The Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture Begins an Extensive Agricultural Research Project in Saskatchewan

On average, sixteen people are killed every year on Saskatchewan farms and 200 people are hospitalized with serious farm-related injuries. Despite the variety of programs that have been implemented, we have not seen a decline in fatal and serious farm injury rates in the past eighteen years.

CCHSA is initiating a research pilot program with the goal of decreasing the occurrence of injury and death. This voluntary program involves health screening, safety assessment, education and incentives within the rural communities that take part. This exciting new pilot program will be set in motion in rural Saskatchewan where farmers will be involved every step of the way, from its inception to the finish. Their participation throughout the research project will ensure the success of the program.

Dr. John Gordon, principle investigator of Certified Safe Farm Saskatchewan states: “The evidence is out there, from programs in Sweden and other countries, that incentive-based programs do reduce accidental death and injury rates on the farm. While pieces of such programs have been developed in many provinces, CCHSA will bring together the Canadian and International architects of these programs to help us develop a broadly-based Canadian approach to a Certified Safe Farm program. We are counting on the Agricultural Health and Safety Network members and SARM to fine-tune this program for Saskatchewan. We are looking to determine (in a large five year study) whether financial incentives will help us to reduce what can only be described as unacceptable death and injury rates in Saskatchewan.”

This is a truly exciting opportunity for Saskatchewan to continue to lead the way in Canada.
WHAT’S HAPPENING AT CCHSA AND THE NETWORK?

The Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan focuses on farm health and safety research. The Agricultural Health and Safety Network is CCHSA’s extension division that delivers resources, programs, and clinics to Saskatchewan farm families. Together with SARM and partnering RMs we are able to carry out many activities throughout the province.

THE CURRENT CANADIAN FARM SAFETY SITUATION WORKSHOP

At the beginning of September, CCHSA brought together representatives from across the country to share their perspectives on a Certified Safe Farm program as well as their abundant experience with existing farm safety programs in their respective provinces.

Also in attendance from Iowa State University was a team from a successful Certified Safe Farm Program that has been running for over ten years. They generously offered their experience and expertise to the group.

The workshop proved successful, and all who attended were able to contribute which gives CCHSA explicit direction, guidance and inspiration to go forward with this program.

SASKATCHEWAN FARM SAFETY CONSULTATION MEETINGS

Earlier in the year, seven consultation meetings were held across the province. The Network, the Steering Committee and other partners assisted CCHSA in organizing these meetings.

The purpose in gathering Saskatchewan producers was to involve them in the early stages of designing the best farm safety intervention for Saskatchewan farm families. Their contributions to these meetings are highly valued and assist CCHSA with developing a research program that will develop an effective intervention in reducing injuries, illnesses and fatalities related to agricultural production. Participants expressed their views on the important elements of the program including health screenings, safety assessments, action plans, incentives, buy-in and recruitment.

It is expected that farmers will continue to be part of the Certified Safe Farm project as it develops. Watch for further updates on the CSF project in future issues of the Network News.

HEARING CONSERVATION AND RESPIRATORY HEALTH CLINICS

The Agricultural Health and Safety Network provides Hearing Conservation Clinics and Respiratory Health Clinics to Network member RMs throughout rural Saskatchewan. The purpose of the hearing clinic is to test farmers’ hearing and provide education about how to best protect hearing when exposed to noise hazards on the farm. The purpose of a respiratory clinic is to test farmers’ lung functioning and provide education about how to protect the lungs when exposed to hazards on the farm.

If you are interested in attending a clinic contact your local RM to request a clinic in your community. If you would like health and safety resources on either of these topics, call the Network at (306) 966-6644.
WHAT IS THE H1N1 FLU VIRUS?

H1N1 Flu Virus has been reported around the world, and the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared it a pandemic influenza virus. H1N1, sometimes called swine flu or swine influenza, is a strain of the influenza virus that usually affects pigs, but which may also make people sick.

H1N1 Flu Virus is a respiratory illness that causes symptoms similar to those of the regular human seasonal flu. Symptoms include: fever, fatigue, lack of appetite, coughing and sore throat. Some people with H1N1 Flu Virus have also reported vomiting and diarrhea.

