



# The Agricultural Health and Safety Network

SPRING 2020 EDITION #47



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN  
Canadian Centre for Health  
and Safety in Agriculture  
CCHSA-CCSSMA.USASK.CA



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## NetworkNews

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

### Taking Care of the Farmer: Wellness & Resiliency

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a “state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” All of the different pieces of our well-being fit together to make us healthy and resilient, but if one of the pieces starts to fall apart this can create a snowball effect and impact our overall well-being. This spring farmers are facing additional challenges including working to harvest 2019 crops while getting 2020 seed in the ground, navigating ever changing markets for livestock, and the COVID-19 pandemic. You may find yourself up late at night going through different scenarios in your mind or find yourself stressed and unable to focus, these difficult times can take a serious toll on your mental health.

It is important to take time to think about your mental health, particularly during these uncertain times. Consider how all of these stressors are affecting you. You can control taking time to take care of the farmer. Give yourself permission to take a break from your worries and concerns. By recognizing and dedicating even a short time every day for your own mental wellness you will reap significant benefits in terms of feeling more confident facing challenges on your farm.

At the Network, we take a holistic approach to mental health that recognizes the many different factors which play a role in our mental wellness. Maintaining mental wellness means finding a balance in all areas of our lives, including physical, social, personal, emotional, financial, and spiritual aspects. Reaching a balance of all of these aspects is an ongoing process that is unique to each individual. In this edition of the Network News we are focusing on *Taking Care of the Farmer*, inside you will find articles on mental health and COVID-19, building resiliency, nutrition, the importance of sleep, symptoms of mental illness, and tips for practicing self-care. It is our goal that these tips will help you take a look at your own well-being, draw on your strengths and take action!

For more information or resources remember to visit our website [aghealth.usask.ca](http://aghealth.usask.ca).



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



Letter from the Director



The COVID-19 situation around the world has brought hardship and stress to families and workers everywhere, and agriculture is no exception. In this issue we have included some information on the pandemic. Our Network staff are actively engaging with partners across the country to help communicate information and provide resources to producers and their families during this crisis. Farming is a way of life and a rewarding passion for many, but its unique challenges can take a heavy toll on your health, especially your mental health.

The effects of the pandemic can greatly amplify these issues. Recognize when this is happening and always find someone to talk to, don't keep it to yourself, and ask for help. This spring will be extra challenging with many still working to harvest 2019 crop and also get seed in the ground, among many other things. It will be more important than ever to remember to take care of yourself. Please stay tuned to our website for more information as we work with our national partners to provide information and resources. As I update this letter, the news about Saskatchewan COVID-19 cases is promising, with recoveries outpacing new cases lately. We are, so far, coming through in a powerful way by sticking to the public health plan, and we can't let our guard down just yet.

Please take care and stay well,

**Niels Koehncke** MD MSc FRCPC  
Specialist in Occupational Medicine  
Director, Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture



Ike Thiessen: Building a Foundation Award



**Isaac (Ike) Thiessen** was a farmer in the rural municipality of Aberdeen (RM #373) and president of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) from 1986 – 1988. He was instrumental in the recruiting of the first RMs in 1988 to join the Agricultural Health and Safety Network setting the foundation for future growth. Currently, 30 years later, more than 70% of Saskatchewan Rural Municipalities are members, supporting the Network's mission to improve health and safety on the farm through education, service and evaluation research.

This Award will be given annually in recognition of the support and dedication to the Saskatchewan Agricultural Health and Safety Network for helping us further our mission and build a foundation of health and safety for Agriculture in Saskatchewan.

The inaugural **Ike Thiessen Award** was presented in March 2020 to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) recognizing the fundamental role they play in helping grow and enhance the activities of the Agricultural Health and Safety Network. Congratulations SARM and thank you for your dedication to improving agricultural health and safety in Saskatchewan!

The Ike Thiessen Building a Foundation Award

*Presented at the SARM Convention 2020 to*

Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities

*In recognition of your support and dedication to the Agricultural Health and Safety Network. Thank you for helping us further our mission and build a foundation of health and safety in Saskatchewan.*



What is grown in Saskatchewan?

Many different types of grains are produced and consumed in Saskatchewan, including:

- LENTILS
- CHICKPEAS
- FLAX
- SOYBEANS
- PEAS
- DURUM
- WHEAT
- OATS
- BARLEY
- RYE

Why LOCAL?

