



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Hardin County Extension News Release

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Spring Farm Safety Reminders

Hardin County - Spring of 2019 brought never-before seen planting conditions for our generation. With a similar weather pattern predicted for spring 2020, the window to get crops in the field may be short again this season. With shorter windows brings a sense of hurriedness, stress, and fatigue. These may all lead to an increased potential of incidents and injuries during planting.

In the ten-year span from 2009 to 2018, there were 116 farm fatalities in Ohio. Sixty-nine of these were the result of tractors, equipment, or other equipment (Farm Fatality and Injury Database of Ohio, OSU Extension Ag Safety and Health Program).

What practices can be done to reduce the risk of injury this time of year? The following are reminders to keep in mind during this busy season. Be completely acquainted with the equipment you are operating. Read the manual and be comfortable with its operation. Ensure others operating your equipment are competent as well.

Make sure all safety guards, shields, and access doors are in place. If one is removed for service, put it back again when complete. If you purchased a used piece of equipment, do a check to make sure all safety devices are present.

Never service or repair a piece of equipment while it is running. Make sure no one else around has the opportunity to start the equipment while you are working on it.

When using ladders, place them as close as possible to the equipment, so that you don't over-extend your reach. Do not use the top three rungs of an extension ladder or the top surface of a step ladder to climb higher.

Keep the access stairs and operator's platforms clear of tools and other items while performing maintenance on tractors and machinery. Slips and falls are common injuries while working in the shop as you mount and dismount the equipment. And refrain from jumping off equipment.

Keep your shop and working areas free of clutter and debris. An organized shop is also a safer shop.

Keep all children, pets, and others away from equipment while in operation or moving in barn yard and NO extra riders.

Ensure all lights and reflective material are in working order and in good condition before operating tractors and equipment on public roadways. Be attentive and defensive. Use an escort vehicle and move equipment at off peak motor vehicle traffic times if possible.

Most importantly, take care of yourself! Don't get in a hurry. Stay hydrated and take breaks.

Taking a little extra time to practice good safety habits has more than just short-term rewards. If a serious injury occurs, then the discussion is "who will get the crops in the ground?" Spring 2020 has already been very unique with the arrival of COVID-19. Having to go to the Emergency Room or Urgent Care exposing yourself to this additional risk is not something anyone wants at this time.

Article written by Wayne Dellinger-OSU Extension, Union County and Dee Jepsen-OSU Extension-Ag Safety and Health. Edited by Mark Badertscher-OSU Extension, Hardin County.