

## Children On The Farm

Children who live on farms or who come to visit are often at greater risk than adults who work there. To make your farm safer for children, hazards must be spotted and risks minimized before children discover them. The safest farms for children are those where safety is a priority for everyone.

### Spot the hazard

Ask children to help you to spot hazards. Identify places where children like to play, perhaps where they are not supposed to be, and the sort of things they might like doing. Consider dams, streams and pools, silos, tractors, electricity, workshops and machinery sheds, chemical storage areas, farm bikes, guns and dangerous stock.

### Assess the risk

For each identified risk, assess the likelihood and possible severity of injury or harm. Ask the children to help. Make high risk areas your top priority for safety improvements.

### Make the changes

The following suggestions will help you to minimize risks to children on your farm.

#### Fences

- For small children, have an effective fence around the house and yard.
- Fence off septic tanks, sheep dips, seepage pits, ponds dams, pools and creeks particularly if close to the house.
- Maintain fences round nearby paddocks and work yards to protect small children from animals, vehicles, machinery, and road traffic.
- Have safe, fenced-off areas where children can play.

#### Workshop

- Ensure gates, doors and locking systems keep young children out of workshops and hazardous storage areas.
- Have safety rules for older children who may need to enter these areas on farm duties.
- Keep workshops free from child hazards relating to electricity, power tools, fire, poisoning, slips, trips, falls and other dangers.

#### Pesticides

- Keep farm pesticides locked away out of children's reach.
- Fence off pesticide mixing and wash-down bays to prevent access by children.
- Keep children out of orchards after spraying.

#### Silos, grain storage

- Keep grain storage bins, silos, augers and trucks, adequately guarded to prevent access by children.
- Never allow children to play on stored grain in silos.
- Ensure fixed ladders are guarded and kept above children's reach.
- Have rules keeping children out of grain loading and storage areas unless under close supervision.

#### Machinery and equipment

- Lock tractors, trucks and other farm machinery away after use, out of bounds to children.
- Electrical appliances and tools should be turned off, disengaged and kept inaccessible to young children.
- Keep firearms, ammunition and explosives locked and out of children's reach.

### **Protection from animals**

- Have rules to safeguard children from dogs that might attack or bite.
- Ensure small children cannot wander into animal pens and stockyards with confined stock.

### **Ladders**

- Store ladders away to prevent children climbing roofs, silos, trees and other height hazards.
- Ensure fixed ladders on silos, bins, tank stands, windmills etc. are adequately guarded against children attempting to climb them.

### ***Emergency first aid***

- Have an emergency plan for dealing with serious accidents.
- Keep a first aid kit suitable for children, and have someone trained in first aid.

### ***Do you***

- Have a 24-hour safety program for everyone on the farm?
- Set a good safety example for children?
- Safeguard children from potential hazards?