



# The Agricultural Health and Safety Network

FALL/WINTER 2016



## NetworkNews

THE NETWORK providing agricultural occupational health and safety information and programs to Saskatchewan farm families since 1988

In 1999 the Centre for Agricultural Medicine (Now the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture) and the Farm Stress Unit organized a meeting to address farm stress and its impact on farm families and rural communities. The goal of the group was to ensure a coordinated response to farm stress in every region of the province. Numerous programs and resources were developed since that meeting and distributed across the province.

Currently Saskatchewan farm families experience many stressors such as large increases in input costs, increases in farm size with narrow profit margins, rapidly escalating

land prices, and the additional burden to become effective marketers.

The depleted rural population makes for a very lonely occupation in some respects. This limits the tradition of giving and receiving assistance and emotional support during the intense growing season when qualified local labor is also in short supply and everyone is stretched thin. There is a lot at stake. We have never had such large farming operations with so few farmers and so many people to feed. The Network would like to share its new stress guarding resource called: Daily Chore: Handling Stress on the Farm. You will find a copy in the centre of this newsletter.

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: 104 Clinic Place Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 2Z4

**NIN**

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## Congratulations Louise Hagel on your Retirement



Louise Hagel brought the first Occupational Health Program to the Centre for Agriculture Medicine, was the first Network RN, and helped establish The Agricultural Health and Safety Network in 1988. She also laid the groundwork for the Network, set up the early respiratory clinic program, and was involved in recruiting the first RMs into the Network.

Louise analyzed Saskatchewan farm fatalities and hospitalized injuries in the 90s in order to tackle the issue of agricultural injuries in Saskatchewan. She obtained her MSc in Injury Epidemiology in 1998 and has been pivotal in numerous studies at the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture such as the Farm Injury Studies, Saskatchewan Rural Health Study, and the Saskatchewan Injury Cohort Study to name a few.

We are indebted to her early commitment that paved the way to this world renowned program in Saskatchewan. The Network extends its best wishes to Louise in her retirement.

## Do you have low back pain?

The University of Saskatchewan is looking for *farm people who are over the age of 18 and have experienced low back pain for at least 3 months* to participate in a study testing the effects of back care education plus a supervised walking program.

To learn more about this study please contact:

Email: [back.research@usask.ca](mailto:back.research@usask.ca)

Call/text: 639-480-5595

Website: <http://research-groups.usask.ca/ergolab/our-research/walking-away-from-back-pain.php>

## Securing Your Home

*The following are a few tips to ensuring the safety of your home, especially when no one is home:*

- All exterior doors should have a solid core, a secure fit and a solid frame
- Use safer door locks: a heavy-duty latch bolt with a dead lock, with panic-proof inside knob, and non-rusting exposed parts. Add a high quality, one-inch dead bolt
- Equip all of your windows with locks that are in working order and remember to secure basement windows
- Install wide-angle viewers for exterior doors
- Ensure that all doors into the garage are secure and locked at all times
- Lock yard tools, axes, hammers and shovels away in your shed or garage; they are effective tools thieves can use to break into your home
- Lock ladders inside or secure them to a non-moveable object to prevent thieves using them to gain entry to the second floor
- Ensure that you know and control who has keys to your home
- Always make your house look as though someone is home
- Place lights on timers when you are away and consider leaving a radio on for sound inside your home
- Don't let your voicemail or social media indicate that you will be away
- Consider installing an alarm. There are many effective systems available today. Some that you can control from your mobile phone.

We all want safe rural communities for those who live and work in rural Saskatchewan.

For more information please contact Lorne Gelowitz, VP  
email: [lgelowitz@commissionairesnsask.ca](mailto:lgelowitz@commissionairesnsask.ca)



# Mobile Crisis Services

**Farm Stress Line 1-800-667-4222**

**Mobile Crisis Services Inc.**

Mobile Crisis Services is based in Regina, Saskatchewan. It provides 24 hour social and health crisis response and emergency intervention services to the community. The delivery model for this service has been very successful and adopted by various other services in Saskatchewan, other Canadian provinces, and the United States.

The range of services provided by Mobile Crisis Services include child welfare, emergency financial assistance, mental health and counselling services, substance abuse and domestic violence counselling, a 1-800 Saskatchewan Problem Gambling Helpline and the 1-800 Farm Stress Line. Mobile Crisis Services responded to 25,000 calls in 2015-16.

