

EOP: ECONOMICS OF PREVENTION PROGRAM

Community Relevant Economics for Rural Areas: Focus on the Social Costs of Injury & Prevention

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BACKGROUND

Agriculture consistently ranks among the most dangerous occupation in the U.S. Every year hundreds of farm workers die from on-the-job injuries (tractor roll-overs being the leading cause). In 2012, the fatality rate for personnel working on farms was 20.2 deaths per 100,000 workers, a rate seven times higher than the average fatality rate in the private sector.

Startlingly, many of these deaths occur among the youngest workers. On average, 113 people younger 20 or younger die annually from farm-related accidents, with many of these deaths occurring in youth 16-19 years of age. Tractors and

All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) cause the majority of these injuries. Of the leading causes of fatal injuries to youth, 23 percent involved machinery (including tractors), 19 percent involved motor vehicles (including ATVs), and 16 percent were due to drowning.

Losing family members and friends is devastating, but take into account the economic and social losses. Every day about 167 agricultural workers suffer from lost work time due to injuries, many of which become life long. These mishaps cost time and money, but the collateral damage impacts hundreds of families.

SAFETY MEASURES TO PREVENT TRAGEDY

Research shows the most efficient way to prevent tractor roll-over deaths is with a Roll-Over Protective Structure (ROPS). Still, in 2012, only 59 percent of tractors were equipped with ROPS.

In fact, ROPS, in combination with seat belts, are 98 percent effective in preventing tractor operator deaths from overturns and ejections from the tractor seat.

Stats show head injuries are the leading cause of ATV-related among children, but that teens drive frequently without using a helmet, with one study showing as many as 40 percent not wearing helmets.

Culturally-directed training practices include mandatory education programs to raise awareness to the dangers of these activities. These programs need to be supported by research institutions to help ingrain these preventive measures.

Education Equals Prevention

The Southeast Center for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention (SCAHIP) has dedicated more than a decade of research and outreach to help address the issues of agricultural health and safety.

The Economics of Prevention Program has been working

to integrate agricultural safety materials into school curricula as well as provide resources to the public to help prevention efforts for about 10 years.

More about EOP project

The EOP project is funded by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Cooperative Agreement No. 2U54OH007547-11. To become a part of this or other SCAHIP efforts, contact us at 859-218-3677 visit our website at www.mc.uky.edu/scahip, or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

