

## Agricultural Employer's Resources for Safety<sup>1</sup>

Carol J. Lehtola and Charles M. Brown<sup>2</sup>

As an agricultural employer, you have many concerns: getting supplies in, getting shipments out, prices, equipment failures, dealing with management and workers -- the list could go on. With all these concerns, the very last thing you want or need is an unintentional injury or death in your operation.

Worker health and safety should be your top priority, because no matter how efficient your operation, unintentional injuries and deaths can destroy morale, lower productivity, and expose owners to liabilities and lawsuits. Of course, there's the human cost; you work with these people; you take responsibility for them; some of them are friends and trusted colleagues. The good news is that unintentional injury is more preventable than ever, and accurate, practical safety information is easier to get than ever before.

This fact sheet describes important resources which you can access over the World Wide Web where you can get up-to-date information on every aspect of agricultural safety and health.



### What is NASD?

The National Agricultural Safety Database, or NASD (pronounced "nazz-dee"), is an important resource that can help keep you safe and healthy. NASD is a collection of information about health, safety, and injury prevention in agriculture. It includes more than 2,000 agricultural safety and health publications. The collection includes Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Standards, Extension publications, abstracts and ordering information for ag safety-related videos, and references to research publications from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). NASD also includes materials in Spanish.

NASD is available over the World Wide Web at this address:

- 
1. This document is ABE331, one of a series of the Agricultural and Biological Engineering Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date September 2002. Reviewed February 2008. Visit the EDIS Web Site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
  2. Carol J. Lehtola, associate professor and Extension safety specialist, and Charles M. Brown, coordinator information/publication services, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A. & M. University Cooperative Extension Program, and Boards of County Commissioners Cooperating. Larry Arrington, Dean

<http://www.cdc.gov/nasd/>

Read the materials on-line, or print them out to read at your convenience. Everything in NASD is contributed and reviewed by safety specialists. NASD is supported by both the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Safety Program.

## Identify Hazards and Learn Safe Practices

You know your agricultural enterprise and its operations better than anyone else. Yet, even the most common agricultural operations have their hazards. You can use NASD to become better informed about these hazards, and to inform others that work for and with you.

NASD isn't just a resource for publications; it can also lead to you to dozens of organizations dedicated to your health and safety, including:

- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)
- United States Department of Agriculture
- NIOSH Regional Centers for Agricultural Safety and Health
- Numerous State Extension Agricultural Safety Programs

## FLAGSAFE

No, it has nothing to do with flags! It's the **FL**orida **AG**ricultural **SAFE**ty Network.

Flagsafe is the Web site for the Florida Extension Agricultural Safety Program. On this site, you'll find many useful publications, and links to even more resources. Find safety-related materials for: Buildings -- Chemicals -- Children -- Crops -- Electrical -- Emergency -- Resources -- Employees -- Health -- Livestock -- Management -- OSHA -- Tractors, Equipment & Machinery -- And more...

Flagsafe also has links to other excellent state Extension safety Web sites.

## The #1 Cause of Farm Fatalities

Make a special note of this: The #1 agent in unintentional death on the farm is the tractor.

Tractors: They are the modern workhorses on the farm. Modern farming would be impossible without them. They are cared for and worked with day-in, day-out. A tractor can become a trusted ally. But a tractor is a machine, and like all machines it doesn't care who you are or what it cuts!

Inform yourself about tractor safety with our Safer Tractor Operations series of publications. Start with "Safer Tractor Operations for Agricultural Employers." Access this publication and others in the series over the World Wide Web at:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE196>

This publication also includes an operator checklist, training requirements for OSHA compliance, and info on having a successful tractor safety program for your employees.

Keep this in mind: no matter how long someone has been driving tractors: it's not a question of knowing what's safe, it's a question of doing it.

## NAGCAT

Depending on your operation, you may have young teenagers working alongside adults. You should be aware that teenagers vary widely in their physical, emotional and mental abilities. The North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) can give you some guidance about the proper tasks for teenagers of different ages. NAGCAT covers youth up to age 16. Just a reminder: Be aware that the Federal Labor Standards Act requires that individuals operating a tractor with more than 20 PTO horsepower must be at least 16 years old except under special, very limited circumstances.

The North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) were developed to

help you know what to expect from youth at different ages. The guidelines show the hazards of various tasks and how youth can do those tasks safely. NAGCAT can be found through NASD, or access the guidelines directly at:

<http://www.nagcat.org>

Learn more about NAGCAT guidelines through Florida Extension publication, "Protecting Children on the Farm: The North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT)." Access it over the World Wide Web at:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE168>

### **It's Rarely an "Accident"**

Injuries and deaths on farms rarely result from accidents. So, are people intentionally hurting and killing themselves? No. But most injuries and deaths on farms result from unintentional and completely preventable causes.

The word "accident" suggests that mishaps are caused by forces entirely beyond our control. On the farm, this is rarely true. A ladder patched one too many times -- a seat belt not fastened -- transporting workers to the field on a tractor fender -- when these situations lead to death, it's no "accident." Hurting someone intentionally is different than knowing you could have prevented an injury or death, but the result is the same.

Thousands of farmers are injured or killed every year in preventable incidents. Agriculture remains one of the most dangerous occupations in America, when it could be one of the safest because the vast majority of injuries and deaths in agriculture are preventable. The next time you read about someone being killed or injured on a farm, ask yourself, "Was it really an accident?"

### **A Reminder**

Not every agricultural injury or death can be prevented, but getting good information and turning it into safer practices can go a long way. You work hard to make your agricultural operation pay. Work safely, so that when the time comes you can sit back and enjoy it.

***Be Aware!***

***Be Alert!***

***Be Alive!***

**Be Aware!**  
**Be Alert!**  
**Be Alive!**

*Safety Resources for Ag Owner/Operators*

- NASD..... [www.cdc.gov/nasd](http://www.cdc.gov/nasd)
- Flagsafe... [www.flagsafe.ufl.edu](http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu)
- NAGCAT... [www.nagcat.org](http://www.nagcat.org)

University of Florida  
**Agricultural  
Safety  
Program**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
FLORIDA**  
EXTENSION  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

**Be Aware!**  
**Be Alert!**  
**Be Alive!**

*Safety Resources for Ag Owner/Operators*

- NASD..... [www.cdc.gov/nasd](http://www.cdc.gov/nasd)
- Flagsafe... [www.flagsafe.ufl.edu](http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu)
- NAGCAT... [www.nagcat.org](http://www.nagcat.org)

University of Florida  
**Agricultural  
Safety  
Program**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
FLORIDA**  
EXTENSION  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Cut out this bookmark to keep resource addresses handy..

Cut out this bookmark to keep resource addresses handy..