- Why should we eat locally grown grains?
- > You are supporting a local farmer and business in Saskatchewan. Helping your neighbour never tasted so good!
  - > More sustainable and economically friendly
  - > Grains provide essential nutrients, vitamins, minerals, fiber, and protein crucial for healthy living.
  - > Whole grains can increase satiety, which makes you feel fuller, longer!
  - > EXTREMELY TASTY!

Where to Start?

By Jessica Karstens & Cassandra Lestrat  
Nutrition Students, University of Saskatchewan

Packing a healthy lunch can be boring and repetitive. But, if you are already growing grains on your farm, or know someone that is, then why not incorporate them into your everyday meals? This article contains many tips and tricks on how ANYONE can incorporate grains into their everyday eating habits, making lunches, snacks, or any meal a real treat.



Tips & Tricks to easily incorporate Grains in your meals

- Add pureed lentils to ground beef to increase fiber content.
- Add cooked pulses such as chickpeas or soybeans to chili and soups for a nutritious, well rounded meal.
- Replace breadcrumbs with oats to recipes like meatloaf to add fiber.
- Add ground flax to cereal for extra taste and satiety.
- Replace your chips or chocolate snack with a tasty oven baked chickpeas or lentils for an extra crunch!

Free nutrition advice from a registered dietitian

1-833-966-5541 eatwell@usask.ca

Monday to Thursday (10 am – 4 pm)



# COVID-19 ALERT

Article by Suneil Bapat, MD, MPH  
Senior Resident, Public Health & Preventive Medicine

# COVID-19 PREVENTION

Like every community in Canada, we are adjusting to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and have had to make major changes to our lives to help keep us all safe during this difficult time.


### What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a newly identified infectious disease caused by Sars-CoV-2, and is a part of the larger family of viruses called Coronavirus. These diseases range from mild illnesses such as the common cold to severe illness such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). While coronaviruses can affect both animals and humans, human coronaviruses specifically are known to cause respiratory infections.

At the present time COVID-19 is causing mild to moderately severe symptoms and some deaths. The virus spreads through close person-to-person contact. As with new viruses, further details will be available as we learn more.

### SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

COVID-19 symptoms may range from little-to-no symptoms to severe illness and death. Most symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually 2 to 14 days after exposure.

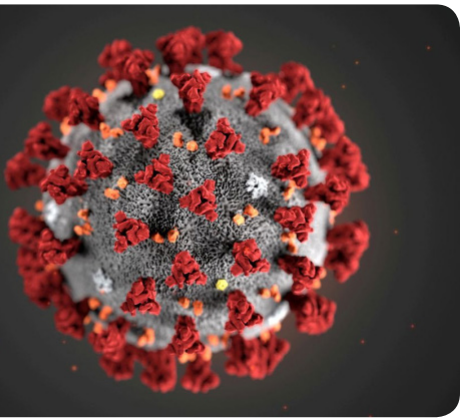
MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS	OTHER SYMPTOMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dry cough</li><li>• Fever</li><li>• Fatigue</li></ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aches and pains</li><li>• Diarrhea</li><li>• Nasal congestion</li><li>• Pneumonia</li><li>• Runny nose</li><li>• Sore throat</li></ul>

### Urgent symptoms requiring immediate medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Loss of consciousness

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult with your health care provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning. There is also a Self-Assessment Tool you may complete online for further instructions.

Self-Assessment Tool:  
[public.ehealthsask.ca/sites/COVID-19](https://public.ehealthsask.ca/sites/COVID-19)



### DIAGNOSIS OF COVID-19

Coronavirus infections are diagnosed by a health care provider based on symptoms and are confirmed through a laboratory test. The test is usually done by taking a nasal swab or a throat swab.

### TREATMENT OF COVID-19

As with most respiratory illnesses, most people with COVID-19 illness will recover on their own. There is no specific treatment for disease caused by COVID-19. Severe or worsening symptoms may require supportive treatment in hospital. If symptoms feel worse than a standard cold, see a health care provider or call HealthLine at 811. If HealthLine recommends you seek acute care, they will provide instruction to call ahead.

### COVID – 19 RESOURCES

The Network is working with other provincial agricultural safety organizations to develop resources related to COVID-19 and health and safety in agriculture.



### PREVENTION OF COVID-19

Currently, there is no approved vaccine that protects against COVID-19. Vaccine and drug treatments for COVID-19 are being developed and tested.

