



August Newsletter



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IT'S SAFE TO SAY

A message from our leader

Harvest is approaching faster than I think we would all like.

Harvest is the time of year where we see the most incidents and fatalities on the farm. Please remember to take a moment each time you start a task to ask yourself:

Is there something that will hurt me or someone else, what can we do to remove the possibility of it happening?

Before you get started with harvest or with the fall run, make sure you are taking the time to communicate with your farm team. Having an orientation for new team members is a great way to share this information - and do not forget to include returning team members for a refresher.

This month, we have collected some practical tips and help suggestions to keep your farm safe as you prepare for a busy season. Keep scrolling to read the latest and - as always - be safe out there.

Lastly if you have questions or concerns, we are always here to help you out. You can contact our team anytime via:

- For general inquiries:

info@agasafeab.ca /403-219-7901

- For our hotline for incidence assistance: 1-833-9AGSAFE

Jody Wacowich

AgSafe Alberta Executive Director



SAFETY MINUTE

Harvest safety highlights 2021

Did you know that most fatalities on Alberta farms and ranches happen in August and September? How are you planning to keep everyone on your farm safe during harvest? Tweet us or tag us at @AgSafeAlberta!



Below are few things to keep in mind this harvest. While far from comprehensive, this list will give you some important points to talk about with your family and your crew.

1. **Keep lights, mirrors and safety reflectors clean.** A spray bottle filled with glass cleaner or vinegar and water and some clean rags in the cab can help you see where you are going and helps others to see you and your equipment.
2. **Walk around your equipment before getting in...every time.** You never know what may have changed since you were last in it or looked. Could a child or pet find shade by or under it? Did they?
3. **Drive slowly when travelling through areas where children may be present, such as yards or driveways.** It may be busy, and you might be pressed for time, but trust us, it is not worth the couple of seconds you might save by driving faster.
4. **Know where everyone on your crew is located.** Everyone should be wearing some form of high visibility clothing and know how to safely approach equipment. If you lose sight of anyone, stop moving until visual contact is made.
5. **Honk the horn on your tractor or combine three times before starting it or engaging the components.** This will alert the people on your crew that something is happening and to pay attention.
6. **Keep a fully charged fire extinguisher on your equipment.** Keep the engine and engine compartment clean. Check belts, grease bearings, and clear

debris regularly to prevent equipment fires. Take steps to avoid losing a key piece of equipment during harvest.

7. **Have several gallons of water and a shovel handy.** It is a particularly dry season and having the ability to throw water or dirt on a fire immediately after ignition is incredibly important.
8. **Keep first aid kits in your equipment.** You often work remotely and/or alone. You need to be able to do something in the event you get hurt or encounter someone else who has been. Blood loss from an injury can happen faster than you think, and the items in the first aid kit may be enough to help slow the bleeding until help arrives.
9. **Get sleep, eat well, stay hydrated, and take breaks often.** When you are fatigued, you become less productive and more likely to make a mistake... and mistakes can sometimes be deadly.
10. **Think about what you are going to do and what could go wrong.** Once you have identified what could go wrong, take steps to prevent it from happening. A few moments spent doing this can spare a life or a lifetime of regret.



Safe handling of veterinary drugs and medicated feeds

Vaccines, anti-parasitics, medicated feeds, and other products present hazards in livestock care environments. Like any hazardous product, it is critical that you

read the label, know how to use product safely, follow the manufacturers recommendations, wear all required personal protective equipment (PPE) and know what the signs of an exposure are.

When handling these products, don't underestimate the potential dangers to the people or other animals present on your farm, especially if these products are administered externally or are mixed with feed. Anyone working directly with or near product should become familiar with the product, its label and drug insert.

When Do I Need to Read a Drug or Medicated Feed Label?

- 1. Before buying the drug/medicated feed*
- 2. Before using the drug/medicated feed*
- 3. Before storing the drug/medicated feed*
- 4. Before disposing of the drug/medicated feed*



Tilmicosin exposure

Tilmicosin phosphate is an effective animal antibiotic used for the treatment of respiratory disease in livestock. While it is not used as widely as it once was (due in part to the approval of other less hazardous antibiotics in recent years), it is still found on many farms today. If yours happens to be one of these farms, would you recognize the symptoms of an exposure?

