



## Rural Road Safety

***Rural Road Safety impacts everyone. Motor vehicle and farm equipment crashes are five times more likely to result in a fatality. The information below will help you protect yourself and others. Also check out the **Growing Safely Rural Road Safety** video on the **Monsanto Off-the-Job Safety YouTube Channel**.***



Driving is one of the riskiest things people do, and many people are on the road and in a hurry. America’s rural roadways are not equipped for accelerated speeds and can present several safety hazards.

Rural roads can be narrow and winding, constructed of gravel, and have unguarded intersections and railroad crossings.

Thirty-six percent of farmers spend an estimated 50 hours a year moving equipment on public roads. Most paved roads are 18 to 20 feet wide and 70 percent of the machinery is more than 13 feet wide.

As a result, motorists could encounter large farm equipment moving slowly from field to field and taking up a large portion of roadway.

Both motorists and farmers must be prepared to share rural roads. The tips on the other side of this handout will help both types of drivers protect themselves and others on the road.

Keep in mind that leaving home a little earlier and allowing more time to make it to a destination is the best way to ensure that drivers, passengers and other vehicle operators are able to safely share the road.

***Source: The National Education Center for Agricultural Safety, Nationwide Agribusiness, Farm Safety For Just Kids***

Taking time to  
**PASS**  
**SAFELY**  
can be the  
difference between  
**LIFE**  
and  
**DEATH**



**Rural fatalities accounted for 55 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2010, despite only 19 percent of the U.S. population living in rural areas – \*Source Fatality Analysis Reporting System.**

## TIPS FOR FARMERS

- ❖ Plan travel to avoid high traffic times, busy roads, bad weather and times before daylight or after dark.
- ❖ Be more obvious to motorists by using visible reflective SMV emblems and lights for any implement operated on public roadways. It's the law!
- ❖ Watch out for passing vehicles when making left turns, especially into fields.
- ❖ Always use hand or turn signals to indicate plans to turn.
- ❖ Install wide mirrors so you can see traffic that is following you.
- ❖ Use reflective marking tape and reflectors on equipment edges.
- ❖ Turn on farm equipment lights.
- ❖ If road and shoulder conditions are safe, pull over temporarily to allow traffic to pass.
- ❖ Minimize equipment width and haul equipment when practical.
- ❖ Have an escort precede or follow you, when practical.
- ❖ Be aware of drowsiness from long hours of work.



*Photo Credit: Iowa Department of Public Safety*

## TIPS FOR MOTORISTS

### SPEED AND CLOSING DISTANCE

- ❖ Always wear seat belts and heed the road speed limit.
- ❖ Reduce speed when you see farm equipment on rural roads.
- ❖ Allow for short closing distances when approaching slow moving vehicles.
- ❖ Brake for orange and red reflective triangles that warn of slow moving vehicles.
- ❖ Slow down on gravel roads, hills, curves and turns.
- ❖ Keep safe distance behind farm equipment so farmers can see you. If you can't see his mirrors, he can't see you.
- ❖ Yield to wide equipment on narrow roads.

### PASSING FARM EQUIPMENT

- ❖ Be especially cautious of farm equipment turning left onto driveways or fields. They may first pull right for wide turns.
- ❖ Pass farm equipment only if conditions are safe and no on-coming traffic.
- ❖ Farm equipment operators may pull over on the shoulder of road if safe to do so.
- ❖ Farm equipment operators may move to the center to avoid objects on the road shoulder.
- ❖ Do not pass farm equipment on the yellow line, curves or hills. BE PATIENT.

*\*Source: Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health*

**Be Patient. Be Alert.**  
**SAVE LIVES!**