As a respiratory illness, the best method to protect yourself against COVID-19 is to practice everyday preventive actions, including:

- Practise proper cough and sneezing etiquette (into the bend of your elbow)
- Wash your hands often with soap and water; if soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean and disinfect your home regularly
- Maintain safe food practices
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Avoid unnecessary travel to affected areas
- Avoid large crowds and practice social distancing of ideally 2 metres (do not shake hands, hug or kiss)
- Wearing a nonmedical mask (even if asymptomatic) is an additional measure you may take to protect others around you, particularly in situations where the recommended physical distancing cannot be maintained (such as on public transit or in grocery stores).

## REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19. WASH YOUR HANDS.



1-833-784-4397

@canada.ca/coronavirus

## COVID-19 and Your Mental Health

Article by Kyle Anderson  
Bridges Health

The recent outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) is having a significant impact on so many areas of our lives. With so much uncertainty surrounding this pandemic, it can be overwhelming and cause strong emotional responses in individuals, including fear and heightened anxiety. Individuals within the Agriculture community are among the most vulnerable when it comes to mental health concerns, as levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout are all high among producers. Because of this, it is important to take a proactive approach to managing our mental health and coping with stress effectively.



### BELOW ARE A FEW TIPS ON HOW TO SUPPORT YOURSELF AND OTHERS DURING THIS TIME:

**Focus on what you can control:** There are so many things outside of our control, and if we fixate on trying to manage these things our stress levels will continue to increase. Instead, focus our time and energy on things we do have control over, such as maintaining a routine and engaging in regular self-care.

**Take care of your body:** Looking after one's physical health will have a positive impact on mental health as well. Try to get regular exercise with home workouts, eat healthy, and get plenty of sleep.

**Self-Compassion:** It is important to recognize that we can't do everything we are use to doing and that this is an unprecedented situation. Treat ourselves with kindness and give ourselves a break. A good idea to monitor our self-talk is to make sure we speak to ourselves the same way we would speak to a close friend.

**Take breaks from the news:** While it is important to stay updated on how the coronavirus is impacting our lives, hearing about the pandemic constantly can be upsetting. Take breaks from watching, reading, and listening to news stories, as well as social media. Additionally, ensure you are getting your information from trustworthy news sources.

**Stay connected with others:** Physical distancing is important to practice, but we still need to maintain social connection with those we care about. Phone, text, or video chat are great ways to maintain contact. Additionally, try to talk about things unrelated to COVID-19 for a break.

**Seek extra help or support:** It's okay to not feel okay, and if your anxiety is having an impact on your daily functioning it may be beneficial to reach out for professional support. Bridges Health has a mobile app called Avail, that is currently being offered free of charge. This provides individuals with a resource to access videos, tips, and articles tailored to specific areas of wellness, and also connects users with care professionals in their area. For more information, please contact **Bridges Health** at [info@bridgeshealth.com](mailto:info@bridgeshealth.com) or (306) 668-5520.

The Canadian Mental Health Association, SK Division has set up phone lines to support those who may be struggling in these changing times:

**Provincial Line: 306-421-1871**

**Provincial Youth Line: 306-730-5900**

Moose Jaw: 306-630-5968

North Battleford: 306-441-5746

Prince Albert: 306-940-7678

Regina: 306-535-4292

Rosetown: 306-831-4083

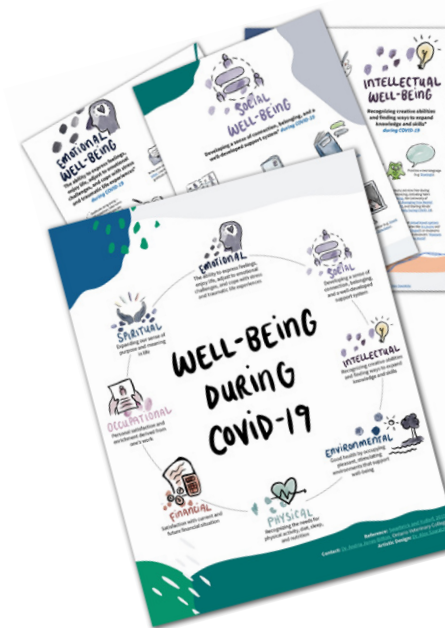
Saskatoon: 306-270-3648

Swift Current: 306-741-5148

Weyburn: 306-861-4951

## 8 Domains of Well-Being COVID-19 Style!

"Unquestionably, these are tough days. The COVID-19 pandemic has required us to make significant changes professionally and personally, in a very short period of time, while also attending to our feelings around the disease. For many of us, we may be having trouble doing our usual activities that support our well-being," describes Dr. Andria Jones-Bitton. The 8 Domains of Well-Being COVID-19 Style resource was designed to help encourage ideas for well-being activities during COVID-19 in the areas of: Emotional, Social, Intellectual, Environmental, Physical, Financial, Occupational, and Spiritual Well-Being.



