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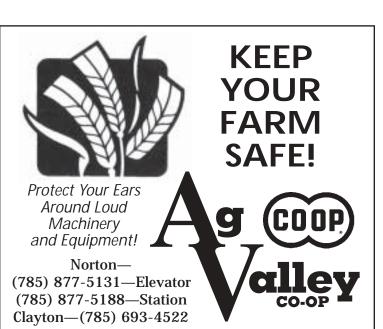
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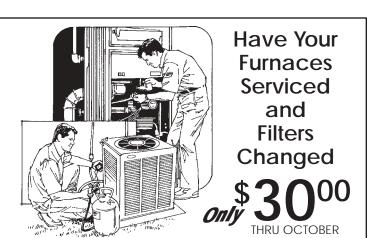
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Harvesting Safety & Health NATIONAL FARM SAFETY E HEALTH WEEK

September 18-24, 2005

National Farm Safety, Health Week Emphasizes Safe Harvest

"Harvesting Safety & Health" is the theme of the 62nd annual observance of National Farm Safety and Health Week, Sept. 18-24, sponsored by the National Safety Council and supported by farm safety advocates across the United States, including Kansas State University Research and Extension.

"The theme for National Farm Safety and Health Week reminds us that harvest season comes with important safety messages," said John Slocombe, K-State Extension farm safety specialist. "Especially important is safety on our rural highways as farm equipment and passengers use the same two lanes. Harvest season generally is a time when we see an increase in collisions between farm equipment and other vehicles."

"These collisions are often the result of the speed differential between slower-moving farm equipment and passenger cars and trucks," Slocombe added. "A highway, the closure distance and time between a vehicle traveling 55 miles per hour and a farm tractor pulling a grain wagon traveling 15 miles per hour is very short. The passenger vehicle driver simply doesn't have enough time to react if they do not recognize the farm

equipment soon enough."

Slocombe reminds farmers to take steps to enhance farm machinery visibility by replacing worn or damaged Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblems and using appropriate lighting and reflective markings. Most tractors and combines are equipped with lighting and markings that make them more visible on the highway.

Passenger vehicle drivers can help too, he said, by acknowledging the fall farming season is busy and often requires large farm implements to be moved on public highways. Drivers in rural areas should always be alert to the possibility of encountering slow moving farm vehicles and be prepared to slow or stop to avoid a rearend collision or striking a farm vehicle turning into a field or driveway.

"Extra patience, careful driving habits, and the use of highly-visible markings and lighting will help prevent farm vehicle collisions as fall harvest season gets underway with the annual observance of Farm Safety Week. Let's all do our part to stay safe," Slocombe said.

The Plain Facts ... About Farmer Health

Farmers are often exposed to toxic gases.

or sudden death. Manure storage and silo gases are often found on farms as the result of manure decomposition or crop storage. These gases can result in asphyxi-chores. ation, irreversible lung damage and lingering respiratory problems.

Farmers and ranchers are often exposed to damaging ultraviolet rays from the sun.

of skin cancer among farmers who work in the sun for prolonged periods without the benefit of protective clothing or sun screens.

Farmers are prone to an increased incidence of

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Research has shown that some farm work may result Toxic gases can result in permanent health problems in permanent joint and ligament injury. These injuries predispose farmers to arthritic conditions which can seriously affect their mobility when performing farm

> Farmers and ranchers are often exposed to damaging noises and sounds.

Farmers and ranchers have increased levels of hearing loss when compared to other occupations. Hearing loss Researchers have documented an increased incidence is prevalent among farmers who are exposed to loud and continuous noise from machinery and equipment which has not been properly maintained or when proper hearing protection is ignored.

Farmers and ranchers are at risk for respiratory dis-

Farmers and ranchers who raise livestock in confinement housing often suffer from Organic Dust Toxic Syndrome (ODTS). These ailments are caused by toxins and dusts in livestock confinement facilities.

Farmers, ranchers and farm workers may be exposed to hazardous agricultural chemicals.

Agricultural pesticides and anhydrous ammonia are among the chemicals which can cause serious acute or chronic health problems. Many agricultural workers fail to wear personal protective equipment when handling agricultural chemicals.

These sponsors want to remind all farmers to be careful not just this week, but every week!



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