

# AGRICULTURE SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM: HELPING FARMERS REDUCE THEIR RISK OF INJURY

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Illinois farmers have one of the highest work-related injury and death rates of any industry in the state. These accidents cost farmers and the industry millions of dollars each year, but the greatest cost is the loss of life and serious injuries that impact families and communities. The University of Illinois Agricultural Safety and Health training and education program is vital to preventing disabilities and deaths among farmers.

## OPPORTUNITY

The agricultural safety program involves extension, teaching, and research that address the high rates of work related injuries, illnesses, and death our agricultural industry currently experiences. Such programs are essential in the prevention of deaths and serious farm injuries that leave farmers with mobility, mental, and health issues.

Programs provide current and future farms and agricultural professionals with critical understanding of the underlying causes of farm injuries and deaths, how to identify risks, and implement effective risk reduction interventions. Training topics and resources relate to machinery, livestock, confined spaces, material handling, electrical, and agricultural chemicals. Farm operators need to understand the methodologies that effectively manage agricultural safety risks and associated liabilities. Train the trainer programs, farm accident rescue, and emergency preparedness plans complete the list of topics that farmers and other agricultural professionals receive training on through this service of University of Illinois Extension.

An undergraduate minor has developed out of the expressed needs of agricultural and rural health employers, for students to have academic and technical training in agricultural occupational safety and health sciences. Additionally, a specialization for graduate students allows for traineeships, similar to fellowships, for up to six graduate students. Research areas have included improved lighting and marking of farm equipment, age appropriate tasks for children, a lifeline system for existing grain bins, analyzing farm injuries and deaths for their causative factors, and evaluating interventions for their effectiveness in reducing the injury and illness risks.



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College of Agricultural, Consumer  
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## RESOURCES REQUIRED

The goal of the agricultural safety program is to reduce the extent of injuries and deaths associated with farm work, and the millions of dollars in associated cost. Private funding is necessary to sustain and support the agricultural safety and health training program for both the agricultural population and students.

The farm safety and health training endowment supports the agricultural safety and health training and outreach program, as well as scholarships for students enrolled in the minor or graduate degree program.



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