Dr. Jones-Bitton highlights that it is really important to remember that we don't need to do to ALL 8 DOMAINS or all suggested activities all at once. Rather, aim to choose those activities that most appeal to YOU and make whatever small changes that are within your control! It is very important that you are kind and compassionate with yourself during this process. Whatever you are able to do is great, regardless of the size of the change. Even small changes can be very powerful! Small changes produce feelings of positivity and personal control. Remember, small changes can add up to something really impactful.

We hope you find some of the activities suggested in the **8 Domains of Well-Being** infographics (next page) to be a useful starting point.

Please visit our website, [aghealth.usask.ca](http://aghealth.usask.ca), to access all 8 Domains of Well-Being.



### Need more information?

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



UNDERSTANDING STRESS, ITS IMPACT, AND EXPLORING COPING METHODS.

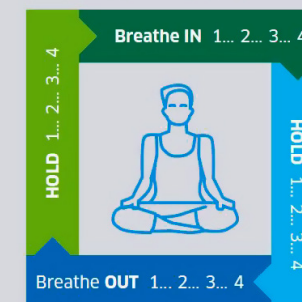


[aghealth.usask.ca](http://aghealth.usask.ca)

**The Network** is working with other provincial agricultural safety organizations to develop resources related to COVID-19 and health & safety in agriculture. Please visit our website for links to various COVID-19 resources at [aghealth.usask.ca](http://aghealth.usask.ca)

### Square breathing

This simple exercise can help calm your nervous system and alleviate feelings of anxiety when you're getting overwhelmed.



If you are in need of mental health resources of information during this uncertain time, the Government of Saskatchewan has several services available to residents:

**HealthLine 811** providing 24/7 crisis support, advice to help manage a caller's situation, information and connection to community resources.

**Farm Stress Line** provides support for farmers and ranchers and is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

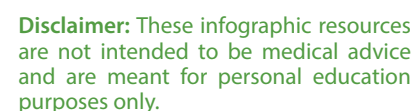
To get help, call 1-800-667-4442.

For more information on these services visit the **Government of Saskatchewan's Mental Health and COVID-19** webpage or scan the QR code on the right. >>>



SCAN ME





Be patient with yourself as changes take time and consistency is key. However, despite proper sleep hygiene, if poor sleep is consistently affecting your personal or work life, you should contact a doctor. Sleep disorders are not uncommon but require medical expertise to properly manage.





# Is a New Technology Right for my Operation?



## Applying the Technology Decision Calculator for Swine Operation Profitability

Article by: **Abisola Omoniyi**

Research Assistant, Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture

New technologies are constantly being introduced onto farms due to promised benefits and enhanced profitability. However, these innovations can also introduce new challenges and costs, such as the impact of new technologies on health and safety. So how do you know if it will work in your specific situation? Prairie Swine Centre and the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture have collaborated to develop a simple, personalizable web calculator that can help predict the value of adopting new technology. This multidimensional tool incorporates implementation costs, productivity, health and safety impacts, and was developed to help forecast the overall benefit of investing in new technology.

Visit the technology decision calculator online to see if a new tool, equipment, or process has what it takes to be profitable on your farm. In a few simple steps, you can fill in the inputs and click on the 'calculate' button to get a personalized result presented as an incremental cost-benefit ratio. The incremental cost benefit ratio shows the difference between the current situation and what is obtainable with the new technology; values greater than one indicate profitability, while values less than one indicate the proposed technology isn't a good bet. In addition to the incremental cost-benefit ratio over the life span of the new technology, the printable report delivers a range of estimates.

The technology decision calculator was developed based on the test case of needleless injectors, the topic of a research study at the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture. Since it is not always possible to get precise costs when estimating the amount of labour, maintenance, and productivity increases, this tool also provides information to allow for educated estimates. We provide background information, things to consider, and the dollar-value results from the needleless injector study. Of course, each new technology is different, but it is hoped that this background information will allow you to make an educated guess about the numbers for your enterprise.

