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**For Immediate Release**

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**Every Farmer Counts! Continuing to protect present and future generations of farmers and rural families through virtual messages**

By: Jana L. Davidson, Education Content Specialist for the Progressive Agriculture Foundation

A farm is a wonderful place to grow up. However, as a busy workplace with active, moving machinery and equipment, it can be a dangerous place for young children. During fall harvest and other hectic times of the year, it is important to keep a safety focus and consider the curiosity of a child.

Sadly, every three days a child dies and every day 33 children are injured due to agricultural-related incidents in the United States according to the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety (NCCRAHS). Of the leading sources of fatalities among these youth, 47% involved transportation (including tractors, ATVs, and UTVs), 20% involved contact with machinery, and 13% involved incidents with animals and other humans. As for ag-related injuries, 60% occurred to children that were not working on the farm.



For adults, role modeling safe behavior is essential. As your child's first role model and teacher, parents have the responsibility to lead by example and instill the importance of practicing safety all the time. Here are five safety tips to keep in mind:

1. Always walk around your equipment before starting it, as children may be hiding in your blind spots. Doing this, can also alert you to any other potential safety issues on or around your equipment.
2. Never allow kids to climb and play on or near farm equipment even when it is not in use.
3. Always lock-up equipment and machinery when you finish using them. Remove the keys and keep them out of reach of children. Also, for equipment that may fall, such as buckets, make sure they are placed in the down position.

4. Do not allow children to be passengers on tractors, lawn mowers, or other farm equipment.
5. Designate and create a “safe play area” with protected boundaries, like a fence, that is far away from where machinery is operated or stored.

Progressive Agriculture Safety Day proudly supports 2020 National Farm Safety & Health Week, taking place September 20 through 26. Join in, as we promote safe and healthy practices on our farms and ranches during this upcoming harvest season. The theme “**Every Farmer Counts**,” is one that reminds us that it is in everyone’s best interest to prioritize the health and safety of those who work so hard to provide our abundant supply of food, fiber and fuel. Throughout the week, a different safety-related topic will be highlighted each day:

- Monday, September 21, 2020 will focus on Tractor Safety & Rural Roadway Safety
- Tuesday, September 22, 2020 will cover Overall Farmer Health
- Wednesday, September 23, 2020 focuses on Safety & Health for Youth in Agriculture\*
- Thursday, September 24, 2020 covers Emergency Preparedness in Agriculture
- Friday, September 25, 2020 examines Safety & Health for Women in Agriculture



\*On Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, you can register to attend a Virtual Progressive Agriculture Safety Day held via Zoom at 9:00 CDT/10:00 a.m. EDT or noon CDT/1:00 p.m. CDT. Due to COVID-19, the Progressive Agriculture Foundation chose to suspend many in-person events. However, many resources have been developed on-line including a Virtual Progressive Agriculture Safety Day, which carries on the program’s mission of keeping children living on farms, ranches and in rural communities safe and healthy. Additionally, most evenings during the week, we will have a special story hour for younger children at 7:00 p.m. CDT/8:00 p.m. EDT.

For more information on the Progressive Agriculture Safety Day® program or to register for the virtual Safety Day or story hour, visit [www.progressiveag.org](http://www.progressiveag.org) or call us toll-free at 888-257-3529. Want to make a safe investment during National Farm Safety and Health Week? Donate to send another child to a Progressive Agriculture Safety Day® in 2021 by texting the word “**SAFETYDAY**” to 44321.

Additional National Farm Safety and Health Week can be found through the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) at [www.necasag.org](http://www.necasag.org).

**Photo 1:** During a Progressive Agriculture Safety Day in Nebraska, participants identify various hidden hazards around the farm. They also discuss appropriate ways to safely correct the hazards to prevent an incident from occurring.

**Photo 2:** 2020 NFSHW Logo