## ***Farm Stress line (Saskatchewan)***

Recognizing the range of issues faced by farmers and rural families and the potential benefits to farmers and rural families in Saskatchewan having a specific phone line to assist, the Farm Stress Line was initiated, funded and resourced by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's Agriculture Knowledge Centre in 1989. In 2012 the Farm Stress Line was contracted to Mobile Crisis Services.

The Farm Stress Line is a 24hr dual purpose phone line designated to respond to the needs of Saskatchewan farmers and rural families. It is administered and delivered by Mobile Crisis Services with funding from the Ministry of Agriculture. It provides a free 1-800-number for farmers and rural families to access confidential telephone counselling, support, information, and referral services for personal and production issues.

### **Social support services are the primary functions of the Farm Stress Line. We assist with:**

- Mental Health – Stress, depression, suicidal thoughts
- Domestic Violence
- Teen Parent Conflict
- Seniors Deteriorating Health, Abuse and Neglect
- Relationships
- Parenting
- Addictions
- Grief
- Custody
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Youth in crisis – Bullying, Relationships with Peers and Parents
- Financial



### **Advantages for Farmers and Rural Families**

- Service is available 24 hours seven days a week.
- Farmers can access service around their unpredictable work schedules.
- Rural families can access help no matter where they are located.
- Ongoing and immediate support for callers.
- Service available for adults and youth
- Professional crisis counsellors with the ability to address any self-identified crisis

### **A look back over the last year**

- There was 305 calls on the Farm Stress Line
- Top three "Farm Issues" identified by callers were financial, succession and crop/livestock issues.
- Top three "Personal/Family Issues" identified by callers were stress, relationships and mental health issues.

Callers seeking agricultural or production advice are referred to the Agriculture Knowledge Centre with the Ministry of Agriculture using a map of agriculture advisors across the province.

Since the Farm Stress Line is one in a range of support services delivered by Mobile Crisis Services, the staff are professional counsellors with extensive training and experience handling a range of situations. Embedding the Farm Stress Line in Mobile Crisis Services provides a professional level of counselling but also provides a single access point to a broad range of assistance for the range of issues that farmers and rural families may face. In addition, the service has connections and existing networks with other service providers to facilitate appropriate and effective referrals as required.



# Stress Impacts Your Health

Stress is part of daily life and is a result of both good and bad events. A certain amount of stress is a positive thing and can help to make us more focused and productive in our work and caring for our families. However, the negative effects from feeling stressed for extended periods of time can take a toll on our mental and physical health.

## The Body's Response to Stress

When stressful times are short-lived or infrequent it poses little risk to our health. However, when stressful situations go unresolved the body experiences chronic stress. With chronic stress our body is kept in a constant state of activation referred to as "fight or flight response", which increases the rate of wear and tear to all our body systems. As a result, fatigue sets in, damage occurs and our body's ability to repair and defend itself is greatly compromised. Chronic stress results in an escalated risk of injury, illness and disease.

### 10 Productive Ways of Dealing with Stress

1. **Work it off:** Exercise gives you energy and makes you feel better. Try some brisk walking.
2. **Strive for a good rest:** Rest revitalizes your body and mind. Try relaxation exercises and deep breathing to lower your anxiety about falling asleep if needed.
3. **Keep it simple and positive:** Take one step at a time, one day at a time. Be aware of negative thoughts. Keep your thinking positive and realistic!
4. **Take time to relax:** Make time for yourself. Do something that you enjoy.
5. **Prioritize:** Avoid putting things off, make a weekly schedule that includes leisure activities as well as things you must do. Prioritize tasks, make lists, set goals, organize your time, delegate to others and reward yourself.
6. **Be assertive:** Don't try and please everyone. Learn to say "no".
7. **Eat healthy:** Eat a well-balanced diet rich in vegetables, fruit, whole grains, dairy and alternatives, and lean meat/ alternatives. Limit salt, sugar, saturated and trans-fat intake.
8. **Keep your mind active:** Learn something new, research something you are interested in on the internet, play cards, do a quiz or crossword.
9. **Get it all off your chest:** A problem shared is a problem cut in half. Talking to someone you trust can really help.
10. **Accept the things you cannot change:** Focus your attention and energy on the things you can do and that you have control over and try to accept that there are certain things you cannot change. Take hope, you will get through this.

