

# FARM SAFETY FOCUS ON: **TRANSPORT**

This guide highlights key risks involving moving vehicles and provides practical advice on how you can **make your farm a safer place for you, your family, your employees and visitors.**



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## THE LAW

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires all employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all their employees.

Transport activity is also covered by the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER). They require that equipment must be suitable for the task, properly maintained and guarded and that adequate training and information about the equipment is available for employees.

The Prevention of Accidents to Children in Agriculture Regulations 1998 (PACAR) makes it illegal to allow a child under 13 to ride on or drive agricultural self-propelled machines (such as tractors) and certain other farm machinery.

### CASE STUDY

A 23 year old farm worker was working alone, cultivating the land, a task he'd done many times before and was more than capable. For reasons unknown, the worker left his tractor without turning the engine off and was run over and killed by the cultivator.

A passing horse rider sounded the alert after she spotted his tractor by a hedge with the engine still running. His body was found with the spikes from the cultivator embedded in him.

## Introduction

Incidents involving moving vehicles are a major cause of workplace deaths and life changing injuries in agriculture. Moving vehicles account for approximately one third of the deaths each year in farming.

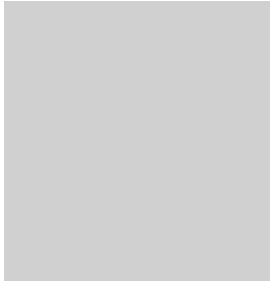
The most common types of serious injury involving transport in agriculture are caused by reversing manoeuvres, vehicles overturning and use of ATVs.

## Safe vehicle

Many preventable incidents causing death and serious injury occur when drivers leave vehicles without making sure it is fully secured and will not move. Follow the **Safe Stop** procedure every time you leave the driver's seat/operating position and especially, before maintenance is carried out:

1. Handbrake on
2. Controls in neutral
3. Engine off
4. Key out

**A simple way to help prevent death and serious injury caused by untrained and inexperienced people is to remove the keys from machinery when vehicles are not in use.**



It is your legal duty to ensure that vehicles, machines and handling equipment are inspected regularly and any faults repaired immediately. [The NFU Farm Vehicle Health Check guidance](#) provides more information and checklists to assist with this.

Make sure all loads carried are stable and secure – many people are killed each year from falling objects.

Good cab protection is essential for materials handlers and loaders as they are far more likely to be hit by any falling objects.

Your tractors, trailers and other machinery must have brakes designed for the maximum loads and speeds at which they operate.

### **Lifting operations**

Only use lifting equipment which is fit for the job and operated by a trained and experienced driver.

Under no circumstances use grain buckets, pallets or other makeshift equipment to lift people off the ground.

Safe working loads are marked on lifting equipment. Make sure overload indicators on handling machines are in working order and not ignored. People are regularly injured and killed from using lifting equipment over its capacity.

Lifting equipment must be regularly inspected and tested by a competent person who has the relevant qualifications and experience to identify potential faults. Equipment that is used to lift people must be inspected by a competent person every 6 months under the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.

Talk to your insurer, local agricultural engineer or machinery dealer for specialist assistance.

### **CASE STUDY**

A farmer borrowed a telehandler from a neighbouring farm. Although the vehicle's brakes had recently been serviced, he felt a poor braking response so topped up the brake fluid.

As he drove down a slight hill the brakes failed and the vehicle started to run away. He jumped from the cab but hit his head as he fell and died from his injuries.

The following investigation found that during the recent service, one of the brake pipes had been left unconnected. Two partners in the farming business were prosecuted, fined and ordered to pay costs for the failures.

Sadly this incident is also thought to have contributed to the later suicide of a partner in the farming business who had lent out the vehicle.

## **On the road**

Specific legislation applies to vehicles travelling on

## Make the most of your mobile phone

Keep your mobile phone in reach at all times in case of emergency but do not use whilst driving.



- Emergency SOS and voice activated features can be invaluable in contacting the emergency services quickly in dangerous and life-threatening situations, as well as automatically alerting pre-selected contacts.

- Set these features up straightaway and learn how to use them – the NFU guide [Phone hacks that could save your life](#) can help you. Contact your mobile provider for help to do this if it's not straight

## CASE STUDY

A 21 year old farmer's son was working alone spreading fertiliser. When loading the fertiliser he left the spreader tractor parked with its engine on and brought the loader tractor up to the spreader. He then got out leaving the engine running without putting the handbrake on properly.

As he went between the machines to slit the fertiliser bag, the loader tractor, which was on a slope, gathered speed and pinned him between the tractor and the spreader. His mobile was in the spreader tractor cab and he could not summon help.

When he failed to return home at the expected time and did not answer his phone, his father and sister went to look for him. They found him dead in the yard crushed between the two tractors.

## CASE STUDY

In Swansea, a worker was crushed to death between a truck and a reversing JCB. The employer had asked the driver of the JCB to reverse the vehicle into a workshop, but he did not assist with the backing up of the machine, despite being in a position to do so.

The company was prosecuted, fined and ordered to pay costs for not having a safe system of work for reversing machinery into the workshop.

## CASE STUDY

An employee was unloading pallets when he was hit by a moving forklift truck. The worker received extensive internal injuries including damage to his spleen, which had to be surgically removed.

The company was prosecuted, fined and required to pay costs for not having a safe system of work to control vehicle movements on site.

One of the directors of the company was given a further fine for failing to provide an adequate health and safety system.

## Safe site

Every year people die from being run over in farm yards. Many of these accidents involve older people and semi-retired farmers who fall and cannot move out of the way quickly enough and tragically children, who may not anticipate what a vehicle will do next.

Children are naturally curious and farms are an inviting place to play and explore. They do not understand the potential dangers in farm yards. With modern cabs, you may not be aware they are there until it is too late. Keep children away from the work place. Young children should enjoy outdoor space in a secure fenced area.

Make sure everyone working on the farm stops operations if children appear and ensures they are relocated to a safe, secure area. Children should only enter the farm workplace for education or experience purposes when under close supervision of an adult not engaged in work activities.

Prevent accidents with pedestrians by creating separate routes for pedestrians and vehicles. This is particularly important for delivery drivers and sales reps that may not be familiar with your machinery movements.

Improve visibility on the farm by using reversing cameras and request that all workers and visitors to the farm wear hi-vis clothing at all times.

Think about general site visibility and how you can improve safety with lights and signs.

Visiting drivers should be made aware of things like where to park and if there are one-way systems in operation. Signs can help with this, as well as issuing clear delivery instructions when ordering products.



## **Safe ATVs**

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) such as quad bikes have been involved in many serious incidents.

**Head injuries are the most common cause**

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

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