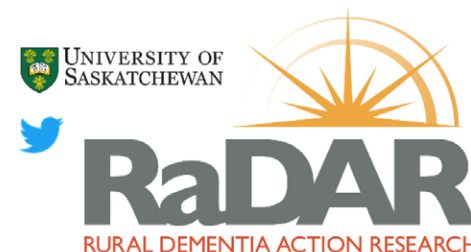
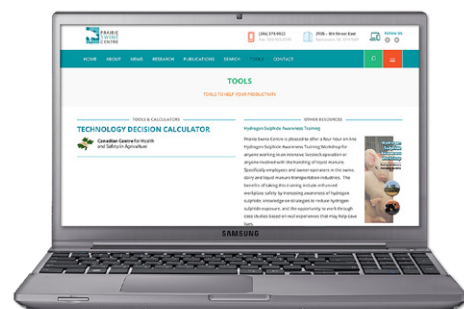
All model reports are estimates and not a guarantee, the model cannot account for all possible variables and is only as accurate as the numbers given as inputs. This tool allows you to select the range of certainty for your cost estimates, resulting in a range of potential cost-benefit estimates. The lowest estimates from cost benefit analysis are considered the most conservative, i.e. the worst-case scenario. If the conservative 'worst case scenario' is still profitable, then the model projects that your organization would still benefit from the new technology, even with the worst combination of costs and benefits. You can also re-run reports for different values, and see how small differences can add up.

This project would not have been possible without the support of Saskatchewan and Manitoba swine industry; we are grateful to all the workers and employers who participated. This study was funded by the WCB Manitoba Research and Workplace Innovation Program, and in part by the Canada Research Chairs.

We invite you to try using this web calculator for your next project and see how it works. We would love to hear your feedback!

Access the technology decision tool via the Prairie Swine Centre 'Tools' website: [prairieswine.com/tools](http://prairieswine.com/tools) or [calculator.prairieswine.com](http://calculator.prairieswine.com)

To learn more about the needleless injector study, visit our study website: [research-groups.usask.ca/ergolab](http://research-groups.usask.ca/ergolab)



The interdisciplinary Rural Dementia Action Research (RaDAR) team's research is inspired by the needs of Saskatchewan's aging population with the main goal of improving dementia care in rural and remote settings. Dr. Debra Morgan, CCHSA Professor and Chair in Rural Health Delivery, has been leading the RaDAR team since 2003.



### RaDAR research guided by The Knowledge Network in Rural and Remote Dementia Care

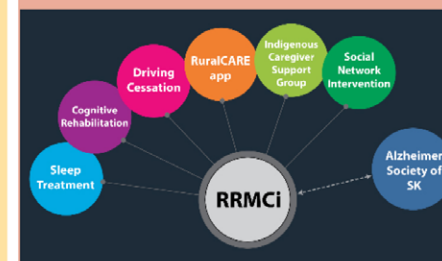
The Network includes **people with dementia and family members, front-line health care providers and managers, health region representatives, international researchers, and individuals from governmental and community-based organizations.** The Network meets at the annual Rural Dementia Care Summit, the RaDAR team's key knowledge exchange event, where Network members provide input into new and ongoing research projects.



More information about Summit can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/RaDAR-Summit>

### Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging (CCNA), Team 15

CCNA Team 15 is led by Drs. Megan O'Connell and Debra Morgan which focuses on dementia care for rural populations. Dr. O'Connell is leading an interdisciplinary team in the development of RRMCI-interventions (RRMCI), a suite of psychological interventions to be delivered remotely via Telehealth across rural Saskatchewan.



More information about these interventions and **how to get involved** is available at <https://research-groups.usask.ca/memory/interventions.php>

### RaDAR collaboration with Primary Health Care teams in rural Saskatchewan

Dr. Morgan and Dr. Julie Kosteniuk are working with rural Primary Health Care teams in southeast Sask to support primary care professionals caring for people living with dementia in their home communities. Four teams have established **1-day memory clinics in Kipling, Weyburn, Bengough, and Carlyle**, which are currently available only to patients of those primary care clinics. Team composition varies by location and includes a number of different professionals, including Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan First Link Coordinators. RaDAR is conducting several projects related to spreading and sustaining RaDAR Rural PHC Memory Clinics, and outcome studies exploring the impact of the clinics. The goal is to continue spreading these clinics across the province.