When experiencing stress your body undergoes a series of responses that impact your health.

- Stress triggers a surge of energy and strength as the body releases adrenaline. It is common to feel symptoms like "butterflies" are in your stomach. Some also experience indigestion, no appetite, and feeling dizzy.
- If stress persists for a period of time your body releases stored sugars and fats. You may feel driven, pressured and tired. As your immunity is compromised, you may catch a cold or get the flu easily. Unhealthy habits such as eating more food, drinking more coffee, drinking more alcohol and smoking are common. In addition, anxiety, negative thinking and memory loss may be experienced.
- If stress levels do not decrease, your body's need for energy becomes greater than its ability to provide it. You may experience insomnia, errors in judgement and personality changes. This response to stress can lead to serious illness such as heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, and increased risk of mental illness such as depression and anxiety.



# CANFARMSAFE™

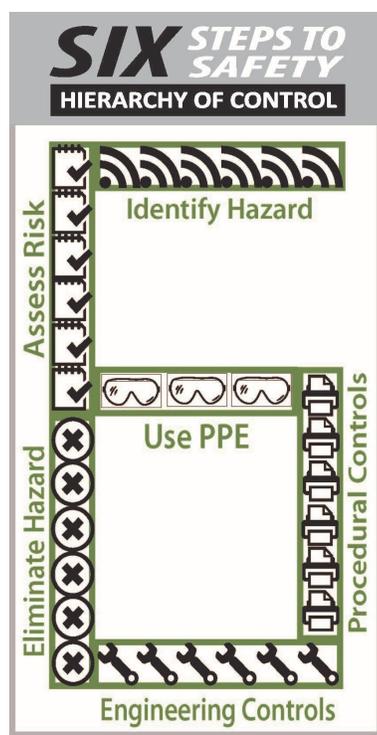
CCHSA / CCSSMA

## National Summit on the Control of Agricultural Injury and Deaths in Canada

On June 7th, 2016, the *National Summit on the Control of Agricultural Injury and Death in Canada* was held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The aim of the summit was to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders including producers, researchers, industry representatives, policy makers, and safety organizations to further develop the applied research strategy in Canada to address the health and safety challenges in key areas of agriculture.

The Six Steps to Safety is a safety tool based on the Hierarchy of Control which is a series of steps to re-duce injuries in occupational environments, and is an important framework for research and programming. The Six Steps to Safety involve:

1. Identifying the hazard
2. Assessing risk
3. Elimination of the hazard, where possible
4. Using engineering controls to address the hazard
5. Using procedural controls to address the hazard
6. Using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect against the hazard



The NATIONAL SUMMIT was hosted by The Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (University of Saskatchewan), Agrivita Canada, and the Centre for Research Expertise in Occupational Disease (University of Toronto). The day built upon the foundation of the *Canadian AgriSafety Applied Research Program* funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and results of a 2012 Summit.

91 attendees representing 8 Canadian provinces and 3 U.S. states worked on plans for practical ways to address specific health and safety hazards in

agriculture. The morning consisted of keynote talks on Culture of Safety, Sustainable Prevention in Occupational Health and Safety, and Six Steps to Safety.

A lunch was sponsored by Farm Credit Canada. In the afternoon, breakout sessions were held on a wide range of topics relating to agricultural hazards including Noise and Vibration, Fertilizers, Pesticides, Dusts, Ergonomics, Buildings and Confined Spaces, Machinery and Equipment Hazards. Sessions were also held on Children in the agricultural workplace, Seasonal and Migrant Workers, and Older Workers. The results from the Summit, including the priorities and strategies identified by the breakout groups will be available to health and safety organizations across Canada to help plan their priorities for prevention programs, develop practical projects to address the key issues, and secure funding for future efforts in agricultural health and safety. If you are interested in having a copy of the National Summit report, please contact us at 306-966-1648.

This document has been prepared by the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA) for Agrivita Canada Inc. and the *Canadian AgriSafety Applied Research Program*, which is supported under *Growing Forward 2 (GF2)*.  
16-10-013

For more information: [www.agrivita.ca](http://www.agrivita.ca) or 306-966-1648

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# Whole Body Vibration

## What is whole body vibration?

Whole body vibration is produced by mobile equipment like farm machinery. Farmers experience whole body vibration on a daily basis which may lead to low back pain.

