

Occupation Health and Safety in Agriculture Training
(Internal use only)

1. OHS In Agriculture

Agriculture is one of the most dangerous jobs. Everyone working in agriculture needs the right skills to do their job safely and meet safety rules. Farming often involves working alone or in remote places, which can make safety risks worse. The agriculture industry includes businesses that:

- Grow fruits, vegetables, and other crops (not including forestry)
- Raise or farm animals (not including fish farming).

Agriculture is dangerous because of many risks, such as:

- Machines, like tractors, motorbikes, and quad bikes
- Chemicals, like pesticides, weed killers, and fertilizers
- Loud noise
- Dust
- Working outside, which means exposure to the sun and all kinds of weather
- Working with animals.

Here's the statistics for fatality in agriculture in Australia in 2023

Year	Cause	Agency
Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming		
2019-20	Falls from a height	Other and not specified ferrous and non-ferrous metal
2019-20	Vehicle incident	Other and not specified cars, station wagons, vans, utilities
2020-21	Vehicle incident	Motorcycles and sidecars, scooters
2021-22	Being trapped by moving machinery or equipment	Other and not specified power presses
2021-22	Vehicle incident	All terrain vehicle (ATV)
2021-22	Vehicle incident	Tractors, agricultural or otherwise
Beef Cattle Farming		

2019-20	Being hit by moving objects	Other and not specified cars, station wagons, vans, utilities
2020-21	Being hit by moving objects	Tractors, agricultural or otherwise
Dairy Cattle Farming		
2019-20	Insect and spider bites and stings	Insects
2020-21	Unspecified mechanisms of incident	Agency not known
Other Grain Growing		
2021-22	Being hit by moving objects	Tractors, agricultural or otherwise
2021-22	Falls from a height	Other and not specified material handling hoists
Vegetable Growing		
2020-21	Being hit by moving objects	Tractors, agricultural or otherwise
2021-22	Being hit by moving objects	Tractors, agricultural or otherwise
Berry Fruit Growing		
2020-21	Being trapped by moving machinery or equipment	Tractors, agricultural or otherwise
Horse Farming		
2019-20	Rollover	All terrain vehicle (ATV)
Olive Growing		
2021-22	Vehicle incident	All terrain vehicle (ATV)
Stone Fruit Growing		
2021-22	Being trapped between stationary and moving objects	Front-end loaders, log handling plant, other loading plant

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/fatalities-and-injury-statistics-agriculture>

In order to reduce these hazards, agriculture employers, supervisors and employees are required to comply with the regulations and conduct safe practice.

2. Safe practices when working on farms

2.1. Personal protective equipment

Video resource

This video explains the purpose of protective equipment, or PPE to workers.

<https://www.youtu.be.com/watch?v=XVNMj0ZxZsI>

Scan the QR code to view the video



Personal protective equipment (PPE) should:

- Match the job you're doing
- Keep you safe enough
- Not cause new dangers
- Work well with other PPE being used
- Fit you right
- Not interfere with any medical conditions of the user
- be easy to use
- Feel comfortable



Wearing gloves, long sleeve clothes and hat to work in the sun

2.2. Working in the sun

For those working in agriculture, gardening, and landscaping, much of the job is done outdoors. In Australia, working outside means facing heat and sun exposure, which can be harmful to workers' health and safety. One effective way to reduce this risk is by avoiding work in direct sunlight during times of extreme heat.

Video resource

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nA5Hsc3UK-g&>

(Scan the QR code to view the video)

This video talks about issues with working in the heat and how to address them



2.3. Correct posture and manual handling

Manual handling includes any task that involves lifting, lowering, carrying, pushing, pulling, holding, or restraining. It also covers actions like stretching, bending, awkward positions, and repeating the same movements. Injuries from manual handling can happen when lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying, lowering, holding, or restraining objects or animals, leading to problems such as:

- sprains and strains of muscles, ligaments, and tendons
- back injuries
- joint and bone injuries or wear
- nerve damage or compression
- muscle and blood vessel injuries.

Horticulture tasks might involve a great deal of manual handling or heavy lifting, such as moving 20kg bags of potting mix. It's important to always use safe manual handling techniques to lower the risk of injury. Consider the following steps:

- eliminate the need to lift or move heavy items
- use smaller amounts to make materials lighter
- use equipment like forklifts or trolleys to move heavy things.

Correct manual handling should be part of everyday work for both employers and workers. To lower the risk from repetitive manual handling, take these steps:

- set work speeds that match each person's ability
- provide different tasks in job design
- reduce fixed positions and repetitive movements by mixing tasks
- increase the number of short breaks rather than having long breaks
- design equipment to adjust for height, reach, and angle
- arrange the workspace for easy movement

- use ergonomic tools, like sprayers with locks, pneumatic pruners, or tools with longer handles
- position tools and equipment to allow work in a comfortable, upright position, mainly at waist level
- rotate tasks to vary movements and reduce strain.

Video: Manual Handling Training Back to Basics

This short video shows how to carry out manual handling safely

<https://youtu.be/Nt4PEss3Ppk>

(Scan the QR code to view the video)

