

# Safety on farms

## A shared responsibility



Industry guidance for farmers, growers, drivers, contractors  
and other commercial visitors



FREIGHT TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION



## Introduction

Deaths and injuries on farms are a serious problem – for the employer, employees, contractors and visitors. On average, 52 people die in agricultural accidents each year, whilst over 2000 people suffer non-fatal injuries.

This leaflet is aimed at farmers and growers, people who periodically work on farms, drivers who collect and deliver farm goods and others making commercial visits to farms. It emphasises the need for a shared responsibility, by the farmer and the visitor. It also describes practical measures to help prevent accidents.

This guidance has been produced in consultation with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), organisations representing farmers and growers, agricultural supply companies and agricultural contractors. Following the guidance below will assist in preventing harm to all people on farms.

## Managing safety on farms – assessing the risk

A hazard is defined as something with the potential to cause harm, for example a substance, machine, piece of equipment or a situation, such as working at heights.

A risk is the likelihood that a hazard will cause harm and its level of severity in actual circumstances, such as the number of people that could be affected.

For example, a crop protection product is a hazard, however, the risk of a crop protection product causing harm can be reduced by locking it in a secure pesticide store.

Hazards and risks can be reduced through effective risk assessment. Risk assessment is an evaluation of the chance that harm will occur. The object of any risk assessment is to prevent loss, whether this loss is due to injury or damage.

The aim of the risk assessment is to identify the hazards to employees and others, to consider the likelihood that the hazard will cause harm and to enable all parties to plan, introduce and monitor preventative measures to ensure that risks are controlled at all times.

All employees, contractors and visitors have a duty to take care of themselves and others and to co-operate with the employer. They should ensure compliance with the workplace health and safety policy to enable the business to carry out their statutory duties.

The following list will assist employers in carrying out their risk assessment, a legal requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Advice about compiling a risk assessment is available from the HSE - contact details are contained in the Further Guidance section of this document.

# Hazard/risk and potential practical control measures

## ACCESS AND EGRESS

- Move gates to a position that gives better visibility.
- Gates should be recessed to allow a lorry, tractor or trailer to pull in before opening.
- Manage hedges or trees to improve visibility, access and egress.
- Exchange specific route information.

## OVERHEAD POWER LINES (OHPLs)



- Tipping, loading and unloading areas should be at a safe distance from any OHPLs.
- Where possible re-site the tipping, loading and unloading areas away from OHPLs.
- Where tipping, loading and unloading areas cannot be re-sited, arrange to have OHPLs diverted or buried (consult with the owners of the OHPLs).
- Consider providing visitors with a map of the farm indicating the position and height of any OHPLs.
- Consider erecting barriers to prevent vehicles encroaching too near OHPLs (eg placing goalposts either side of the cable, indicating a safe height).
- Erect clear warning signs setting out maximum permissible heights of vehicles working near or under any OHPL.
- If a trailer comes into contact with a power cable, leave the vehicle by jumping clear. Do not make contact with the ground and the vehicle at the same time, as this would complete the electrical circuit. Prevent anyone else from coming into contact with the vehicle while it is touching any power cable.

## LIGHTING

- Where appropriate, improve lighting or re-schedule delivery or collection times.

## LADDERS, STEPS, FLOORS, PARTICULARLY LOFTS AND CATWALKS

- You should ensure all areas and equipment are safe, stable and secure.
- Visitors should not place themselves in any situation where their health and safety may be at risk.

## PIPES AND FITTINGS

- Pipes and fittings should be regularly inspected and maintained.
- All parties should monitor conditions and communicate any changes as they occur.

## BULK BINS (EG STATIC SHOCK FROM UNEARTHED BINS) AND MECHANICAL HANDLING FACILITIES

- Provide effective electrical bonding and earth all metallic bulk bins and associated metallic structures.

## DUSTS OR VAPOURS (EG GRAIN DUST)

- Avoid contact in the first instance.
- If this is not possible, ensure the use of adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Ensure there is no ignition source near grain stores or loading and unloading areas.

## MANUAL HANDLING (EG BAGS AND BOXES)

- Where practicable, avoid manual handling by using machinery and equipment (eg forklifts).
- Ensure adequate vehicle access and egress to delivery points.
- Ensure appropriate training.

## CHILDREN

- Segregate children from potentially dangerous activities, including moving and working vehicles and equipment.
- Supervise children.
- Children should not ride in vehicle cabs.
- Never assume children are not in the vicinity.

# Hazard/risk and potential practical control measures

## VEHICLE MOVEMENTS

- Segregate pedestrians from vehicle movement areas, (especially children).
- Minimise reversing or consider use of reversing aids, such as mounted mirrors, banksman or reversing alarms.
- Consider enlarging yard or introducing a one-way system.
- Make sure surfaces are suitable for the vehicles used.
- Minimise blind spots (eg use mounted mirrors).

## OBSTACLES IN THE WORKING AREA (EG MACHINERY)

- Ensure all working areas are clear and unobstructed.

## ANIMALS (INCLUDING PETS)

- Ensure they are kept under control at all times.

## MACHINERY (EG CONVEYORS)

- Ensure all machinery is guarded appropriately and that equipment is regularly inspected and maintained.
- Ensure all people expected to use machinery have had the appropriate instruction.

## WORKING AT HEIGHTS

- Avoid climbing on vehicles or their loads where practicable.
- Where practical, lorries should be fitted with automatic remotely operated sheeting devices, which avoid the need for anyone to climb onto the vehicle or its load.
- If it is essential to climb onto the vehicle or its load, a safe system should be used to prevent falls (eg sheeting, gantries).

