

LKL Safety Note

Farm Safety Week - 17th - 21st July 2023



17th - 21st July 2023 marks the 11th Farm Safety Partnerships Farm Safety week. This was originally launched to engage the Farming community in talking about Farm safety and the importance of staying safe and well on farms.



Farm Safety Partnership was established by NFU Mutual as a charity to help the farmers of the future work safety.

The charity is represented by a pair of yellow wellies and asks young farmers to consider “Who would fill your boots?” if they were to be affected by a serious or life changing injury or fatality.

BBC Farming today reported in June that so far in 2023 there had been 18 farming fatalities which was nearly double the statistics of last year and half of the fatalities occurred in May alone. This equates to 3 farming families a month dealing with a tragedy. Most of these fatalities were transport or machinery related including 3 as a result of damaged PTO shaft guards. Its illegal to operate farm machinery with a missing or unsafe guard.



In 2017 the **Devon Federation of Young Farmers** launched an initiative in response to a death of one of their 20-year-old members which was believed to be caused by a PTO shaft. The Growing Safer Farmer scheme highlighted the need to ensure that PTO shafts and guards are maintained and they worked with Agricultural vehicle dealers and servicing businesses who flagged any safety issues and provided discounts on annual PTO and brake checkups and new guards. It was very successful in getting 100's of broken and missing guards replaced in Devon alone and showed how effective a targeted campaign can work in improving safety standards.

Back in 2017 an agricultural engineer who has signed up to the scheme said:

“It’s also crucial to ensure workers feel responsible for reporting any faults. We have to move away from the idea of safety being neglected due to busy workloads.”

I believe that what he was clearly saying was - that in order to succeed in improving farm safety long term there needs to be work within the organisation of farms to **improve safety culture and encourage individual and team ownership of their own health and safety**

Sadly over 5 years on from 2017, the 2023 fatality statistics so far - still show that further work is required.

The very first Farm Safety week was set up to engage farming staff and raise awareness of the importance of safety in agriculture and trigger the discussion around changing the safety culture in farming and, today, this conversation is still as important as ever in order to prevent the tragedy, pain and suffering from farm related accidents.

The Farm Safety Week theme this year is ‘Farm Safety Starts with Me’ recognising that we all need to work harder to encourage good safety behaviours and increase safety awareness. Everyone has a part to play to make good decisions about working safely in farming and staying alive and looking out for each other.





LKL Launches their Annual Farm Safety Champion Award



LKL is committed to raising awareness of good health and safety standards and myself and the H&S committee, regularly promote good health and safety working practices in our Newsletters and website and James Picot, our Regional Manager and trainer is committed to ensuring LKL staff receive H&S awareness training and refresher training in telehandler and ATV handling and other safety courses. We know that there are lots of LKL staff out there that are working hard to promote health and safety standards and improve the safety culture on their farms and **leading by example**; whether that be: -

- ensuring they stay up to date and following their health and safety training,
- developing safe systems of work, and ensuring they always take a moment to assess the risk and carry out the job safely,
- ensuring work equipment remains well maintained, inspecting it before use and making sure guards are in place.
- or looking out for others with health and safety reminders such as; wearing essential PPE, and good communication of safety hazards.

Good Health and Safety culture is about great leadership and setting an example - even if you are the only one committed to ensuring good standards - but doing it anyway - because you know it's the right thing to do.

For example, making a stand against social norms and always wearing a helmet when riding an ATV or the right PPE when handling corrosive chemicals, even when others rush and forget or think that it looks weak.



Behaviours and management practices are identified as a causal factor in 90% of agricultural incidents - so managing these are a key to improve safety culture and reduce accidents.

Remember Thinking about Safety should be a normal part of working culture and given more emphasis than 'completing tasks on time'.

Could you be our LKL Farm safety Champion(s) 2023?

This **Farm Safety week** - as well as giving you Safety reminders - **we also wanted to celebrate all the LKL staff who are working hard to promote good health and safety standards on their farms**



From July until December we will be asking our Regional Managers to look out for, and nominate an individual member of LKL staff or LKL Team who consistently demonstrate good Health and Safety standards and leadership to be our

Annual LKL Farm Safety Champion(s).

This could be demonstrated by their behaviours and working practices to positively promote good health and safety and wellness on Farm, or working towards improving the Safety culture on the farm or coming up with innovative safety solutions to protect staff from hazards.

In December we will draw up a shortlist of 3 nominations towards the award and this will be announced at our Annual Conference in April 2024 along with the existing Award categories. We will feature and celebrate the proactive work in health and safety of all 3 nominations in our Newsletter/website etc.

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By Michelle Jeal, LKL Health & Safety Advisor