For more information about the memory clinics visit <http://tiny.cc/RuralMemory>



RaDAR works closely with the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan to meet the needs of people living with dementia in Saskatchewan. The Alzheimer Society offers programs and services to help support people living with dementia across the province. Learn more at <https://alzheimer.ca/sk>

**Dementia Helpline**  
Have questions? We can help.

**The Alzheimer Society is here to answer your questions.**

Call today to speak to one of our trained staff members, ask the questions that matter to you, and connect to information and support.

**Dementia Helpline 1-877-949-4141 or [helpline@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:helpline@alzheimer.sk.ca)**

### ASOS Resource Centres

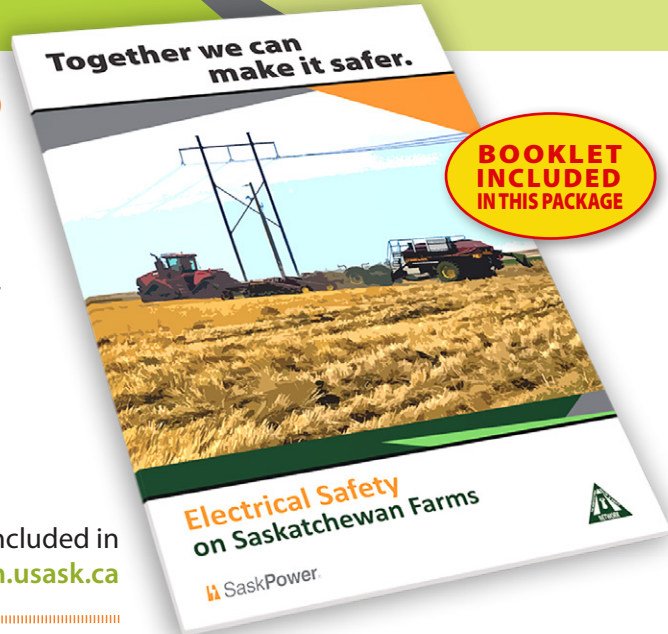
Battleford [prairienorth@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:prairienorth@alzheimer.sk.ca)  
Prince Albert [paparkland@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:paparkland@alzheimer.sk.ca)  
Regina [regina@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:regina@alzheimer.sk.ca)  
Swift Current [cypress@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:cypress@alzheimer.sk.ca)  
Saskatoon [saskatoon@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:saskatoon@alzheimer.sk.ca)  
Estevan/Weyburn [suncountry@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:suncountry@alzheimer.sk.ca)  
Yorkton [sunrise@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:sunrise@alzheimer.sk.ca)




## ELECTRICAL SAFETY ON SASKATCHEWAN FARMS


The Electrical Safety on Saskatchewan Farms resource is a new and unique resource that will increase awareness and prevent incidents when working around overhead and underground power lines. The Agricultural Health and Safety Network is grateful to have partnered with SaskPower in the development and delivery of this resource and will continue to grow this partnership in the future. In 2019, there were 326 overhead line contacts caused by farm machinery and while none of these incidents were fatal, each incident had the potential to be. Don't take the chance, be aware and be safe!

Please find the **Electrical Safety on Saskatchewan Farms** resource included in this Spring Network mail out package, and online at [www.aghealth.usask.ca](http://www.aghealth.usask.ca)



# WHAT'S YOUR MAKE & MODEL?






## HELP IDENTIFY WHICH TRACTORS ARE IN USE ON CANADIAN FARMS

## TRACTOR SURVEY

Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) is developing blueprints for rollover protective structures (ROPS) for retrofitting on older model tractors. To help PAMI determine which tractor models to develop blueprints for please take our survey!



Scan QR Code to go directly to survey or visit [agrivita.ca](http://agrivita.ca)

DETAILS: [WWW.AGRIVITA.CA](http://WWW.AGRIVITA.CA)

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



Thank you

to the **Ministry of Agriculture** for their support!



**IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING SYMPTOMS OF STRESS, THE FARM STRESS LINE IS AVAILABLE 24/7 AT**

**1-800-667-4442**






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Facebook: [@AgricultureHealthSafetyNetwork](https://facebook.com/AgricultureHealthSafetyNetwork)

**Need more information?**  
There are a variety of resources available online at:  
[agsafety.usask.ca](http://agsafety.usask.ca)

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



Agricultural Health and Safety Network  
Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture  
University of Saskatchewan  
104 Clinic Place PO Box 23, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 2Z4  
Phone: 306-966-6644

### Moved? Retired? Not Farming?

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

Would you like regular email updates from the Network?

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