WHAT IS YOUR FARM'S SAFETY STORY?

By Jody Wacowich, Executive Director, AgSafe Alberta

"Each and every day you are writing a story, whether that story turns out to be a Greek tragedy or one that you will be proud to share with your kids, your family, and others, is entirely dependent on the actions that you have been taking and will continue to take," said Chris Spasoff, OHS Lawyer, in the webinar *Contracting Ag Services in the Age of Tractors, Contractors, and Tik-Tok*, available at www.agsafeabseed.ca

When an incident occurs, the question is not whether you did something wrong but what you did right. So, what have you done on your farm lately, for your safety story?

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Changes in December 2021
In December 2021 there were changes to OHS legislation. A couple of important things to note from those changes include: The Farm and Ranch Exemption was removed for one piece of Code. Farms and ranches with 5-19 employees are required to have a health and safety representative (HSR) and farms and ranches with 20 or more are required to have a committee (HSC). See what's new for information on training for this requirement.

The legislation around Potentially Serious Incidents (PSI's) was also changed in efforts to make it clearer what they are and how to report them. The definition of a PSI is:

- *the incident had a likelihood of causing a serious injury or illness, and*
- *there is reasonable cause to believe that corrective action may need to be taken to prevent recurrence.*

This applies to workers, and it could include others at the worksite if it resulted from work activities. OHS recently had stepped up their review of these reports and we have received calls from farms who received letters asking them to review if a recent WCB claim should have also been reported as a PSI. Please feel free to reach out to us for support if you receive one of these.

Farm Safety Statistics
I thought it might be interesting to share a few of the numbers we see on farm safety here in Alberta. The first three charts are collected from the Hay/Grain/Crop category from WCB (note they were printed in early January 2022, hence no numbers are in those columns). It is interesting to note the costs of these injuries and the numbers of days lost to them. Falls have been the incident that injures most of the workers on these types of farms, so it's a great time to look at your farm story and see what can be done better.

Total Claims

Accident Year	Number of Claims	Claim Costs	Number of LTCs	Total LTC Costs	TTD Days	Modified Work Ever Performed Claims	Medical Aid Claims	Disabling Injury Claims
2017	137	$782,904	53	$712,633	2,360	42	84	66
2018	155	$694,667	65	$604,197	2,218	44	90	77
2019	144	$1,700,287	60	$1,618,590	2,564	41	84	74
2020	108	$1,864,028	52	$1,800,358	2,485	45	56	65
2021	113	$628,129	58	$581,825	1,943	41	55	71
2022 YTD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Type of Accident

Top 5 by Total LTCs

Type of Accident	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 YTD	Totals
Falls	15	11	17	11	8	0	62
Struck by Object	12	13	8	8	14	0	55
Contact with Objects and Equipment	10	15	11	11	6	0	53
Highway/Non-Highway M.V. Accident	4	7	6	6	6	0	29
Bodily Reaction and Exertion	5	4	6	3	6	0	24

Part of Body

Top 5 by Total LTCs

Part of Body	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 YTD	Totals
Foot(Feet)/Ank(s)/Toe(s)	8	9	9	7	17	0	50
Fingers	9	10	6	6	5	0	36
Trunk	7	11	7	4	3	0	32
Back	3	5	6	7	6	0	27
Hand(s)/Wrist(s)	8	5	4	5	5	0	27

What's New

AgSafe Alberta is here to support you and your farm safety story. We have resources, a team of advisors and 1-833-924-7233, for you to call to get your questions answered or to get support from us with an OHS visit. We have also recently launched an online learning platform and courses on it include HSR and HSC training to help with the new legislative requirements noted above. There is also a WHMIS course and recordings of our webinar series, and our farm safety program modules. It also contains our new FARMERS CARE program, aimed at helping farms get their safety stories started in a simple and practical way. This program works well for family farms too!

Get started on making your safety story a good one, we are here to help.