

The Cultivator

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Commissioner of Labor



Gold Star Grower

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ASH Training in Vance County

The Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau held an on-farm training session in Vance County on June 24. About 100 growers and workers attended. The three-hour training included coverage of these topics: heat stress recognition and prevention; wage payment, farm labor contractors and other USDOL regulations; tobacco harvester and baler safety; migrant housing standards; pesticide safety; and green tobacco sickness. William Gerringger provided CPR and first-aid training to farm owners and managers.

In addition to bureau staff members, employees of the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division and health professionals from the Office of Migrant Health led sessions. Growers and workers rotated through the six sessions. Each session covered a topic and lasted about 20 minutes.

Grower Tommy Ellington hosted the training on his farm site near Henderson. R.J. Reynolds sponsored the event. The training started at 9 a.m. and concluded around noon with a catered lunch provided by R.J. Reynolds.

"It's a good partnership," said Ron Wright, senior leaf manager at R.J. Reynolds, Santa Fe and American Snuff. "The U.S. Department of Labor and N.C. Department of Labor can bring training on the farms to show what compliance is."

Growers are practicing the hands-only CPR approach in the first-aid certification and CPR training session taught by William Gerringger, bureau chief of the NCDOL Mine and Quarry Bureau.

CPR and First Aid Training

At the safety training, 10 growers and workers became first-aid certified and knowledgeable about the hands-only CPR method. William Gerringger, Mine and Quarry Bureau chief, led the three-hour training session. The Department of Labor's goal is to have one grower or worker on each farm trained in first-aid and CPR.

"It's about accident prevention and stabilizing someone in a life-threatening scenario," Gerringger said.

First aid-certification is good for three years. In the first-aid certification session, participants learned how to check the scene, assess the situation, and how to stabilize the victim before the EMT arrives and takes over. Examples of situations included how to control bleeding, how to treat shock, what to do in heat stroke scenarios, and others. The segment also included situations on serious injury, such as falls.

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ASH Training in Vance County

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Ellington, managing member of Ellington Farms LLC, said he hosted the training for several reasons, touching primarily on the importance of safety.

“Anything dealing with safety and regulations is important in making the right decisions now and later down the road,” Ellington said.

David Rose, J.B. Rose and Sons owner, attended because he believes it’s important to stay current with regulations.

“I try to be familiar with changes going on,” Rose said. “Anytime we can take advantage of something offered, we should.”

The Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau has conducted nearly 20 on-site training sessions since 2008. All trainings are conducted in Spanish and English. The training highlights materials from the bureau’s safety DVDs. To view these safety DVDs, go to the NCDOL YouTube channel here.



Alan Fortner, NCDOL Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau officer, instructs workers on tractor and baler safety.



Anthony Delgado, USDOL Wage and Hour Division investigator, speaks to workers concerning their rights under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA) and the H-2A: Temporary Agricultural Employment of Foreign Workers program. Delgado emphasized the importance of keeping track of hours worked, healthy and safe housing and transportation, child labor in agriculture, and knowing your rights when employed by a farm labor contractor (FLC).

“It’s a good partnership. The U.S. Department of Labor and N.C. Department of Labor can bring training on the farms to show what compliance is.”

Ron Wright
Senior Leaf Manager
R.J. Reynolds

CPR and First Aid Training

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“Some companies have plans on how to handle scenarios,” Gerringer said. “We discussed instructions on how to control bleeding, and assess scenes to be prepared for life-threatening situations.”

In the hands-only CPR training, participants learned how to handle a scenario where someone suffers an injury and becomes unconscious and unresponsive. Gerringer said to immediately call 911 and then perform hands-only CPR while waiting for EMT to arrive. Hands-only CPR is an effective and simpler method of standard CPR. Gerringer

said to do chest compressions to get blood and oxygen pumping back up to the brain. The reason this method works is because research has determined that there is enough oxygen in your lungs to keep someone alive for 10 minutes.

The session on first-aid certification and hands-only CPR training taught growers and workers preparedness and how to respond to serious injuries and life-threatening situations.



