

How to make 1984 safer on the farm

WILMINGTON, Del. — Making your farm a safe place to live and work in 1984 is one goal you'll want to reach - and keep.

While there's some good news concerning farm families and their safety consciousness, (80% of farm homes now have smoke detectors), farming continues to be a dangerous, high-risk occupation.

That's the consensus of a new farm safety survey just compiled by Du Pont Agricultural Chemicals, makers of "Lexone" DF.

The survey questioned 5,000 soybean farmers in the Delmarva and other major soybean areas in the U.S.

Some highlights of the survey:

—17.5% of the soybean farmers responding said a member of the immediate family, a close relative or a neighbor had been killed or injured in a farm accident in the last two years.

—9.5% of the respondents had an accident or injury causing a loss of time on their farm last year. 44.8% were machinery-related accidents, 22.4% were caused by falls, 6.9% were chemical related.

—Only 40% have ever attended a safety meeting.

—50.4% say they always wear gloves when mixing agrichemicals, but only 19.7% say they always wear goggles. Most (68%) store agrichemicals in a barn or farm shop rather than a special chemical storage building.

—Nearly 80% have smoke detectors in their homes.

—Nearly 80% have a fire extinguisher on their combine, but only 45% have a fire extinguisher in their barn.

—Just 39% have the Poison Information Center phone number posted near their telephone.

—49% wear seat belts in their cars and pickups "sometimes"; 46% said they never use seat belts.

As the survey statistics indicate, part-time safety in any phase of the farm operation invites personal loss, and often tragedy.

No loss compares with the farm accident which costs the life of a family member. Less tragic, but extremely serious, is loss of an arm or leg - or health.

Common sense is basic, but safety specialists believe more caution is needed. Also, proper safety equipment.

For example, when working with farm chemicals, farmers should wear gloves and goggles. For best

resistance to chemicals, gloves should be made of natural rubber, and of medium to heavy weight. Gloves should extend up past the wrist so that they reach above sleeve cuffs. Do wear long sleeves.

Goggles used for protection against agrichemicals or anhydrous ammonia have special air vents, hooded to help prevent liquids from entering. Goggles used for shopwork probably don't have that added degree of safety, extension safety specialists say.

The Du Pont survey clearly shows that farm families have made some positive strides in several areas, but much remains to be done to prevent farm accidents.

How safety conscious are you? Take this 20 question quiz and see how you score. Then, set your 1984 goal to make it a safe year on your farm.

1. I have attended a farm safety meeting in last 12 months. _____
2. Our house has at least two smoke detectors. _____
3. All safety shields on implements and power tools are in place and in good repair. _____
4. Everyone who operates a combine or other heavy equipment stops regularly to take a 10-minute break. _____
5. We have a fire extinguisher in the house. _____
6. We have a fire extinguisher in the barn. _____
7. We have a fire extinguisher on the combine. _____
8. Farm chemicals are stored in a separate, locked building. _____
9. We wear gloves when handling agrichemicals. _____
10. We wear goggles when mixing agrichemicals. _____
11. My family and I wear seat belts when driving the car or pickup. _____
12. I always wear long trousers mowing the lawn. _____
13. I always wear safety footwear while mowing the lawn. _____
14. I have my state's Poison Information Center telephone number posted by the telephone. _____
15. I always read the label before using a chemical. _____
16. I am familiar with respirators and dust masks and know when they should be worn. _____
17. I have a bump cap or protective headgear to wear in the farm shop. _____
18. I avoid wearing loose clothing while working around machinery or in the shop. _____
19. When working on the combine, I solidly block or use safety stands on the header before working underneath. _____
20. I check clearances, especially of over head power lines. _____

How Did You Fare?

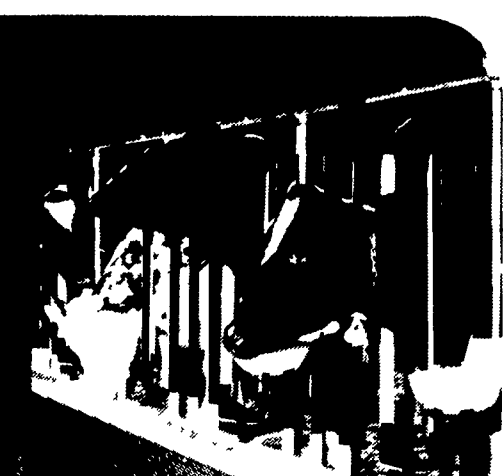
I'm safety conscious and well protected - 18 to 20 "yes" answers.
 I'm better than average but need to do more - 15-17.
 I'm average but just not up to snuff - 12-14.
 I could be in trouble - 9-11.
 I'm an accident waiting to happen - 9 and below

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