

Always Inspect Equipment For Hazards, Wear

In November 1998, Larry Harpster was working on his Huntington County farm filling a plastic silage bag with high-moisture shelled corn. Because the wet corn wasn't flowing out of the gravity wagon very well, Larry climbed into the wagon and pushed the shelled corn out into the bagger.

On the 14th load of corn that day, the wagon began to tip over while he was pushing corn out. Most of the corn was out of the unloading side, but about 50 to 60 bushels were lodged on the opposite side of the wagon.

"I thought the whole wagon was tipping," Harpster said. "I didn't want to be pinned under it, so I tried to jump at an angle."

The edge of the wagon box hit the ground before Harpster could jump clear, catapulting him out of the wagon with unbelievable force. He rolled an additional 15 feet after slamming onto the ground.

"My helpers came running over to help me up, but I couldn't walk without assistance," Harpster said.

After additional inspection of the wagon, which he had borrowed from a neighbor, he found the gravity box actually tipped off of the wagon

chassis. The two rear brackets holding the gravity box to the chassis were not fastened, and the right front bracket had been cracked, welded, and had broken again. The left front bracket was fastened, but had bent when the wagon went over.

"I had borrowed that bin wagon many times over the last 10 years whenever we

were short of wagons," Harpster said.

After this incident, Harpster said he changed and repaired the brackets on this wagon and on his own three gravity wagons. He also secured the gravity wagons to the chassis with heavy safety chains.

Luckily, Harpster was not

seriously injured. He suffered a cracked pelvis and was on crutches for two weeks, but he has since fully recovered. Luckier still was the fact that his 12-year-old son, who had been in the wagon just a short time before, was not injured.

Harpster's accident demonstrates that even though you are familiar with

a piece of equipment, and have just recently used it, you should always inspect the equipment for potential hazards and wear.

Wagon brackets are not something that you may automatically think of as potentially hazardous if they fail, but Larry Harpster can tell you otherwise.

NCGA Unveils Web-Based 'Corn In The Classroom'

ST LOUIS, Mo. — The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) has introduced to its web site www.ncga.com, "Corn in the Classroom," a web-based curriculum that utilizes examples from the corn industry to teach kids mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, and even music and

art.

"We are very excited about introducing this innovative curriculum that will be used not only by rural teachers, but those in urban areas as well," said NCGA Director of Communications Kevin Aandahl. "NCGA is stepping to the plate in educating and informing the general public about the corn industry. We regularly receive requests


from teachers throughout the nation for teaching materials on corn, and 'Corn in the Classroom' is designed to meet this need."

The curriculum is divided into nine different units and based on the real-life experiences of a Minnesota farm family. Each unit contains a brief story, background for teachers and hands-on lesson plans that are adaptable to

all ages.

"This curriculum will provide educators with fresh and different examples for teaching the core subjects required by most states," said Aandahl. "At the same time, students will enjoy learning about everything from corn's role in American history to genetics, the environment, satellites, geography, nutrition and much, much more."





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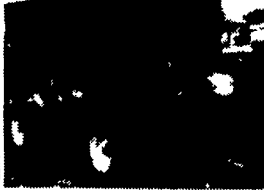
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