



# Agricultural Field Worker Safety Training

A Training Program for Farmers and Workers

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## What operations do field workers perform?

- Planting
- Harvesting
- Cultivating
- Weeding
- Irrigation
- Plant watering
- Fertilizing and other plant care operations



**According to the National Institute of Safety and Health, the most hazardous operations field workers perform are planting and harvesting, primarily because these operations must be completed within a limited time period.**

**Work at a reasonable pace and never take safety risks. Patience on the job results in fewer and less severe risks. Taking time to do the job right can result in higher efficiency for the entire operation.**



## What can field workers do to enhance their safety?

- Come to work well rested after having a nutritious breakfast.
- Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, and shoes that cover the feet, never sandals.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat for protection.
- Wear light weight, preferably cotton, clothing in the summer and heavier clothing for cooler weather.



•Wear loose-fitting clothing as long as the worker will not be working around a tractor, PTO, or other machines with moving parts.

• Wear sunglasses for ultraviolet protection in the open sun.

• Do not wear rings or bracelets that may prevent hand movement or be caught on tools and equipment.

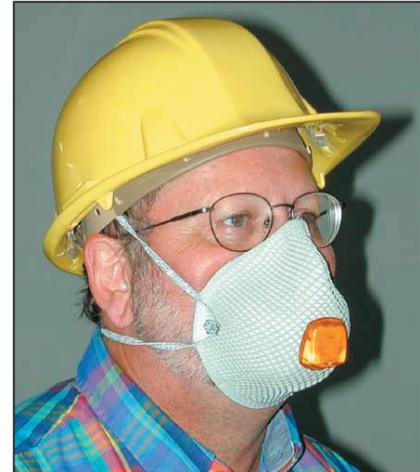
•Wear goggles or approved safety glasses with side protection to protect your eyes from plant material and pesticides. The best device depends on the job to be performed.



•Protect your ears when working near machinery, tractors, planters, and harvesters or in other noisy areas. If you experience a temporary loss of hearing or ringing in the ears, you should use earmuffs or plugs when performing that task.



•Protect yourself from dust inhalation by wearing a respirator or appropriate dust mask in addition to protective eyewear.



•Avoid heat stress by drinking 6 to 8 ounces of nonalcoholic liquid every 15 to 30 minutes. Expect to sweat, and notify your supervisor and seek shade if sweating stops or you feel dizzy, nauseated, light-headed or



have a headache. This could be a sign of ensuing heat stroke, which will require immediate medical attention. If sweating stops and heat stroke occurs, your supervisor or co-worker should spray your face and fan you to enhance air circulation and reduce body heat after calling for medical assistance. To avoid heat stroke, you should take short, hourly breaks in the shade and drink water frequently.

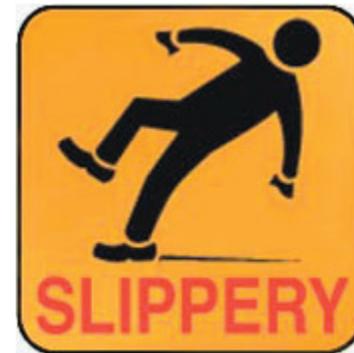
- Use sun block with an SPF of 15 or greater on exposed skin (face, hands, and neck) to provide maximum protection from sunburn.



- **Know how to lift and carry a load properly to prevent back injury. Bend your legs. Do not stoop.**

- **Remember that slips, trips, and falls can occur at any location. Slips involve slippery footing conditions caused by water, oil, detergent, ice, etc. Falls can be from a height above the walking surface or at ground level. Trips occur from stepping on undetected debris, rough terrain, or unexpected objects in the working path. Watch where you put your feet to avoid tripping.**

- **Wear work shoes with soft-cleated rubber soles and heels to reduce slips, except**



on oily, detergent-coated, or icy surfaces. These surfaces must be avoided until they are cleaned.

- Be aware that snakes, scorpions, bees, spiders, and fire ants may be present field work locations. Avoid contact with these potentially hazardous pests, and point them out to your co-workers.

- Be aware of overhead power lines, and do not allow equipment (irrigation pipes, grain auger, ladders, etc.) to contact them. Be sure power tools and equipment are in good working order, and properly grounded in rainy or wet conditions. Report faulty equipment to your supervisor.



- **Maintain good hygiene for a healthy workplace. Be sure to wash your hands before and after using toilet facilities and before food consumption.**
- **Do not enter fields that have been treated with pesticides until after the re-entry date and time. This date and time should be written on the “Do Not Enter” field sign.**
- **Do not use farm equipment for shade in which to take breaks or have lunch.**



- Do not drink irrigation water or eat your food in the field.
- Be careful working around field machinery, and avoid being run over. The equipment operator may not see you in time to stop.

