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## Safe Use of Harvesting Equipment

Harvesting equipment is a necessity on farms to gather the crops for a bountiful harvest. Harvest time is primary revenue time on many farms and is also one of the peak periods for farm injuries and deaths. Many of these injuries can be prevented through effective farm safety management.

- Develop a "safety first" attitude. Follow safe work practices all the time and set a good example for others.
- Be physically and mentally fit before operating equipment. Fatigue, stress and worry can distract you from safely operating equipment. Take frequent breaks.
- Pay attention to all safety information. Read operator's manual and warning decals.
- Inspect the equipment and correct any hazards before operating.
- Identify hazardous areas on equipment and make sure you stay away from moving parts. Beware of pinch points, shear points, wrap points, pull-in areas, thrown objects, crush points, stored energy hazards and freewheeling parts.
- Make sure everyone who operates the equipment has the appropriate training and is physically able to operate it safely.
- Shut down equipment, turn off the engine, remove key and wait for moving parts to stop before dismounting equipment.
- Keep bystanders and others away from equipment operation area. Do not allow "extra riders", especially children.

### Inspection

- Are PTO shields in place?
- Are guards and shields in place?
- Are safety locks operational?
- Are there any leaks in hydraulics?
- Is reflective "Slow Moving Vehicle" signage in place?
- Are lights working properly?
- Is a 20 lb. "ABC" fire extinguisher in place?

*Information supplied by the National Safety Council's Agricultural Division, the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) – [www.necasag.org](http://www.necasag.org) or 888-844-6322.*