Product Name & Form	How Exposure Occurs	Symptoms/Signs of Exposure
Micotil 300® is the injectable form of tilmicosin phosphate	Injection, puncture wounds, cuts in the skin, skin contact or contact with mucous membranes	Off taste in the mouth, nausea, headache, dizziness, rapid heart rate, chest pain, anxiety, light headedness.
Pulmotil Medicated Premix® is a medicated feed containing tilmicosin phosphate	Inhalation, ingestion, and direct contact the with skin or eyes	Ingestion or injection of tilmicosin phosphate reduces their heart's ability to contract and causes a rapid heartbeat which can be fatal.

It should be noted that there is *no antidote* for a tilmicosin phosphate.

Where possible, substitute tilmicosin phosphate with a less hazardous antibiotic. If this is not practical, ensure that everyone on your farm who works with or near the product is thoroughly trained in its safe handling, use, understands the hazards of the product, knows and uses the hazard controls in place to reduce them, can recognize the symptoms/signs of an exposure, and knows how to respond to an exposure. It is also important to ensure that animal handling or dust collection equipment is maintained and working, that good housekeeping is being practiced, and that unauthorized individuals are prevented from accessing the product.

Elanco, the maker of Micotil®, has developed an online [Safe Handling and Use Training document](#) to help.

Visit Take11.ca for helpful hints on chemical exposure on your farm



Watch our short video on chemical exposure

SAFETY FIRST, LAST THOUGHTS

Don't let the 'm' word hold you back this harvest

Meeting: *A planned occasion when people come together...to discuss something.*

Conversation: *A talk between two or more people in which thoughts...and ideas are expressed, questions are asked and answered, or news and information is exchanged.*

Source: Cambridge English Dictionary

Meetings with the bank, meetings with the accountant, meetings with your child's principal, so many meetings that you can find yourself not looking forward to. Like many of us, just hearing the word 'meeting' makes an eye twitch. This is no exception in health and safety, especially when the meeting is held out of obligation (rather than purpose) and done such a way that the person leading it is 'talking at' everyone present.

Now take a moment to read the definitions of *meeting* and *conversation* again. When you 'meet' with your crew, what are you looking to achieve? More often than not, what you are looking to accomplish fits the definition of a conversation. Don't avoid important health and safety related discussions with the people on

your farm; instead of calling it a meeting, start calling it a conversation.

A small change in how we look at or approach something can have a big impact on safety, especially if that something is a meeting that was once avoided and has become something that the people on your farm find helpful and important. Good communication can save lives; maybe it is time to have less meetings on your farm and more conversations about safety.



A simple act of leadership

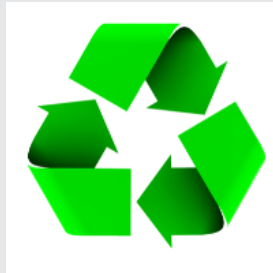
Do the people on your farm make a point of taking a few minutes to talk about the job they are going to do, the tasks that will be performed and the hazards of those tasks before starting work? This type of meeting, or conversation if you read the previous article, goes by many names (i.e., toolbox talks, tailgate meetings, field level hazard assessments, etc.). Regardless of what you call it, it is:

- A brief, informal talk led by a supervisor or lead hand
- Held at the location work and takes place immediately before the job is going to start
- Specific to the work and tasks that are going to be performed that morning/afternoon/day
- Repeated as necessary, for example, when the job or tasks changes, there is a change in crew members or equipment, or once everyone is ready to move

onto the next part of the job or next task

- An opportunity for the crew to ask questions about the work being done, their role in it, and even make suggestions that could help the work get done in a more safe and efficient way

This single, simple act of leadership by the supervisor or lead hand will help ensure everyone's focus is on the work at hand. When we are focused on what we are doing, we are not only less likely to make mistakes that could result in injury or equipment damage, but we are also likely to get the work done more efficiently. This type of meeting or conversation only needs to take a few minutes, but it can save hours, days or even a life depending on the type of mistake that was avoided because of it.



Agricultural Plastics: Get Ready To Recycle!

Don't wait until its too late and you get stuck digging around in the snow or pulling it out of the muck in the spring. Recycling agricultural plastics is not only the right thing to do, but it keeps your water, land, crops, animals, and ultimately you and your family free from the toxic compounds that they contain.

For examples of agricultural plastics, the hazards they pose when not handled properly, and tips to get your agricultural plastics ready for recycle, read this [Ag Plastics Fact Sheet](#).



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