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Gold Star Grower
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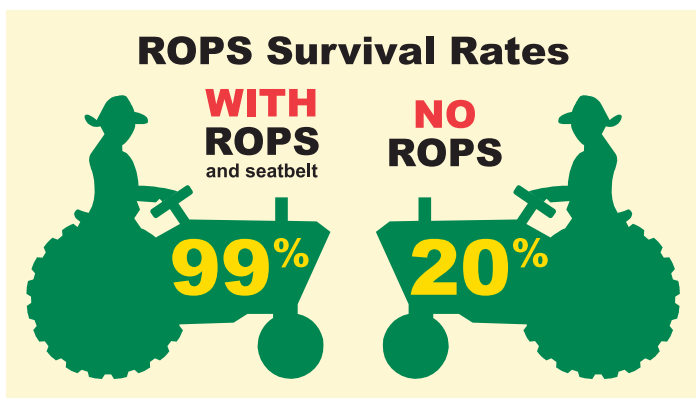
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Safety Saves: Rollover Protective Structures

It's important to recognize that farming economics have changed. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service reports that national net farm income is forecasted to be \$95.8 billion in 2014.¹ The average farm household income in 2013 was \$108,844 compared to the average U.S. household income of \$71,274.² Although these numbers are only averages and do not hold true for all farms, the numbers show that there are potentially high profits to be earned.

Farming is a business where safety should be a priority. Earnings realized can actually increase with the implementation of safety procedures and equipment. An investment in safety can increase a grower's profit and productivity. Safety not only saves lives, but money.

The use of rollover protective structures (ROPS) has been shown to significantly prevent fatalities. According to the National Safety Council, half of all fatalities on farms involve a tractor.³ Tractor overturns are the most significant cause of fatal injuries in agricultural tractor-related injuries. In conjunction with a seatbelt, the operator of a ROPS-protected tractor is 99 percent likely to walk away from a rollover with only minor injuries. Comparatively, the operator of an overturned tractor without ROPS has only a 20 percent chance of survival, according to the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health.⁴



A study by the Agricultural Safety and Health Center found that from 1992 to 2002, 98.6 percent of deaths and 95 percent of nonfatal injuries were associated with non-ROPS tractor overturns, compared to ROPS-equipped tractors. The social cost of these injuries totaled \$1.5 billion in 2006 dollars. Non-ROPS tractors compared to ROPS-equipped tractors accounted for at least 97 percent of the costs.⁵ The cost of a ROPS varies, but most have a retail value of less than \$1,000—less than \$3 per day for only a year.

The savings outweigh the costs. A Kentucky equipment dealer did a four and a half year intervention encouraging farmers to retrofit older tractors with ROPS. He found that the ROPS intervention was cost effective with a savings of \$35,713 per injury averted.⁶ The elimination of overturn fatalities could result in more than \$100 million in annual savings, according to American Society of Safety Engineers.⁷

ROPS are only one example of the cost effectiveness of safety. Safety Saves!

Tobacco Harvester Safety—Don't let cost and time savings lead to accidents!

- ❖ The use of mechanized tobacco harvesters greatly reduces labor demand when compared to the labor needed to hand harvest.
- ❖ Many growers are using harvesters for flue-cured tobacco
- ❖ Field accidents/fatalities have increased, most involve unclogging a machine while it is operating. This practice often results in a fatal event.

At a Glance...

2014 National Net Farm Income Forecast:
(USDA's Economic Research Service)

\$95.8 Billion

Annual Savings Prediction with ROPS:
(American Society of Safety Engineers)

\$100 Million

SAFETY SAVES!

❖ Train those who will be operating the tobacco harvester! Here are some suggestions for those workers who will be operating the harvester:

1. You must receive on-site training in a language you understand prior to operating a harvester.
2. Before starting the engine, make sure that there are no other people, cables or vehicles near the machine.
3. Never remove or alter any of the guards or safety features on the machine. They are there for your protection!
4. If there is a leak in the hydraulic system, DO NOT touch it! Notify the person in charge immediately.
5. Never get off the harvester while the engine is running or any parts are in motion. Even if the machine has a dead man's switch, it is best to cut off the machine manually to ensure your safety.
6. Never try to remove anything from the defoliators or cutters while they are moving.
7. When refueling, turn off the engine. Do not permit smoking around the machine during refueling.
8. If you do not know or understand something, ask.

1. "U.S. and State Farm Income and Wealth Statistics," *U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Services*, last modified July 31 2014, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/farm-income-and-wealth-statistics.aspx>.

2. "U.S. and State Farm Income and Wealth Statistics," *United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Services*, last modified July 31 2014, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/farm-income-and-wealth-statistics.aspx>.

3. "Tractor Operation and Rollover Protective Structures." *National Safety Council*. May 1, 2005. Accessed Aug. 8, 2014. <http://beta-test.nsc.org/Membership Site Document Library/Data-Sheets/622.pdf>.

