

SMV emblems can save lives

NEWARK, DEL. — Statistics do not favor the farmer who leaves a field and enters a highway. Though the average farm tractor is on the road only one out of every 25 operating hours, a third of all tractor accidents occur there.

Two out of three highway accidents involving slow moving vehicles are rear-end collisions,

points out Delaware extension safety specialist Ron Jester. Motorists often fail to notice the disparity between their own speed and that of the vehicle ahead. By the time they realize they are approaching a slow moving vehicle, there is very little time to adjust speed and direction to avoid a collision.

Last year in Delaware there were 12 recorded accidents involving slow moving vehicles. To avoid such accidents, Jester says drivers of slow moving vehicles must give other motorists plenty of advance warning. This means prominently displaying the triangular, fluorescent/reflective slow moving vehicle (SMV) emblem on all trailing equipment. Tractor operators should also use emergency flashers on a highway. On certain roads they may require escort vehicles as an added precaution.

It is important that the SMV emblem be displayed only on equipment normally traveling at speeds under 25 mph. To use it on other types of equipment or stationary objects is to invite trouble, Jester says.

The following safety recommendations are from "Motor Vehicle Laws Affecting Farmers

in Delaware."

— Observe all traffic laws. You have all the rights and all the duties of any other motor vehicle driver on the highway.

— Keep all lighting devices properly maintained according to the Delaware motor vehicle laws, and use at all times on the highway.

— A slow moving vehicle, behind which five or more vehicles are formed in line, shall turn off the roadway wherever sufficient area for a safe turnout exists.

— Stop before emerging from an alley, driveway or private road, and yield right-of-way to any pedestrian or vehicle approaching on the roadway.

— A SMV emblem is for the farmer's safety and is required by the Occupational Safety and Health Act to be properly attached to equipment operated by employees on the highways.

— Buckle up for safety if the

tractor or self-propelled equipment is equipped with a roll-over protection structure.

By taking these precautions, driving vigilantly, and restricting road travel to off-peak hours, farmers can do much to eliminate needless accidents, Jester says.

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USDA simplifies poultry rule

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Effective June 22, federally-inspected poultry slaughter plants will no longer be required to keep poultry condemned for disease separate from poultry condemned for other reasons, a USDA official said today.

Under the new rule, plants may keep all condemned poultry in the same container except for poultry suspected of containing biological residues, said Donald L. Houston, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Federal inspection regulations require that poultry condemned for disease, or for such nondisease reasons as contamination, death other than by slaughter, decomposition or overheat, be made unfit for human consumption. Approved disposal methods include rendering, incineration and chemical denaturing.

Poultry condemned for biological residues, however, must either be incinerated or buried under USDA supervision. This regulatory requirement will not be changed under the final rule.

"Since both diseased and nondiseased condemned products are disposed of in the same manner, the present requirement is often restrictive and unnecessary," said Houston. "The final rule will allow plants to operate more efficiently."

USDA received two favorable comments on the Aug. 9, 1982, proposal.