## LOAD SECURITY

- Lorries and trailers to have effective fixings (refer to DTLR publication, *Safety of loads on vehicles*).

## DELIVERY OR COLLECTION INFORMATION (EG TIMINGS)

- Ensure appropriate liaison between farmer or grower and visitor.

## OTHER WORK ACTIVITIES IN PROGRESS ON SITE

- Keep work activities and visitors separate if either group is at risk from the other's activities.

## SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

- Where possible, provide a clean and even surface with adequate drainage and lighting.
- Ensure that spills, ice, snow or any other obstacles are cleared.

## FIRE

- Where appropriate, provide equipment, signs and means of escape and ensure visitors are given all appropriate safety information.

## FERTILISER (INTERMEDIATE BULK CONTAINERS)

- Provide suitable offloading equipment.
- Ensure drivers are given appropriate training in offloading techniques.
- Never stand under raised bags.

## OVERLOADING

- Know your vehicle.
- Establish weights of loads in advance.
- Be aware of and use the nearest weighbridge.



# Liaison and essential precautions

Effective liaison between the farmer or grower and visitor is essential if accidents are to be prevented. Listed below are the things you need to do in advance of any visit:

| ACTION  | BY WHOM                  |
|---|--------------------------|
| ■ Provide a risk assessment, as appropriate.  | Farmer, grower, visitor. |
| ■ Discuss and agree arrangements and time for delivery or collection, for example, access and egress routes and any particular hazards, especially for first time visits. | Farmer, grower, visitor. |
| ■ Ensure access and egress is adequate for lorry and machinery types and sizes.   | Farmer, grower, visitor. |
| ■ Drivers need to be made aware of OHPLs.   | Farmer, grower.          |
| ■ Give specific site instructions and if necessary, provide a site map.   | Farmer, grower.          |
| ■ Provide all appropriate contact telephone numbers.  | Farmer, grower, visitor. |
| ■ Provide and use only well maintained equipment.   | Farmer, grower.          |
| ■ Provide a suitable loading and unloading area.  | Farmer, grower, visitor. |
| ■ Ensure a safe parking area is available for all machinery.  | Farmer, grower.          |

# Help and Advice

## GENERAL GUIDANCE

General guidance can be obtained from the organisations responsible for the preparation of this leaflet:

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| BAGMA  | Tel: 01923 720241<br>Website: <a href="http://www.bagma.com">www.bagma.com</a>          |
| FTA    | Tel: 01892 526171<br>Website: <a href="http://www.fta.co.uk">www.fta.co.uk</a>          |
| HSE    | Tel: 08701 545500<br>Website: <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a>        |
| NAAC   | Tel: 01733 362920<br>Website: <a href="http://www.naac.co.uk">www.naac.co.uk</a>        |
| NFU    | Tel: 0870 845 8458<br>Website: <a href="http://www.nfu.org.uk">www.nfu.org.uk</a>       |
| NFUS   | Tel: 0131 472 4000<br>Website: <a href="http://www.nfus.org.uk">www.nfus.org.uk</a>     |
| RHA    | Tel: 01932 841515<br>Website: <a href="http://www.rha.net">www.rha.net</a>              |
| UKASTA | Tel: 020 7930 3611<br>Website: <a href="http://www.ukasta.org.uk">www.ukasta.org.uk</a> |

## LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

The guidance and advice in this leaflet is supported by relevant health and safety legislation, namely:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH)
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997

## FURTHER GUIDANCE

From the HSE:

- *Avoidance of danger from overhead electric power lines* (GS6 ISBN 0 7176 1348 8)
- *Workplace transport safety* (HSG136 ISBN 0 7176 0935 9)
- *Sheeting and unsheeting of tipper lorries* (HSG148 ISBN 0 7176 0888 3)
- *Managing vehicle safety at the workplace* (INDG199)
- *Five steps to risk assessment* (INDG163)
- *Farmwise: Your essential guide to health and safety* (MISC165)
- *Reversing vehicles* (INDG148)
- *Keep children safe on the farm* (INDG340)

Available from:

HSE Books  
PO Box 1999  
Sudbury  
Suffolk  
CO10 2WA

Website: [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk)  
Tel: 01787 881165  
Fax: 01787 313995

From the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR):

- *Safety of loads on vehicles* (ISBN 011 550666 7)

DTLR  
Publications Sales Centre  
Cambertown House  
Goldthorpe Industrial Estate  
Goldthorpe  
Rotherham  
S63 9BL

Email: [dtlr@cambertown.com](mailto:dtlr@cambertown.com)  
Tel: 01709 889499

# Farm visitors information sheet and checklist

*To be completed by the farmer or grower*

Company name .....

Farm or unit name and address .....

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Contact person/s name and telephone number .....

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Ordnance survey map reference .....

Directions of best route .....

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Other useful contacts:

Vet .....

Water company .....

Electricity supply company .....

Environment agency .....

HSE .....

Emergency services.....

Others .....

.....

## Please check that you have...

- Provided a copy of the completed appropriate risk assessment or relevant safety information to the supplier, contractor or visitor
- Provided an appropriate loading and unloading area and equipment, including adequate vehicle access and, if possible, room to manoeuvre vehicles without reversing
- Discussed and made appropriate arrangements for the visit and particularly, that unsupervised visits have been planned in advance
- If appropriate, provided a map indicating hazards (overleaf), including the location of overhead power lines and areas that should not be accessed
- Discussed and agreed biosecurity measures

Provide a sketch of relevant farm details here:

**Checklist:**

- farm access
- farm office
- turning area or one-way system
- loading or unloading area and equipment
- overhead power lines
- areas out of bounds
- cleaning and disinfecting point
- fire equipment
- first aid box
- pedestrian only areas