

## FACTS

- ➔ Almost half of all workplace fatalities in Ireland occur in farming.
- ➔ Children and the elderly are particularly at risk. 50% of all farm deaths now involve over 65s and 20% of fatalities involve children.
- ➔ Tractors account for the highest proportion of fatalities and accidents each year. The causes of vehicle accidents include being crushed, struck, pinned under or falling from the vehicle. Poor operation of vehicles particularly when reversing is another main cause of fatalities.
- ➔ Over 3,000 serious injuries occur on Irish farms every year.

## Did you know?

➔ See [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) for lots of information on farm safety

### Check out:

[www.hsasafetygame.ie](http://www.hsasafetygame.ie) to play our workplace safety game  
Risk Assessment – [www.farmsafely.com](http://www.farmsafely.com)

### See also:

Information on the Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996 available from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise, and Innovation's website at [www.entemp.ie](http://www.entemp.ie)  
[www.frstraining.com](http://www.frstraining.com) for information on safe tractor skills training.

# HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

## Keep Safe On The Farm

information leaflet for post-primary students

### Do you

- ➔ Live on a farm?
- ➔ Visit friends or relatives on a farm?
- ➔ Work on a farm?
- ➔ Think about studying agriculture further?

Then read on ...



# Why learn about farm safety?

Agriculture is an important economic sector in Ireland. It provides excellent food products for people both at home and abroad and sustains jobs in the country. It is estimated that there are 139, 829 active farms in Ireland (CSO, 2010). Due to the busy nature of farming life and the exposure to high risk work activity it is important that the farming community and persons coming in contact with the farm are protected and safe.

You may live on a farm or perhaps have a relative or friend who lives on one. Maybe you are planning to do some summer work on a farm. Whatever the circumstance this leaflet will outline some of the key points you need to know about keeping safe on farms.

The farm is a unique workplace as it includes the home. Everyone connected to the farm, including visitors, can be exposed to the many hazards that exist there.

Sadly too many lives are lost each year as a result of farm accidents. Several of these accidents involve children and young persons. In 2012 alone 21 people died on farms. Between 1996 and 2011, 46 children and young persons died as a result of farm accidents. In addition to this many non-fatal accidents also occur, several of these resulting in serious injuries such as loss of limbs or occupational ill-health such as chronic back pain or hearing loss.

While parents are responsible for ensuring their children are safe and do not stray into dangerous areas, all adults working in agriculture, have a responsibility to keep safe and follow safe working practices. Young persons need to know, understand and follow the safety rules.



## What can I learn?

There is a lot to learn about farm safety. Some of the most common causes of accidents result from falls, contact with moving machinery or equipment, livestock, particularly bulls, and drowning. These are what are known as hazards, something that could cause harm. You need to be vigilant when visiting a farm and stay clear of any hazards, unless properly supervised and instructed.

Remember to:

- ⚠ Be careful around machinery and equipment. Machinery can be noisy and the person operating them may not know you are nearby.
- ⚠ Beware of anything stacked up in piles, e.g. bales of hay or tractor tyres. These can topple over and crush you so stay clear!
- ⚠ Give animals lots of space. They may become agitated or excited particularly when they are protecting their young or being moved.
- ⚠ Wash your hands regularly, and particularly after contact with animals or their housing and feedstuffs.
- ⚠ Watch where you go and keep away from slurry tanks or water ponds.



# I'm a young person, what should I know?

- If you are working on a farm you must be properly instructed about the work activities and the associated risks and how to avoid them. You must also know what to do in an emergency.
- You should not engage in farm activities unless supervised by a responsible adult.
- Report any defective equipment to a responsible adult. Never operate a vehicle or machine if it is unsafe to do so, e.g. problem with brakes, broken mirror, lights not working.
- You must be 14 years old or over to operate a tractor or mechanically propelled machine on the farm. You should attend a formal training course run by a competent training provider, and receive adequate instruction in the safe operation of the particular tractor or mechanically propelled machine you are driving and fully understand the purpose of all the controls and the effect of their improper use.
- Never carry passengers on a farm vehicle unless a seat is provided. FRS Training have a Safe Tractor Skills (14-16 year olds) course.
- You must be over 16 years of age to drive a tractor on a public road. The rules of the road should be consulted for road usage.
- Always wear the proper personal protective equipment (PPE). This includes items such as gloves, dust masks, ear muffs and a suitable helmet if operating a quad.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions. You may need to be over 16 to operate a quad.



## Remember if you are helping on the FARM

- F** **Focus on safety**  
Listen to instructions. Be safety aware. Don't mess around. Don't take chances.
- A** **Ask**  
Never be complacent about getting help or advice when you need it. Check with your supervisor or a responsible adult and never take risks. Just ask!
- R** **Read the signs**  
You may notice safety signs on the farm. Pay attention to warnings. Remember this information is there to protect you. If you see something unsafe report it immediately to a responsible adult.
- M** **Meet the requirements**  
Don't start any job until you have clear instructions and are confident you know what to do. Make sure you are fully compliant with the requirements of the job.

