

## Life Changing Agriculture Injury Stories from Farmers

### Russell and Eric's ATV Rollover

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[http://depts.washington.edu/pnash/ag\\_storycorps](http://depts.washington.edu/pnash/ag_storycorps)

**Eric:** When your accident occurred, what were you doing at the time?

**Russell:** I was up on a steep hillside, and I was going along. I was probably only going maybe 1 or 2 miles an hour. I drove that ATV and there was a coyote hole, so as I was going along I ran the front left wheel up on that dirt pile. I always had this idea well, if I started to roll one of those ATVs on the hillside, I'd just slide up off on the uphill side. When that front left wheel went up on that dirt pile, that threw me so quickly downhill that you didn't have time to react, anything. So anyway I was out there about 12½, 13 hours. My luck was that the ATV didn't stop there, it rolled on over me, probably those handlebars got me in the middle of the back. The rest of it probably got me in the pelvis, because the damage to me was in the colon and in my pelvis. So I was in intensive care for 30 or 35 days because they were feeding me up to let that colon heal up, and to let those fractures in the pelvis heal. I got out of the hospital finally, and I was out about ten days and then about a foot of my small intestine just outside my stomach collapsed. Then I was back in and they took that section out of my small intestine. So I finally got out then after a month and a half or more. After that I had about two and a half or three months of physical therapy. I kind of almost had to learn to walk over again. We don't use them [ATV's] so much in that tall grass any more, we more use a wheel tractor sprayer. The thing is, on those ATVs you can drop a wheel into a ditch and that four-wheel drive will turn those things, and of course the faster you're going the worse it is.

**Eric:** Yeah, which is remarkable since, you know, a lot of these accidents on ATVs happen at high speeds, but your accident occurred at a very, very low speed, probably 1 mile an hour. As some of our friends have said, if you ride ATVs there's really only two categories of riders: those that have already had an accident and those whose accidents are pending.

**Russell:** Anybody that has ridden an ATV knows how violently they surge forward or backward the minute you touch the accelerator.

**Eric:** Russell's accident has definitely colored the way my children think about farming and ATVs, and I don't think they'll ever let their children, heaven forbid, ever ride them.

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