4. "Tractor Safety." *New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health*. Jan. 1, 2012. Accessed Aug. 8, 2014. <http://farmworkercliniciansmanual.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/tractor.pdf>.

5. Melvin Myers, Henry Cole and Susan Westneat. "Projected incidence and cost of tractor overturn-related injuries in the United States." *Journal of Agricultural Safety and Health*. 14, no. 1 (2008): 93-103.

6. Melvin Myers, Henry Cole and Susan Westneat. "Cost effectiveness of a dealer's intervention in retrofitting rollover protective structures." *Injury Prevention*. 11 (2004): 169-173.

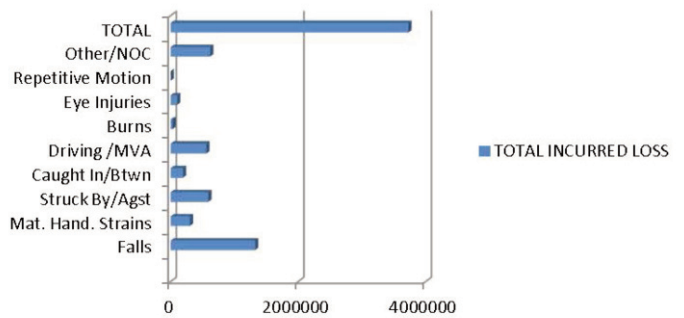
7. U.S. Department of Labor, "Roll-Over Protective Structures," Washington, DC: GPO, 2005, https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=FEDERAL_REGISTER&p_id=18478 (accessed Aug. 8 2014).

Work Safely!

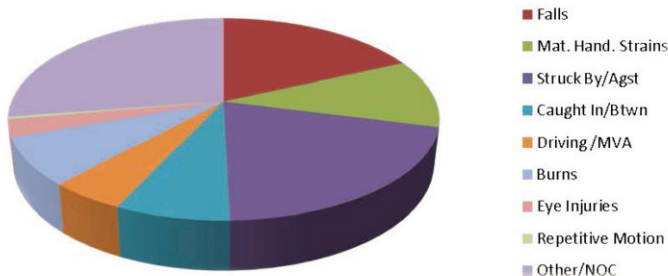
Workers' compensation data from claims made during 2011 through June 30, 2014, indicate that a number of specific agricultural workplace hazards are costing workers and growers. Workers pay with their health, and growers see a reduction in workplace efficiency. Growers also watch their workers' compensation rates rise following an accident or injury. What are the safety hazards that need attention? The charts below indicate that the leading hazards are being struck by an object, followed by falls. Falls resulted in the highest total losses incurred—more than \$1.3 million.

"If I were a grower, I'd say what safety measures am I using now? And what are my workers exposed to out in the field? I'd ask what I could do differently," said Alan Johnson, senior loss control consultant at Meadowbrook Insurance Group, when asked about these data. "We all want a safe workplace."

TOTAL INCURRED LOSS



CLAIMS



Workers' compensation is a system of insurance, mandated by law, that provides both cash compensation for wage loss and medical care to victims of work-connected injuries. Under state law, agricultural employers in North Carolina must provide coverage if they employ 10 or more year-round workers. Under federal law, employers of H-2A workers must provide coverage or comparable insurance.

Costs and claims can decrease by practicing agricultural safety. Everyone should have the same goal—a safe workplace.

Johnson explained, "We want the complaints to be few—and as inexpensive as possible to the insurer. We want more people practicing safety, and more people adhering to safety methods."

Material Handling Strains: an all-encompassing term that generally refers to "ergonomic" issues. We usually consider accidents arising from:

- ◆ Twisting
- ◆ Lifting
- ◆ Reaching
- ◆ Other strains/sprains from overuse or overexertion
- ◆ Jumping
- ◆ Pushing/Pulling
- ◆ Tool usage

Struck By/Against: means being "hit" by something or against something.

Caught In/Between: usually means getting something smashed or crushed because you have placed a body part in a precarious place.

Driving/MVA: injuries arising while in a motor vehicle accident (while on the job). Motor vehicle accidents are the No. 1 cause of workplace fatalities in the U.S.

Other/NOC: "Other" or "Not Otherwise Classified" means that the exact, specific details were not available when the incident was entered into our claims database. Giving the incident an "NOC" title means we can enter it and it still gets counted in the grand totals.

Follow NCDOL on



CAUTION: Farmer at Work!

Practice safety when operating farm machinery on public roads.