

CROPS Project

Cost-effective Roll-Over Protective Structures

Tractor accidents account for a majority of the injuries and deaths that occur on farms, with tractor overturns being the leading cause of farm operator deaths.

ROPS, combined with safety belts, are

98%

effective in preventing tractor operator deaths

In 2014, 38% of the nation's farm tractors did not have ROPS.

The same year, 12,000 youth (less than 20 years of age) were injured on farms. 4,000 of these injuries were due to farm work.

An average of 133 youth die annually from farm-related injuries.

Approximately 23% of fatal injuries to farm youth involved machinery.

Despite the hazard, many farmers use non-ROPS tractors because of the expense of installation.

The CROPS Project seeks to reduce the number of tractor related injuries and fatalities in farm communities in the southeast by becoming a part of the culture of agricultural education programs.

Through the CROPS Project, agricultural education students learn about:

1. Hazards posed by non-ROPS tractors
2. How to use NIOSH's CROPS plans
3. How to construct and install proper ROPS on unprotected tractors

Facilitating collaborative work, both teachers and students have become invested in the CROPS Project.

"I don't want to go out and spend \$3000 on a new one when I can go out here and build one and be proud of it. I'm proud of that one out there." ~ Cameron, Student, William Blount High School, TN

"I'm not the only one that's trying to sell my program anymore. I've got students trying to sell classes as well. 'You need to take this course. You need to take that course.'" ~ Brandon Fawbush, Teacher, North Laurel Co. High School, KY

Not only have students found the real-world connection of the curriculum to their lives and community, it has also allowed them to apply their knowledge to an often ignored safety issue that can have a deeply personal impact.

"There was a tragedy in my family without a ROPS. My dad got killed a couple years ago. So after that and now that I've had this experience, we've got a ROPS on our tractor now. We're going to help out other people so that they have a ROPS also, so that nothing else happens to anybody else..." ~ Dalton, Student, Nelson Co. High School, KY

"Definitely a big impact. I could really tell a difference this year, when we had our tractor driving. [...] Now they understand, so now they do wear a seat belt. Actually, the seat belt on the tractor tore up. They wouldn't even drive it until we got it fixed." ~ Glen Croley, Teacher, Whitley Co. Schools, KY

Since the program began in 2013, 28 agricultural education programs in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia have participated.

Combined, they have built and installed 67 CROPS, protecting over 200 lives.