## What did we measure?

The Saskatchewan Farmers Back Study Team at the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture went out to visit 22 farms in central Saskatchewan during 2015.

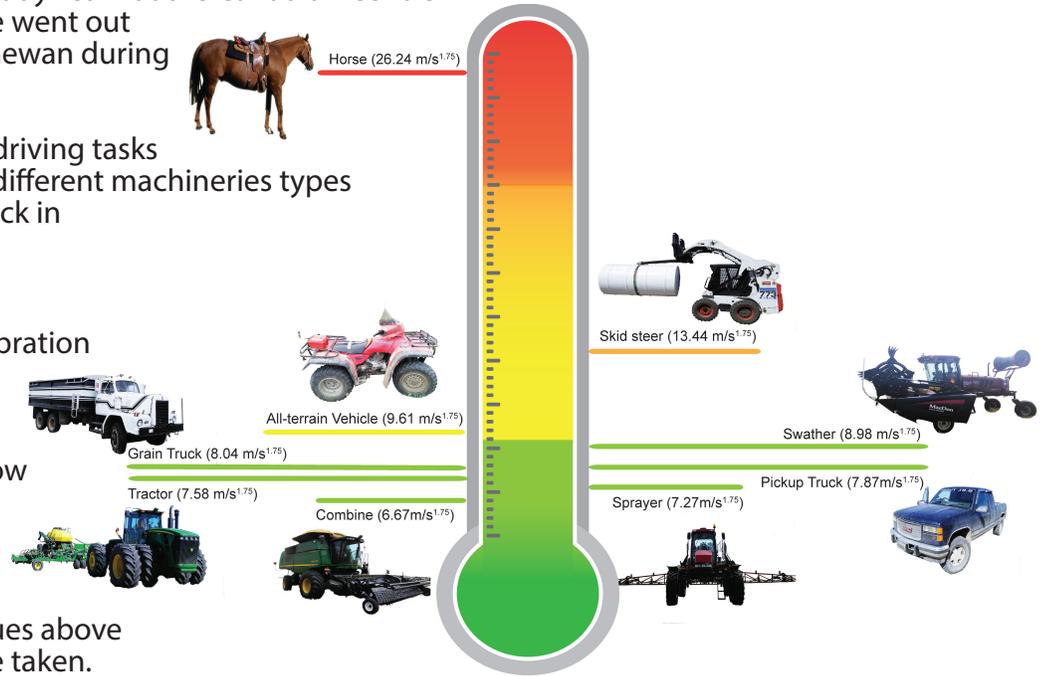
We measured:

- 40 male farmers during different driving tasks
- 87 vibration measurements on 8 different machineries types
- 2 WBV measurements on horseback in ranch farming

## What did we find?

Vibration is measured in units of 'vibration dose value' or VDV. In this graph, measurements in the green zone are below 9.1 and considered 'low risk' for health effects; the yellow zone is between 9.1 and 21 and is considered to include some risk for back pain and action should be taken to reduce exposure.

The red zone is vibration doses values above 21 and immediate action should be taken.



**What does it mean**

- Farming equipment generates high whole body vibration at levels that could hurt your back
- 32-41% of measurements exceeded health guidelines;
- No one has measured vibration from horses before, so the current guideline levels are for machinery. It is not clear how the guidelines apply to horse vibration, so this needs to be investigated further

Machinery features related with higher vibrations	How do I manage this hazard?
A rigid seat	Consider installing an air ride seat, or a seat with springs, suspension, or cushioning.
Lower horsepower Manual transmission	This is related to the type of machinery – smaller machines tend to make shorter, trips, and manual gear shifts are often more jerky. Consider limiting your time on these types, or incorporating more breaks.
'Always' pulling a load	Pulling implements introduces more vibration, especially when changing direction. Upgrading to single-purpose machines such as high-clearance sprayers eliminates the vibration of pulling implements. If this isn't possible
Older equipment	Equipment upgrades have the benefit of newer technology for safety and health. If an upgrade isn't possible, consider taking stretch/walk breaks for your back

# Crime Stoppers

In this article I am going to answer the most popular questions I have been asked about the Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers program:

## “Is Crime Stoppers really anonymous?”

Yes it is...100% anonymous. When you call Crime Stoppers you never have to give your name and you will not be asked to testify in court. Our Crime Stoppers tip line is never recorded and tracing devices are never used. We do not subscribe to the telephone feature of "call display". All calls placed to our toll free tips line, as well as emails and text, are processed by specially trained personnel who pass along information about a crime to investigating officers. Callers remain anonymous because they are issued a confidential code number when they call the Crime Stoppers line. This number helps us track the tip information and if the callers information leads to an arrest or charge for any crime or drug related offense, the confidential code number is used in making a cash reward up to \$2,000.

