



# agriSAFETYculture NEWS

## YOUR SAFETY YOUR WAY

Ag Safe Alberta is an agriculture based safety organization that is results-oriented, accountable and transparent to our stakeholders with focus on continuous improvement and best practices.

The overall goal of Ag Safe Alberta is to empower farmers and ranchers to integrate practical safety management programs into their everyday operations, in order to prevent illness and injury for everyone involved on the farm.



Volume 2 Issue 1 April 2018

## SPRING LAUNCH OF AG SAFE ALBERTA SOCIETY

Ag Safe Alberta Society celebrated Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW) by announcing the official launch of the producer-led farm safety organization, Ag Safe Alberta Society.

“Keeping everyone safe and productive as we operate our farms is a daily priority. The recent establishment of the Ag Safe Alberta Society represents a milestone achievement demonstrating the commitment of Alberta’s farmers and ranchers, to enhance the culture, awareness and practice of farm safety on ranches and farms across the province,” says Kent Erickson, Ag Safe Alberta Society (ASAS) Chair.

The Alberta crop and livestock sector-driven farm safety organization, Ag Safe Alberta, has been engaged in delivering practical safety and risk management solutions to farms and ranches around Alberta for the past year. The goal is to enable farm businesses to establish practical farm safety programs that are integrated into the farm business and that will enhance the safety culture on the farm. Erickson says it is important to acknowledge the overall intent of any farm safety program is to simply prevent incidents, and serious or fatal injuries.

Though farm safety week is only 7 days of the year, farm safety is important all year around. Ag Safe Alberta Society endeavors to establish and implement, appropriate, practical safety and health training and education programs and resources for farmers, farm families and persons employed in the agricultural sector.

Most agricultural operations have some degree of safety measures in place but many have not been formalized. Ag Safe Alberta has tools, resources and services available to assist producers in formalizing safety in their operations. Ag Safe QuickStarts, guide producers to build a plan on their own and are a good starting point for setting up key components for grass-roots farm safety management.

The Ag Safe Alberta website is the place to find e-learning courses, testimonial videos, farm safety planning resources, and the calendar of events for upcoming activities.

The Ag Safe Alberta programs and services provided to date were funded by a Growing Forward 2 grant. As of March 1, 2018, the Ag Safe Alberta Society assumed leadership and direction of Ag Safe activities and services. The board of directors for the Society is comprised of 10 producers representing crop and livestock sectors from across Alberta. Board members and supporting groups are noted on page 4 of this newsletter. Contact Ag Safe Alberta Society Chair, Kent Erickson for more information, [kerickson@agsafeab.ca](mailto:kerickson@agsafeab.ca).



## FARM & RANCH SAFETY TIP

Have you checked your fire extinguishers lately? Be sure to assess the number and location of fire extinguishers. Check your fire extinguishers, and set reminders to check them regularly and replace them if necessary.



# Speaking from Experience...

## Plugged auger trouble

Production was up on Dale's grain farm and having enough storage space was starting to be a concern. Dale was unloading grain into one of his bins and noticed the main pulley quit turning. He thought that the belt was slipping or that the auger was losing power so he decided to grab onto the belt and give it a pull to give it some help driving the auger. The belt grabbed his hand and pulled off a couple of Dale's fingers. It turns out that the bin was full and that is what caused the auger to stall and stop rotating. Dale ended up losing part of 3 fingers in the incident and looks back on what he would have changed if he could relive that split second decision. Since the incident, Dale has installed bin-level indicators on all of his bins. He also suggests, especially when you are working in the busy, high pressure seasons, to stop and think before putting yourself in danger. Do a quick review of what could go wrong and put measures in place to avoid disaster. Dale admits that he was tired and did not put any thought into what could happen when he grabbed the belt. He cannot get his fingers back but can put measures in place to reduce the chance of a similar incident happening again or harming anyone else.



## Simple task leads to life long impact

Marjorie was routinely feeding the cattle the same way she did every day. On this day, while opening the gate to let the animals get to the feed bunks, one cow pushed hard against the metal gate she was holding. She felt the impact and winced, then carried on with the rest of her day. Marjorie never thought much of it but that evening she awoke in throbbing pain and this was the start of a long journey of several surgeries to repair the damage. She spent 27 days in hospital and underwent more than six weeks of physiotherapy to strengthen the injured limbs. Marjorie looks back on the incident and has a few lessons to share, estimating that over the years her incident cost the farm over \$250,000. She advises that farmers and ranchers have to take the lead in their own health care. "Your health is everything, so get yourself properly checked out immediately following any incident – even if the sprain, strain or fall seems minor." She also suggests that everyone on a farm – including farmwomen, children and employees – should be taught the basics in livestock handling. Once a person knows how cattle think and act in certain situations, they are more aware of the safety concerns. Marjorie also advises not to underestimate the vital roles and responsibilities of farm women and their contribution to the farm's operations. It is imperative to protect them.



**Share your story** - if you have a story and lessons learned from an incident that took place on your farm that you are willing to share, your experience may help prevent similar incidents from happening to a fellow farmer.

