

Farm safety for tight times

Keeping you, your employees and your family safe

Keeping our children, farm staff and ourselves safe on the farm is the number one priority. During tight times, a number of things can happen on the farm that can end up causing a safety incident.

Here are five important tips to make sure everyone is safe.

Fatigue

Working harder and longer during tight times can quickly turn them into tired times. And when you're tired, mistakes and accidents are more likely to happen. In fact, being fatigued is just as bad as having a blood alcohol reading that's above-the-limit.

Small, regular breaks make a big difference. Have a power nap if you start to feel sleepy. And set some time aside to get off the farm, even if it's just for a few hours each week.

Most importantly, try to get at least 7 hours sleep each night. There is nothing like a good sleep – it is the answer to prevention and recovery from fatigue.

Cutting corners

Don't take short cuts that compromise your own safety because an accident is the last thing you need. Also, if you take unsafe shortcuts, others on the farm could take your lead.

Taking it steady can get you there just as fast with lower risk.

Working solo

When you or one of your staff are working solo, the most important thing is to have a good communication process in place.

Let people know where you are and when you should be back and always have your mobile phone with you.

Some jobs, like using ladders (working at heights), working with bulls or loading cattle should always have at least two people involved.

Inexperienced employees

It may be tempting to employ cheaper, inexperienced people to reduce labour costs. But this means induction, training and supervision are required, all of which will take your time.

With inexperienced staff, make sure you match the job to the ability of the person. Tell them if they don't feel safe with a task, don't do it. If older members of the family are coming back to help on the farm, be realistic about what jobs they can physically cope with.

Where are the kids? What are they doing?

If both parents need to be working, make sure you have safe play areas set up for young children, and that someone is checking on them. For older kids who may be helping on the farm, make sure they:

- Don't ride or travel as passengers on quads of any size.
- Only ride 2-wheelers that are the right size for them and wear a helmet and boots
- Don't travel in the back of utes or on trailers or ride as passengers on tractors
- Always wear seatbelts when in cars, utes and trucks (and they see the grown-ups doing the same)
- Wear bright coloured clothing so adult drivers can see them

Remember, you are legally responsible for the safety of everyone working on the farm, that's still true in tight times.

More information on Farm Safety is available at:
www.thepeopleindairy.org.au/eski

www.thepeopleindairy.org.au/tighttimespeople

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