Different strains of influenza are commonly circulating in our environment, including strains that can cause illness in humans, birds and pigs. Sometimes, humans and animals can pass strains of flu back and forth to one another through direct close contact such as in pig production barns and livestock exhibits at fairs. When a swine influenza virus does affect a human, there is also a risk that the animal influenza can mutate and then spread directly between humans.

Recommendations to avoid influenza:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitizer
- Get an annual flu shot
- Cough and sneeze in your arm or sleeve
- Keep doing what you normally do, but stay home if sick
- Check for travel notices and advisories

IS THE H1N1 FLU VIRUS CONTAGIOUS?

H1N1 virus is contagious. Most people that have become ill have not been in direct contact with pigs and the Public Health Agency of Canada states that the virus has spread from person to person. Influenza and respiratory infections are transmitted from person to person when germs enter the nose and or throat. Coughs and sneezes release germs into the air where they can be breathed in by others. Germs can also rest on hard surfaces like counters and doorknobs, where they can be picked up on hands and transmitted to the respiratory system when someone touches their mouth and/or nose.

WHY ARE PEOPLE CONCERNED ABOUT H1N1?

The strain of H1N1 Flu Virus is a new, or novel, influenza virus. Since this is a new strain, people will likely have no natural immunity to protect against the virus. International experts are concerned that this strain could spread quickly.

VACCINATION FOR H1N1

Vaccines are the primary means to prevent illness and death from influenza. A vaccine is any preparation intended to produce immunity to a disease by stimulating the production of antibodies. The vaccine stimulates the production of antibodies against the flu virus components included in the vaccine, providing immunity against the virus.

A new pandemic vaccine will be available to all Canadians who need and want to receive it.

The Public Health Agency of Canada plans to have a vaccine ready for clinical trials by late September or early October, and to begin immunization in November.

For more information:

www.fightflue.ca
www.hc-sc.gc.ca
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca

This information has been adapted from the Public Health Agency of Canada.
"Our children are the most important resource on the farm."

**Rural Safety for Children**

**GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS**

Unintentional injuries can happen when parents and children underestimate the level of risk and hazards associated with a task and mistake age and size for ability. The North American Guidelines for Children’s Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) was developed at the request of members of the farm community.

The basis for these guidelines is to provide parents with a tool that will assist them in assigning safe farm jobs to children 7 to 16 years. Children can be assessed from a physical and cognitive perspective and recommendations are made for the supervision required and safety tips.

For the North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks go to Safe Kids Canada website resource list: www.safekidscanada.ca

Designing a safe play area for young children on the farm can be challenging. For a resource on creating Safe Play Spaces go to: National Children's Centre for Rural Safety and Health: www.marshfieldclinic.org/research/children/safePlay

The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) supports Progressive Agricultural Safety Days in Canada.

This is a hands-on, fun, and educational program that helps children across Canada learn about dangers and potential deadly outcomes of unsafe behaviour on the farm.

Safety days are organized locally which allows each community to meet the needs of their area. There is year round support and each coordinator is provided with training on how to organize a Safety Day.

In 2009 there were 58 Safety Days across Canada. While the basic program reaches children ages 8-13, safety days may also be organized for 4 – 7 year olds or even entire families.

“The mission of the Progressive Agriculture Safety Days is simple - to make farm and ranch life safer and healthier for all children through education and training.”

If you are interested in a safety day in your area, go to the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association and click on Progressive Agriculture Safety Days. www.casa-acsa.ca

**Fatal Farm Injuries to Children in Saskatchewan**

According to the Canadian Agricultural Injury Surveillance Program (CAISP):

- Between 1990 and 2007 machinery related injury events accounted for 83% of deaths among children 14 years of age and younger in Saskatchewan.
- Extra rider events and bystander runovers caused 48.2% of deaths.
- The leading mechanism of injury in this group was being run over by a farm machine.
- Of those killed in runover events, 71% were 1 – 4 years old.

Most young children are injured when they are brought into the farm work area while someone else is engaged in farm work.
I'm reading the same files repeatedly. Another child crushed in a tractor runover, the same story of a drowning, and same mom or dad who was minding the kids while they got a few chores done, and 'just turned their head for a moment.' And from the coroners and police: "a freak accident within a well known family . . . so tragic . . . couldn't be helped . . . no inquest or inquiry, the family has already suffered enough." I begin to feel torn up inside. I think of my own young children. To cope, I become clinical and rather analytical in my approach. There is no more pain and anguish, only check boxes, text descriptions, cross-tabulations, and recommendations. Then I feel even more guilt. These dead children are becoming numbers. The stories that I am re-living, including the forensic pictures, are all so horrible. There is so much grief. My eyes well up. I find that I am angry, but am not sure at whom – at farm parents who expose their children to risks, at a rural society that appears to accept these tragedies as part of their fate, at the coroners and health and safety professionals that have yet to challenge the status quo. This is no longer and academic exercise. Something must change.

William Pickett, PhD, Professor of Epidemiology, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Robert J. Brison, MD, M PH, Professor of Emergency Medicine, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Barbara Marlenga, PhD, Research Scientist, Marshfield Medical Research Foundation, Marshfield, Wisconsin.
“HOLY SMOKES! MAYBE I’M DYING HERE!”

“60% of Canadian farmers work alone where assistance is not readily available in the event of injury, illness or emergency”
~Canadian Agricultural Injury Surveillance Program

“I remember like it was yesterday. The freezing rain was stinging my face and I was lying there in the mud - so cold - with the horses sniffing and milling around above me. I could feel a painful heat and numbness rising up my body from my legs - like boiling water. All I could think was, ‘Holy smokes! Maybe I’m dying here!’”

These are the words of Edwin Taylor of Grand Valley, Ontario, a survivor of a horrific farm incident that changed his life and his family’s in an instant.

Ed is not alone. On average, at least 1,500 people are hospitalized and 113 are killed in farm-related incidents in Canada each year, according to the Canadian Agricultural Injury Surveillance Program.

In 2006, Statistics Canada notes that almost 14 thousand Canadian farms reported one or more medically treated or lost time injuries. The Census of Agriculture 2001 shows the most frequent causes of farm-related injuries include unsafe use of equipment or material-handling practices, followed by fatigue, trying to save time and miscommunication between workers.

Ed was lying there in the mud, unable to move.
“Holy smokes! Maybe I’m dying here!” continued Ed.

Ed of his Standardbred and Thoroughbred winners. Ed has since sold his horse breeding business and is concentrating on the cash crops along with several racehorses.

“I think we farmers get so used to the reality and dangers of farm life that we get complacent and careless,” says Ed. “It’s a hell of a lesson to have to learn the hard way.”


by Theresa Whalen-Ruiter, CFA Farm Safety Coordinator

Mandate: “To promote farm safety and to provide services, practical information and support to farmers and their families to help them adjust and continue farming with a disability”

History of Farmers with Disabilities
When farmers are affected by injuries, illness or changing health and are faced with some hard questions. Do I keep farming or not? If I do, how am I going to manage?

The Farmers with Disabilities program began in 1985 to help answer these questions, and provide support for farmers with disabilities who want to stay on the land. Through the program, farmers across Saskatchewan have formed a network they can rely on for advice and support. Injured farmers and farmers with disabling health conditions can talk with others who have experienced the same challenge. Farmers have trouble adapting their equipment for their disability can draw on the network for ideas.

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES:
Visitation - a newly disabled farmer is visited in the hospital by a volunteer farmer who is experienced in farming with a similar disability. The volunteer can answer questions, share experiences and practical information, and give encouragement.

Assistive Technology Resource – Information on assistive technology that the farmers use in their daily living and in their farming. Much of the information on modifications to machinery, the house, shop and other farm buildings and the farmyard is available on the Council website at www.abilitiescouncil.sk.ca.

HANDIFARMER Newsletter – Three issues are produced annually. The newsletter features a success story, information on upcoming events, and articles on assistive technology and farm health and safety.

Farm Safety and Accident Prevention Promotion:
• Interviews granted the media
• HANDIFARMER newsletter
• Displays at farm shows and health fairs
• Farm safety presentations given to school children and adults
• Cooperation with agencies, organizations and companies that promote safety

For more information on Farmers with Disabilities:
Bill Thibodeau, Program Coordinator
Phone: (306) 374-4448
Fax: (306) 373-2665
Email: farmerswithdisabilities@abilitiescouncil.sk.ca

WHEN WORKING ALONE REMEMBER:
• To use cell phones, radio, and written notes to maintain contact.
• To keep your cell phone or radio close within reach.
• Emergency and local contact phone numbers – program them into your phone for speed dialing.
• To let someone know what you are doing, where you are going, how you will get there and when you will be back.
• A buddy system – checking in can work both ways. Have a person check on you periodically with a phone call or a short visit.
• To have contact with someone who will come and look for you if you do not return as expected.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT . . .
Cell phones may lose their signal or may not always be accessible in an emergency. Having personal contact is critical to ensure someone will follow up if you do not check in as expected.

