

Farm Safety Partnership Scotland

Working together to save lives



Don't leave it to FATE

Over 70% of work-related deaths on Scotland's farms are due to only four causes!



Falls from height – roof work

CASE STUDY - A farm worker died when he fell through a fragile roof. He was working on top of a cattle shed, replacing damaged fibre cement roof sheets when he stepped on or fell through the fragile roof light.

13 people have been killed by falls from height (17% of the overall total) over the past decade on farms in Scotland.

Top safety tips if you have to work at height:

- Never walk on fragile materials, eg fibre cement sheets, roof lights or glass
- Never 'walk the purlins' or 'walk the line of the bolts'
- Use proprietary access equipment or other measures when working at height
- Plan and set aside enough time to do the work
- Take account of environmental conditions, eg wind and rain
- Make sure everyone knows the precautions to be followed
- Roof ladders or crawling boards must span at least three purlins
- Roof ladders must be securely placed. Do not rely on gutters, ridge caps or tiles for support

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Animals – cattle handling

CASE STUDY - A farmer and son were treating cows when one of the cattle refused to go into the crush. The farmer entered the race and as he moved away from the front of the crush to the side of the race, the cow kicked an unfastened gate in the cattle race beside the crush. He died from serious head injuries when he was knocked over by the gate.

9 people have been killed in livestock-related incidents (12% of all fatalities) over the past decade on Scottish farms. Handling cattle always involves risks, eg from crushing, kicking, butting etc.

Top safety tips:

- The risk is greater if the animals have not been handled frequently
- Never underestimate the risks, even with good precautions in place
- You should have:
 - proper handling facilities, that are well maintained and in good working order
 - a race and a crush suitable for the animals to be handled
 - trained and competent staff and
 - selection of breeding animals with the aim to improve herd temperament

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Transport – all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) (eg quad bikes)

CASE STUDY - A farm worker was found trapped underneath a quad bike having suffered fatal chest injuries. The ATV had been loaded with buckets of animal feed and was being driven across a sloping field. The final position of the ATV suggests that it rolled over sideways down the slope crushing the worker underneath it.

26 people have been killed by vehicle overturns and being struck by moving vehicles (35% of total) over the past decade on Scotland's farms.

Top safety tips:

- Make sure all drivers and riders receive adequate training
- Carry out regular checks and maintenance, eg tyre pressures, brakes etc on all vehicles
- Take extra care with trailed or mounted equipment and understand how they affect stability
- Wear a helmet when riding an ATV
- Passengers should not be carried on sit-astride ATVs
- Secure loads on racks and make sure they are evenly balanced

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Equipment – maintenance and clearing blockages

CASE STUDY - A farm worker died from serious crush injuries after being entangled in a potato harvester. He was carrying out maintenance work on the machine and it appears that he started the harvester to check its operation and was then drawn in by the rollers.

6 people have been killed by contact with the moving parts of equipment or machinery (8% of all fatalities) over the past decade.

Top safety tips:

- Follow the 'Safe Stop' procedure before carrying out any intervention (handbrake on, controls in neutral, engine off, keys out)
- Secure anything which could fall, eg by using props on tailgates/doors
- Secure anything which could move or rotate, eg by using chocks
- Remember, energy can be stored in springs or hydraulics. Consider how you will stop this energy being released or release it safely
- Use the right tools for the job
- Follow the instructions/procedures as set out in the operator's manual
- When finished, replace the guards and check the machine before restarting

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Our men and women working in the farming industry to bring food to our tables do so in often hazardous conditions and this can sometimes have tragic consequences. Every single tragedy is one too many and it is therefore essential that everyone working in the industry understands the risks and takes every available precaution to stay as safe as possible. By raising awareness and providing safety information and tips, the Farm Safety Partnership Scotland has the potential to save lives and prevent injury, and I very much welcome this partnership initiative.

Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment

As farmers know, farms can be dangerous places so it is important that everyone on a farm takes the necessary steps so that they can stay safe while farming. The Farm Safety Partnership intends to change behaviours and attitudes by promoting the steps that can be done to reduce the risks of common farm jobs. Most people will be able to recall a close call situation that could so easily have resulted in serious injury or even fatality. By adopting some simple steps as part of everyday working practices we can reduce the number of accidents and deaths on Scotland's farms.

Allan Bowie, NFU Scotland

As the insurer of the majority of Scottish farms we are all too aware of the dreadful impact that deaths and serious injuries have on farming families and are determined to do everything we can to help prevent accidents in the future. The establishment of the Scotland Farm Safety Partnership provides a focus for organisations involved in agriculture to work together and use their combined skills and experience to produce a less dangerous working environment. Whilst other industries – including construction – have seen accidents fall sharply in recent years, the number of people killed and injured on our farms has remained high and farming is now the most dangerous occupation in GB.

Martin Malone, NFU Mutual Scotland Manager

The high rate of deaths in the farming sector underlines the industry's poor record of managing risks. Every year too many people are needlessly killed and injured on farms in Scotland. This Partnership is a massive step forward in the industry working to tackle the issues and creating a safer future.

Rick Brunt, Head of Agriculture, Waste and Recycling Sector, Health and Safety Executive

Make the promise. Come home safe.

