That way, everyone becomes aware of potential dangers and understands how to avoid them.

And make it a priority to do repairs or buy the necessary safety equipment.

Farm Machinery Use

- Are all tractors equipped with rollover protective systems (roll bar, seatbelt)?
- Does equipment have functioning flashing lights, taillights, headlights, and signal lights?
- Are "Slow Moving Vehicle" emblems and reflectors affixed, clean, and unfaded?
- Do tractors and towed implements have safety chains for road travel?
- Are heavy loads hitched only to a drawbar or specified hitch point to reduce risk of turnovers?
- Do you travel with the loaded bucket down on front-end loaders?
- Are power-take-off (pto) shields in place?
- Are the shields in good repair?
- Are all other needed shields and chain guards in place that will prevent entanglements?
- Do portable grain elevators have shields over auger intakes to prevent hand and foot contact?
- Are all hydraulic hoses in good condition?
- Are 5-pound, UL-listed, charged fire extinguishers accessible on machinery?
- Are areas where fire is possible free of grease, dust, and chaff?
- Are remote shutoff devices, such as those on forage blowers and feed grinders, operational?
- Are operators' manuals within easy access?
- Are warning decals affixed to machinery, alerting operators to potential hazards?
- Do you always stop the machine before unclogging it or attending to operating problems?
- Do you use hearing- and dust-protection devices around machinery when necessary?
- Are rocks, stumps, and ditches marked so tractor drivers can avoid them?
- Are power sources placed underground or high enough for tall machinery to clear?
- Do you set brakes and remove keys before leaving machinery?
- Do you block equipment with steel jacks or wooden blocks when removing wheels or working under machinery?

- Are confined spaces, such as manure storage areas and grain bins, well ventilated?

Chemical Use

- Are current labels readily available for all pesticides used?
- Do you have all protective equipment called for on the label, and do you use it?
- Do you write the date on respirator cartridges, and then dispose of them when breathing through them becomes difficult, you notice odors, or the manufacturer's date is past?
- Do you wear goggles or a face shield when applying chemicals?
- Do you wash gloves and boots before taking them off?
- Do you wash separately all your exposed clothing?
- Do you avoid cleaning protective devices, such as respirators, with alcohol or solvents? These can damage rubber and plastic.
- Are chemicals stored in sealed containers and in a secured area?
- Are empty containers triple rinsed and disposed of or stored as the maker recommends?
- Is water available in the field for washing after handling chemicals and for emergencies?

Animal and Facility Safety

- Are manure ponds posted and fenced?
- Are manure pit openings covered?
- Are buildings free of trash or objects that could contribute to a fire or lead to a fall?

Emergency Response

- Are emergency phone numbers by all phones?
- Can everyone disengage and shut off all equipment?
- Do you have a good first aid manual, and are you familiar with its directions?
- Has any family member taken a safety training course, such as basic first aid or cardiac pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training, in the past 12 months?
- Have children 14 to 16 had formal operator's training on tractors and other farm machinery?

Free copies of this checklist are available. Send your request, along with a stamped, self-addressed long envelope, to Safety Checklist, *Progressive Farmer*, Box 2581, Birmingham, AL 35202.