## “How can Crime Stoppers guarantee 100% anonymity to its Tipsters?”

In February of 1997 the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously decided that callers to Crime Stoppers programs were entitled to the protection of this privilege. In a typical case which started from a Crime Stoppers tip, the identity of the informer is unknown to both the Crime Stoppers Coordinator who took the call or on line tip and the case investigator. The Supreme Court went on to confirm that the privilege is so broad in scope it prevents disclosure not only of the name of the informer (even if it were it to be known) but also of any information which might implicitly reveal his or her identity. This is the premise behind the claim that "Crime Stoppers guarantees the tipsters anonymity."

## “How does the Tipster get paid?”

1. When you call, email or text Crime Stoppers you are given a unique number. You use this number as your ID when corresponding with us.
2. Your information is forwarded to the investigating agency and if an arrest or charge or matter is cleared as a result of the information you provided, you are eligible for a reward.
3. The result of your Tip is inputted into a formula which calculates the reward amount

4. Your Tip and the amount is presented to our Board of Directors which authorizes the amount to be paid to the Tipster.

5. The Tipster is contacted and advised of the amount they are rewarded; if it was a Web or Text Tip...if it was a call Tip, we have to wait for the Tipster to call us back to advise them of their reward.

6. The Tipster is asked what financial institution and date they would like to pick up their cash at?

7. Our Accountant will then mail a cheque to the manager of the financial institution with instructions to cash the cheque and place the cash in an envelope with the Tipsters unique number on it.

8. The Tipster attends the Bank on the date they requested...asks the manager for the envelope with their number on it...and the manager hands them the envelope; with no questions asked.

Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers is 100% anonymous and does not subscribe to call display nor are your calls traced or recorded. Web and Text Tips are encrypted. Call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477), text TIP206 and your message to CRIMES (274637), or you can submit a tip online at [www.saskcrimestoppers.com](http://www.saskcrimestoppers.com) where you can also view other unsolved crimes.

Sgt. Rob Cozine



**SASKATCHEWAN**  
**CRIME STOPPERS**  
**1-800-222-8477**

# FARMERS WANTED TO BUILD ROPS

THE PARTIAL COST TO  
RETROFIT ROPS WILL BE COVERED

Farmers with a Massey Ferguson tractor of  
one of the following models:  
35, TO35, 130, 135 150, 230, 235, 240, or 245  
are invited to participate.

The tractor should currently not be equipped with ROPS.

Instructions will be provided.  
Call Justin: 306.682.5033 or toll free 1.800.567.7264

Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute



## Farm Stress Line

Toll Free: 1-800-667-4442

24 hours per day.

Seven days per week.

Calls to the Farm Stress Line are answered by Mobile Crisis Services, a non-profit, community based agency providing crisis intervention services in Saskatchewan since 1974.

Whether it is information, conflict or crisis, the first step is communication.

*Call before the problem becomes a crisis.*

## Network Membership

There are currently 219 RM members in the Agricultural Health and Safety Network.

If your RM is not a member, and you would like to find out more about becoming a member, please call

**306-966-6647**

## Moved? Retired? Not Farming?

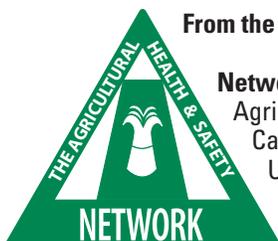
To remove your name from our mailing list call (306) 966-6644 or contact the editor.

## Need more information?

There are a variety of resources available on line at: [agsafety.usask.ca](http://agsafety.usask.ca)



### Thank You to the Following Organizations for Supporting the Network News:



From the Editors: Send your ideas, comments and suggestions to:

#### Network News:

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Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture  
University of Saskatchewan  
104 Clinic Place PO Box 23, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 2Z4  
Phone: 306-966-6647 • Email: [agsafety@usask.ca](mailto:agsafety@usask.ca)

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regular email updates  
from the Network?

If so, email us at  
[aghealthandsafety@usask.ca](mailto:aghealthandsafety@usask.ca)