

National Farm Safety and Health Week, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The production of agricultural commodities for domestic and international markets has been the mainstay of American agriculture for decades. Farmers and ranchers from coast to coast raise, process, and distribute high quality products that meet the nutritional and sustainable needs of consumers worldwide. These commodities require that agricultural workers dedicate long strenuous hours, often enduring weather conditions that create stress and danger that other industries are not prone to.

The hard work and dedication of agricultural workers, including farm and ranch families, help meet the demand for U.S. products in the expanding global markets. Work undertaken by agricultural workers often exposes them to many workplace hazards. They are always on the alert for risks associated with the operation of farm machinery; exposures related to the application of agricultural chemicals and fertilizers; and when working around large, unpredictable livestock.

Some of our nation's agricultural workers are at a higher level of risk of injury than others. Among them are children and youths who actively participate in family farm operations. They are often exposed to the same hazards as adults; however their level of maturity and experience does not allow them to fully understand their risks. Seniors who are still actively involved in farming and ranching are also at greater risk. Some are slowed by previous injuries or from the onset of work-related arthritis and may no longer have the quick reaction time necessary to avoid a serious incident.

As we reflect upon the hard work of our nation's agricultural workers, we must also keep in focus the importance of national security, and emphasize the critical nature of rural security and protection of our vital natural resources and agriculture infrastructure.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States do hereby proclaim the week of September 17-23, 2006 "National Farm Safety and Health Week." I call upon the agencies, organizations, and businesses that serve America's agricultural workers to strengthen their commitment to promoting farm safety and health programs. I further call upon all citizens of our great nation to reflect on the importance of our agricultural heritage and to make the health and safety of our farmers, ranchers, and farm workers among our utmost national priorities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this _____ day of
September, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the independence of the
United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.