Please send in your stories to [office@agsafeab.ca](mailto:office@agsafeab.ca)



Most of us have a story to tell about a farm safety incident that happened to us or someone close to us on the farm. One of the most progressive things we can do is share the lessons-learned from the incident. There should be no shame in telling others what we did wrong, or what we would change next time to avoid the incident, as it may prevent someone else from meeting the same fate. Tell your story.



# HAZARD MANAGEMENT ON THE FARM

A hazard is something that has the potential to cause injury or damage. Farms and ranches have a number of high risk activities that create hazardous situations for farmers, farm workers and farm families such as operating equipment and working with unpredictable animals. Managing the hazards is a great way to protect people on the farm from accident, injury or illness.

Producers may have extensive experience working with these hazards every day and often develop a respect for the damage that can be caused. Sometimes we call this experience, “common sense” and our common sense grows and adapts to give us an added layer of protection against the different types of hazards. The question is, how do you take your common sense and transfer that wisdom to another worker on the farm? One way is to set up a hazard management program for your farm and capture that knowledge to be shared.

Planning ahead by establishing a hazard management program may sound like a complicated process but it comes down to identifying hazards or situations that could cause harm to people on the farm and then putting control measures in place to reduce the risk. Four simple steps to hazard management programs:

1. Identify jobs
2. Identify hazards
3. Identify controls
4. Provide training

The first step in a hazard management program is to identify the jobs that represent most of the work being done on the farm. For example; seeding, harvesting, handling livestock, feeding, or barn chores. Once the main job tasks are defined, identify the hazards that might exist within those jobs. Remember, a hazard is something that could cause injury, illness or damage. Examples of hazards during seeding may include muscle strain, fall from heights, entanglement, collision, and fatigue. Examples of hazards when handling livestock could include crush injuries, muscle strain, or animal strikes. Producers who work on the farm, day in and day out are the best people to identify the hazards of highest concern. Ask yourself “what are the issues that I worry may cause harm to someone while working on our farm?”

After the hazards have been identified, determine what can be done to control those hazards. Examples of hazard controls are machine guards, electronic lock-outs, safe job procedures, and personal protective equipment such as safety glasses or hearing protection. In the livestock handling, crush hazard example, control measures could include identifying and placing signage in the crush areas, training staff to identify livestock crush zones, setting up corrals to remove crush areas and using a lock system for gates.

Another essential component of a hazard management program is providing training to everyone who may be impacted by the hazard. Training should describe the hazard and potential consequences of the hazard and then explain the measures that are in place to control the hazard and how to use those hazard controls.

It is also good practice to perform “on-the-go” hazard assessments. For last minute hazard assessments use the STOP-n-THINK concept. Pause before starting a task and consider the hazards that are present and identify what can be done to prevent the hazards from causing harm. Questions you could ask for an on-the-go assessment: Where will I go if I need to escape? What would happen if this equipment was energized? How will I be rescued if something went wrong? Last minute hazard assessments remind the farm worker to pause and think about how to do a job task safely.

The hazard management program is probably the most important aspect of a farm safety management system. The key to a successful hazard management program is to start with manageable components and then let it grow and evolve over time. An effective farm safety management program will contribute to the overall success of the farm business. View the AgSafe Alberta Quickstart Guide for [Hazard Management](#).



## Hazard Management Programs

1. Identify the job
2. Identify the hazards of that job
3. Identify controls for the hazards
4. Provide training



# Ag Safe Alberta Workshops & Extension Activities

Watch for Ag Safe Alberta at these upcoming agricultural events:

- April 4: Red Deer County Farm Safety Seminar
- April 12: MARA Crop Day Fort Vermillion
- April 12: Irma Ag Society farm safety seminar
- April 17: Catalyst Farm Safety update
- April 18: Athabasca County farm safety seminar (Tentative)
- May 9: Feedlot safety seminar Picture Butte

Check out [www.agsafeab.ca](http://www.agsafeab.ca) for finalized times, registration and locations of events.



## Ag Safe Alberta Society Board of Directors

Board Member	Representing
Kent Erickson Ag Safe Chair	Alberta Wheat
Erna Ference Ag Safe Vice Chair	Alberta Chicken Producers Poultry
Hanneke Camps	Potato Growers of Alberta
Martin Bowman	Alberta Pork
Martin van Diemen	Alberta Milk
Martin Zuidhof	Alberta Cattle Feeders Association
Kevin Serfas	Alberta Canola
Tim Vanderhoek	Alberta Pulse
Garth Porteous	Alberta Beef Producers

## Ag Safe Alberta Supporting Organizations

- Alberta Barley Commission
- Alberta Beekeepers Commission
- Alberta Beef Producers
- Alberta Canola Producers Commission
- Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association
- Alberta Chicken Producers
- Alberta Elk Commission
- Alberta Farm Fresh Producers Association
- Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association
- Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association
- Alberta Hatching Egg Producers
- Alberta Lamb Producers
- Alberta Milk
- Alberta Pork Producers
- Alberta Pulse Growers Commission
- Alberta Seed Growers Association
- Alberta Sugar Beet Growers
- Alberta Turkey Producers
- Alberta Vegetable Growers (Processing)
- Alberta Wheat Commission
- Alfalfa Seed Commission
- Bison Producers of Alberta
- Egg Farmers of Alberta
- Forage Network
- Landscape Alberta
- Potato Growers of Alberta



[www.agsafeab.ca](http://www.agsafeab.ca)