

ROPS FAQs: Frequently Asked Questions about Rollover Protective Structures¹

Carol J. Lehtola and Charles M. Brown²

Frequently Asked Questions about ROPS

How common are tractor overturn injuries?

Tractor overturns are the leading cause of work-related deaths in agriculture.

Can overturn injuries be prevented? Using a ROPS and seatbelt is 99 percent effective in preventing deaths and injuries from overturn.

Why is a seatbelt needed with ROPS? The seatbelt keeps the operator within the zone of protection in an overturn. Don't use a seatbelt on a tractor without a ROPS because it will prevent you from jumping clear in a dangerous incident.

How do I know if a ROPS is available for my tractor or tractors? You can check in the ROPS directory prepared by the National Farm Medicine Center in Marshfield, Wis. The directory is distributed to county Extension offices and equipment dealers. Most manufacturers offer ROPS at affordable prices. Contact your dealer for details.

I can't afford ROPS for all my tractors, but I want to reduce my risk of being hurt in an overturn. What can I do? Surveys have indicated that approximately two out of three farms already have at least one tractor with a ROPS. You can improve safety by using a tractor equipped with a ROPS for riskier operations. You might also consider trading in an older tractor for a model equipped with a ROPS.



Figure 1.

If ROPS are so great, why can't I make my own? Only ROPS that have been tested to meet specific standards are acceptable. ROPS that haven't been approved can split during an overturn. Anything less than an approved ROPS provides a false sense of security. Altering a ROPS by welding something onto it or by drilling holes in it can make it less

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2. Carol J. Lehtola, associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, and Extension Agricultural Safety Specialist, and Charles M. Brown, coordinator for information and publication services, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.

effective. The dynamic forces that act upon a ROPS during a tractor overturn make it crucial that a ROPS be properly designed, manufactured, and installed.

Won't a ROPS limit the way I can use my tractor? Fewer than 6 percent of all farmers actually remove a ROPS because of interference. ROPS that can be folded are available for many utility-sized tractors.

Some of my tractors have cabs. Isn't the ROPS a part of the cab frame? Many older tractors may have what is known as a weather cab, meaning a ROPS is not part of the frame. In an overturn, these cabs may be more deadly than having no protection. They provide absolutely no chance for you to escape quickly, which increases your chances of being crushed.

How do I know if the cab on my tractor has a ROPS as part of its structure?

- Look for a label indicating it has an approved ROPS. However, labels are not located in a uniform spot, and the cab may cover them up.
- Look for a seatbelt. Manufacturers only install seatbelts on ROPS-equipped tractors.
- Consult your dealer.

How can I get more information about tractor and agricultural safety? Visit the Florida AgSafe Web site: <http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu>