

Farming With A Traumatic Brain Injury

MONTROSE (Susquehanna Co.) — It is important to recognize that an individual who has experienced a brain injury as a result of a stroke or blow to the head may have varying limitations including memory loss, dizziness, fatigue, instability, paralysis, decreased reaction time, loss of coordination, cognitive impairment, visual and other impairments, and impulsivity. Those with a brain in-

jury also may recall their previous abilities and not be aware of their new ability level. They need to recognize the effect of their new ability level on safe performance of farm tasks.

Farmers who have returned to work on the farm after a brain injury offer the following suggestions:

1. If the doctor says you should not drive a car, do not operate

farm machinery.

2. If the doctor says you can drive a car with modifications, the same applies to farm machinery. Consult a rehabilitation professional for modifications.

3. Wear protective head gear, such as a helmet, at all times when performing farm-related tasks.

4. Use appropriate mobility aids to help prevent falls. Examples are a golf cart, lawn mower with adaptations, appropriate wheel-

chair or special cane tips for maneuvering on ice, snow and loose gravel.

5. Those with paralysis on one side of the body may need assistance mounting and dismounting farm machinery. Consider additional steps, wider steps, steps made of non-slip material and additional hand-holds to help prevent falling.

6. When vertical climbing is needed, consider a lift, back sup-

port rings or stairs, or leave this task to someone else. Avoid vertical climbing if there is a risk of getting dizzy.

7. Be cautious around livestock because they are so unpredictable. Consider fence line feeders or automated feeding systems, raised decks for hogs, appropriate livestock holding equipment, or delegate livestock chores to someone else.

8. Individuals with decreased thinking (cognitive) skills should consult with medical professionals about what activities they could perform with supervision or prompting aids, such as a job coach, color-coded measuring devices, memory aids, closed-loop tape machine with repeating messages, and outdoor communication devices.

9. Adaptations or modifications should be used only by the individual for whom they were designed. Use by another individual may cause injury.



This column is for readers who have questions but don't know who to ask for answers.

"You Ask—You Answer" is for non-cooking questions. When a reader sends in a question, it will be printed in the paper. Readers who know the answer are asked to respond by mailing the answer, which will then be printed in the paper.

Questions and Answers to this column should be addressed to You Ask—You Answer, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Attention: Lou Ann Good.

Do not send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a reply. If we receive the answer, we will publish it as soon as possible. Please include your phone number because we sometimes need to contact the person to clarify details. We will not publish your phone number unless you request it.

QUESTION — Gregory Badger, Collegeville, would like to know where to find a long sleeve shirt produced by a company called Feed Sacks. The printing on the back is "Pawnee Bill's Wild West Show" with authentic markings toting a wild west show theme. Message on the back states "The only historic Wild West Show in existence. Seats 10,000 people under waterproof canopies." Either this shirt or something similar with a western or side show theme.

QUESTION — Bill Martin, Egg Harbor, N.J., wants to know where to obtain seeds for a sweet melon called cob mush melons, which require little water to grow. During the Depression Era, these melons were popular.

QUESTION — Paul Musser, Ephrata, wants to know where to buy organic spray to use on fruit trees.

QUESTION — M. Miller, 250 Kulp Road, Harleysville, would like to purchase a New Holland farm engine or parts. Also, he would like manuals for the New Holland engine and machinery.

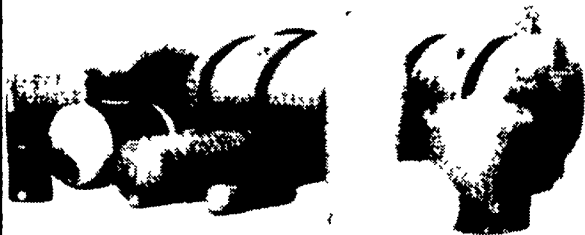
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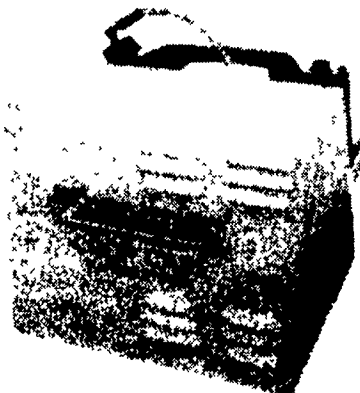
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