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Contact: Scott Heiberger, heiberger.scott@mcrf.mfldclin.edu; 715-389-7541

International group promotes National Farm Safety and Health Week

The International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health (ISASH) has updated its membership list and made contact information available online in conjunction with National Farm Safety and Health Week (September 18-24, 2011): *Safety Counts – Your Community Depends On It*.

ISASH members include engineers, educators, insurers, physicians, nurses, veterinarians, statisticians, communicators, business leaders and others who work for a safer and healthier agricultural work place.

“Safe practices on farms and ranches also lead to safer and healthier rural communities,” said ISASH President Marsha Purcell, American Farm Bureau Federation. “And at harvest time, especially, those working on our farms and ranches need to be mindful of working safely.”

The list of ISASH experts can be found at www.isash.org. Additionally, there’s a link to the list via the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (www.necasag.org), the agricultural partner for the National Safety Council.

ISASH recognizes the hazardous nature of the agriculture industry. In a typical year, 551 workers die while doing agricultural work in the United States and about 88,000 suffer lost-time injuries. Most of these incidents are preventable.

ISASH officially changed its name earlier this year; it had been known as the National Institute for Farm Safety since 1962. The name change was prompted by several key considerations, including:

- Growth in international membership.
- An increase in the number of members involved in health and agromedicine.
- The desire to replace “farm” with the more encompassing "agricultural."

“Our new name and tagline, ‘Protecting People in Agriculture,’ better reflect the needs of agriculture and the work of our membership,” Purcell said. “With our 50th anniversary coming up in 2012, we felt it was a good time to take a look at how we’ve evolved and where we want to go.”

Board members elected: ISASH elected three new members to its board of directors during the annual ISASH symposium held this past summer in Boise, Idaho, and co-sponsored by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Elected to three-year terms were Mike DeSpain, John Deere; Karen Funkenbusch, University of Missouri; and Chris Shivers, Mississippi Farm Bureau.

Rounding out the 2011-12 board of directors are: ISASH President Marsha Purcell, American Farm Bureau Federation; President-Elect George Cook, University of Vermont; Eric Hallman, Cargill; Ann Carruth, Southeast Louisiana University; Bernard Geschke, Progressive Agriculture; and Bruce Johnson, Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association. Ex-Officio to the board: Nancy Hetzel, treasurer; Chip Petrea, University of Illinois, secretary.

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