THE FARMERS WITH DISABILITIES PROGRAM OF THE SASKATCHEWAN ABILITIES COUNCIL

The Farmers with Disabilities Program of the Saskatchewan Abilities Council is pleased to present a free Peer Mentoring Workshop

Date: November 12, 2009
Time: 2:00 – 6:00 (including supper)
Place: 2310 Louise Avenue, Saskatoon, SK

The guest speaker, Colleen Stewart, Mentorship Consultant, will speak about the benefits and challenges of peer mentorship. There will be time for informal networking and fellowship. All participants are invited to stay for supper, at no charge, immediately following the workshop.

Please confirm your attendance before October 13, 2009:
Contact: Bill Thibodeau (306) 374-4448
bthibodeau@abilitiescouncil.sk.ca

Farmer's with Disabilities at the Farm Progress Show 2009
Bill Thibodeau and Mr. Bernard Querry
SARM Scholarship

RM OF EYEBROW NO. 193 STUDENT AWARDED SARM SCHOLARSHIP

“I have lived here my whole life; we have many safe and special memories here. I have learned about safety, responsibility and above all good work ethic. It is important that our farm serves not only as a workplace but as a safe and happy home.”

Courtney Cave

2009 SARM Scholarship Winner

Courtney Cave, from the RM of Eyebrow No. 193 is this year’s winner of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities 90th Anniversary $1000 Student Scholarship in Agricultural Safety and Rural Health.

Courtney’s essay focuses on the hazardous and demanding business of farming. She discusses how safety must come first when working on a farm and that injuries can be prevented by identifying hazards.

Scholarship Eligibility

Have you completed the last two years of high school in Saskatchewan?

Are you . . .
• Enrolled in Grade 12 for the 2009-2010 school year?
• Planning on studying at a post secondary school in the fall of 2010?

Do you . . .
• Have a farming background?
• Have parents or guardians who pay taxes to a RM?
• Live in a rural area?

YES! GREAT!
• Download an application form from http://www.cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/ahsn/scholarships.php or get one from your RM office.
• Write a 1,000 word essay on The Importance of Safety and Health on Our Farm or Safety and Health Hazards on Our Farm.
• Send your application and essay to: Sueli de Freitas, Public Relations Coordinator, Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture, Box 120, Royal University Hospital, 103 Hospital Drive, Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W8

Deadline: Post marked no later than Friday, February 5, 2010.

Welcome New Network Members!
The Network continues to grow as RMs recognize safe and healthy ratepayers are their most valuable asset. We welcome the RM of Glen Bain No. 105, the RM of Caron No. 162, the RM of Grassy Creek No. 78, the RM of St. Louis No. 431, the RM of Big Arm No. 251, the RM of Weyburn No. 67, RM of Brokenshell No. 68, the RM of Montmartre No. 126, the RM of Caledonia No. 99, the RM of Francis No. 127, the RM of Kellross No. 247, and the RM of Fillmore No. 96.

Farm Stress Line: 1-800-667-4442 Monday to Saturday 8 A.M. to 9 P.M.
The farm stress line is a confidential peer counseling service responding to the needs of farm families. When you call you will talk to people who understand farming—men and women who have experienced the pressures of farming today. They are there to help you explore options and connect you with programs and services so you are better able to address problems and make choices.

Did you know about Making Connections?The Connections Services Directory is a directory accessed through the internet at www.agr.gov.sk.ca/connection providing information and links to government agencies, programs, volunteer organizations and their programs and services. Making Connections: 1-866-680-0006

Moved? Retired? Not Farming?
To remove your name from our mailing list call (306) 966-6644 or contact the editors.

Need more information?
There are a variety of resources available on line at: aghealthandsafetynetwork.usask.ca

Thank You!
Saskatchewan Agriculture for supporting Network News.

From the Editors
Send your ideas, comments and suggestions to:

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Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture
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Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W8
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