



Image: Debbie Cristinelli WA - A Safe Climb

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Media Guidelines Images

The agricultural stories we tell in the media can make life healthier and safer for farm men, women and agricultural workers. At the same time, while not intentional, what we write, say and the images we show, can perpetuate and even increase unsafe farm practices and unhealthy behaviours.

To help minimise unsafe practices, the National Centre for Farmer Health has compiled the do's and don'ts provided here as reminders for all of us. Following them can help each of us be confident that we are doing our part to spread a positive message on health, wellbeing and safety.



Image: Cameron Taylor VIC

Photos and Graphics

DO show tractors and other farm equipment being maintained and operated safely. That includes Roll Over Protection Structures (ROPS) on tractors and guards in place on Power Take Off's and other moving parts.

DO show children doing supervised age-appropriate chores.

DO show people working wearing proper fitting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) appropriate for the tasks they are performing. When depicting workers with machinery, make sure they are not wearing loose fitting clothing or anything that could become entangled (jewellery, long loose hair, drawstrings, bandana).

DO show people wearing helmets on horses and bikes and using sun protection.

DO be aware of the background. Is it free of clutter? Do buildings and equipment appear to be well-maintained? A clean, well-ordered background conveys an environment of safety and attention to detail.

DO NOT show individuals riding on the back of trucks, tractors or quad bikes.

DO NOT show unhealthy behaviours such as smoking, drinking and eating unhealthy foods.

DO NOT show persons climbing to heights without fall protection, stair or platform guarding.

DO NOT show workers leaning over or feeding materials into machines with moving parts or blades.

DO NOT show children driving any motorised farm vehicle or riding on adults' laps on tractors, ride on mowers or quad bikes.

DO NOT show children in close proximity to large animals unless appropriate barriers are evident.

Written Content

DO use the word "incident" rather than "accident". Evidence confirms that injuries are both predictable and preventable. "Accident" implies that the incident was an "act of God" or "bad luck".

DO explain safety violations and/or prevention measures. Grisly details of an injury are only part of the story. Make the story a teachable moment. Sometimes an injury can be prevented with a simple, inexpensive step such as ensuring a PTO shield is in its proper place.

DO follow up on long-term implications of a serious injury. Emphasising the "courage" of a trauma victim during immediate recovery, and the outpouring of goodwill following an event, can overshadow long-term implications such as economic hardships, post-traumatic stress, and/or multiple follow-up surgeries and family stress.

DO depict agriculture for what it is: a demanding, high risk industry made even more stressful by unpredictable factors such as weather and market conditions.

DO include information on safety resources and programs that are available to readers like those found on our website.

DO NOT say that a child killed in a farm incident, "died doing what they loved", or that they "loved to help daddy". This implies that it's OK to allow a child into an agricultural work site.

DO NOT attribute mishaps on the unpredictable nature of animals, the failure of machinery or the existence of other inanimate objects such as a protruding rock or a ditch that gives way.

DO NOT use "freak accident" when describing a traumatic event. Although an adverse event may seem unique, injury data will likely reveal that many similar events have occurred.

DO NOT suggest that unsafe practices are acceptable just because they are family "tradition".



References:

Media Guidelines Childhood Agricultural Safety Network
<http://www.marshfieldresearch.org/Media/Default/NFMC/PDFs/MCRF-Centers-NFMC-NCCRAHS-CASN-Media-Guidelines-7-19-10.1-1.pdf>

Guidelines for talking about suicide & mental health conditions
<http://www.mindframe-media.info/for-media/media-resources>

Specific to Children/Young People

Curiosity, size and lack of knowledge and training can put children and young people at greater injury risk than adults. It is important to depict (visually/textually) children and young people in safe situations. If they're doing farm chores/activities, make certain the tasks are developmentally appropriate.

Photos of children are often used as "attention getters", but sometimes "cute" is unsafe. Examples to avoid include a child playing in a grain bin, in close proximity to an adult animal or riding a horse or motor bike without a helmet. Emphasise the adult's role in prevention.



This includes:

Always providing young children with a safe play area, instead of allowing play on the work site; and Always providing sufficient training and personal protective equipment for those old enough to help.