

## PRESS RELEASE

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### National Farm Safety and Health Week September 18 – 24, 2011

Each year since 1944, the third week of September has been recognized as National Farm Safety & Health Week. This recognition has been an annual promotion initiated by the National Safety Council and has been proclaimed as such by each sitting U.S. President since Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the first document. Over the years, the development and dissemination of National Farm Safety & Health Week materials has shifted to the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety. NECAS is the agricultural partner for NSC and has been serving the agricultural family and business community since 1997.

The 2011 theme for National Farm Safety & Health Week is *“Safety Counts ~ Your Community Depends On It.”* Go to our web site, [www.necasag.org](http://www.necasag.org) for information and public service announcements related to this year’s theme. We are most grateful to our friends at Illinois Farm Bureau for their work in developing the theme and logo this year. For the past few years, there has been an increasing focus on the safety and health issues in agriculture related to tobacco farming, viticulture and enology, and grain production.

The many aspects of wine production from early vineyard growth and nurturing to harvest to the wine production process have established an increased presence in North American agriculture. An emphasis on a culture of safety is vital to the wine production industry. As in the majority of large industries, larger, established wineries have documented safety and health programs. For many of the smaller vineyards throughout the U.S. and Canada, safety programs are more difficult to develop. An awareness of safety issues related to hand held tools, presses, ergonomics, ladders, sleep deprivation, and weather is crucial to the well-being of workers and crop production. The National Education Center for Agricultural Safety, as well as other agencies, has developed safety programs specific to the wine production industry.

In the U.S., thousands of workers are engaged in the growing and harvesting of tobacco and its products. Ergonomics, proper tools and equipment, appropriate clothing, and weather conditions are among the many issues that contribute to the safety and health status of tobacco workers. A major issue each harvest season is green tobacco (nicotine) sickness.

With over 50 grain bin incidents, auger related injuries, PTO incidents, and more than two dozen fatalities in the U.S. in 2010, the grain production industry continues to be one of the most dangerous aspects of crop production. Grain storage units are a familiar site through much of the central regions in North America, with family members of all ages involved in the industry.

As we recognize National Farm Safety & Health Week this September, please join us in promoting safe and healthy practices on our farms and ranches across the U.S. and in our neighboring countries as producers enter the harvest season. We welcome your collaboration and participation. If you have an article or public service announcement that you would like to share with educators and media, please send it to the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety via email. Although the focus is on tobacco, viticulture, and grain, we welcome information on any safety and health aspect related to farming and ranching. Contact information is listed below.

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