

NewsWatch

Tractor safety advice saves lives



NURSE MURF

By HELEN MURPHY

ON Aug. 23, 1999, a farmworker was driving a tractor towing a hay baler on a public road when the wheels of both the tractor and baler went onto the road's gravel shoulder, causing the tractor to roll over into the steeply banked shoulder. The victim attempted to jump free, but was crushed and killed by the tractor."

Many people postpone safety improvements and think accidents only happen to the "other guy." Only when it happens to you or someone you know do you think about what it means to lose a spouse, parent and child, or have a loved one permanently disabled.

Tractor overturns, runners, entanglements and highway collisions are the leading cause of death and serious injury in farming. They account for 250 deaths per year in the U.S. Yet, if roll bars and seat belts were used they could prevent 100 or more tragic rollover accidents each year.

Washington is the only state to require roll bars on tractors (except in orchards). A recent review of eight years of Washington's tractor-related fatalities confirmed that roll bars and seat belts made the difference. During this period, there was not a single death on a tractor equipped with a roll bar.

Take action now

The tough part is putting this lifesaving simple technology to use! How do we spread the word and get people to make these safety modifications? Everyone in agriculture knows the dangers, but that doesn't always lead to action. Unfortunately, it usually takes a close call or tragedy to inspire change.

U.S. tractor manufacturers recognized the problem, and in 1986 began voluntarily adding roll bars and Rollover Protective Systems on U.S.-sold tractors over 20 horsepower. This has not been the easy fix, since many older tractors and off-market tractors do not have roll bars. In total, 50% of the farm tractors in use today do not have any rollover protection devices.

Another problem is that these gruesome statistics include children. Annually, more than 100 children are killed and 26,000 seriously injured on U.S. farms. Tractors are responsible for 41% of accidental farm deaths of children under 15, yet four out of five farm children regularly ride tractors with family members.

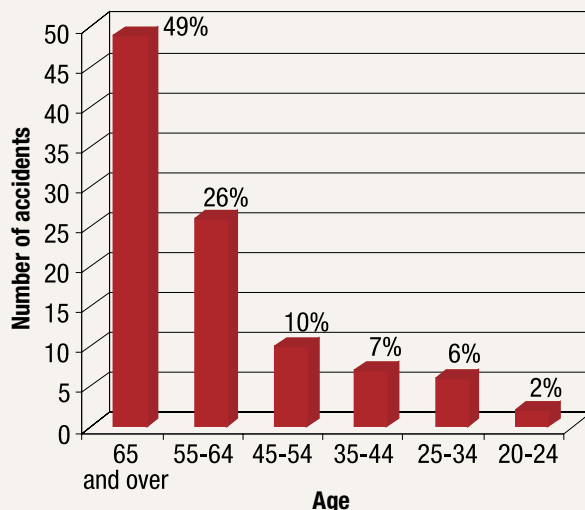
Farm life is wonderful for families and having a ride on the tractor with parents or grandparents is considered part of the farming tradition. The Childhood Agricultural Safety Network understands the risks and has taken a "tough love" approach, stating that it is never OK for a child younger than 12 to be on a tractor.

While riding the tractor may be a family tradition, it's easier to bury a tradition than a child.

Identifying effective solutions, safety researchers recommend:

- ✓ roll bars and a Rollover Protective

Occupationally related tractor accidents for 2006



- Total fatalities are 166 (these are only adults and occupationally related accidents).
- The majority of deaths (83%) occurred with the self employed versus only 17% among wage or salary workers.
- Of the fatalities, 88% occurred on the farm as opposed to a highway.
- The majority of victims were farmers and ranchers (78%) as opposed to hired workers.
- Most of the fatalities on moving tractors on farm premises were noncollision overturns (55%).
- Three quarters of the fatalities were those over age 55 (75%).

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

System on all tractors

- ✓ seat belt use on ROPS-equipped tractors
- ✓ no extra riders
- ✓ proper maintenance of machine guards on PTO drivelines and equipment
- ✓ effective lighting and marking of tractors that travel on roadways

National campaign

A national health campaign is under development to bring these proven solutions to farmers. Partners include agricultural leadership, equipment manufacturers and dealers, researchers, safety professionals, and farmers.

We are working together to spread the word, to secure financial incentives for farmers to install ROPS, and to develop cost-effective ROPS that work on

all ages and makes of tractors. If you are committed to tractors and safety, join us in building a coalition.

To learn more about tractor safety and the national campaign, called the National Agricultural Tractor Safety Initiative, contact Steve Reynolds of TSI at 970-491-6152 or by e-mail at Stephen.Reynolds@Colostate.edu.

For ROPS and seat belt retrofits for your tractor, check with your local tractor dealer.

The pain of a loved one's loss is far costlier than that of safety equipment and safe practices.

Murphy, outreach and education director at the University of Washington Pacific Northwest Agricultural Health and Safety Center, may be reached by phone at 206-616-5906 or by e-mail at hmurf@u.washington.edu.

Calendar

November

3: Montana Hereford Association annual meeting and convention, Best Western City Center, Bozeman, Mont. Contact: Cory Dutton. Phone: 406-288-3563.

7-8: Land, Water & Fire Conference (formerly called Wildland Urban Interface Conference), Coeur d'Alene Inn, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Contact: Pat Munts. Phone: 509-477-2173. E-mail: pmunts@spokanecounty.org.

12-15: 88th annual Washington Farm Bureau meeting, DoubleTree Hotel and Spokane Convention Center, Spokane, Wash. Contact: Margaret Warren. Phone: 800-331-3276. E-mail: mwarren@wsfb.com.

16: 10th Agri-Business Council of

Oregon Denim & Diamonds Dinner and Auction, The Governor Hotel, Portland, Ore. Web site: www.aglink.org.

30-Dec. 2: Montana Organic Association "Organics: Farming for the Future" fifth annual conference. Contact: Lise Rousseau. Phone: 406-887-2869. E-mail: conference@montanaorganicassociation.org.

December

5: Workshop on high-residue farming under irrigation, ATEC Center of Big Bend Community College, Moses Lake, Wash. Contact: Andy McGuire. Phone: 509-754-2011.

■ For more calendar items, see our Web site at www.WesternFarmerStockman.com.



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HTF Ethanol Hybrids



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To protect the usefulness and availability of these technologies for the future, growers must implement an Insect Resistance Management (IRM) program as specified in product use guides for the following traits available in Pioneer corn hybrids: Herculex® I, Herculex RW, Herculex XTRA and YieldGard® Corn Borer.

For detailed IRM requirements for hybrids with in-plant insect resistance, refer to the appropriate product use guide, available from your Pioneer sales professional or on the web at: www.pioneer.com/IRM.



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