

3. HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS



KEEP SAFE, KEEP FARMING

INFORMATION SHEET

Farms are workplaces. Like all other workplaces, workplace health and safety laws apply and you need to have a health and safety management system in place.

KEY POINTS

A safety management system helps you manage hazards on your farm

Everyone coming onto the farm must be made aware of the hazards

Keeping clear records is an important part of your health and safety system

If you have employees they should be fully involved in safety management and help you design an effective system.

Safety management systems help you run your farm safely. This information sheet will help you develop an effective and practical health and safety system so you can manage the hazards on your farm.

BEING SAFE

Safety isn't complicated, but it does take a commitment from everyone on the farm. To manage safety, the farm needs to ensure:

- > Everyone on the farm is thinking about safety
- > People know what they are meant to be doing
- > Everyone is trained for the jobs they do
- > Hazards/risks are identified and managed
- > Equipment is regularly serviced
- > Visitors are made aware of relevant hazards/risks
- > Contractors have safety management systems for their work
- > Employee's wellbeing and environment is monitored

- > There are emergency plans
- > All accidents and near-misses are reported and investigated

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A BASIC HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEM

Identify existing and potential risks and hazards on your farm

1. **Assess** the hazards based on whether they will occur and the potential seriousness of the harm
2. Put appropriate **controls** in place to manage the hazards
 - a. if you can, **eliminate** or remove the hazard. Not carrying passengers on quads is a way of eliminating a hazard
 - b. if you can't eliminate hazards, **isolate** them. PTO guards isolate a hazard on a tractor
 - c. if you can't eliminate or isolate hazards, **minimise** them. Helmets on quads and no-go zones on farms are ways of minimising hazards
3. If you can only minimise hazards, **monitor** them regularly.

You should record all identified hazards, controls and any issues that you find through monitoring in a **Hazard Register**.

A good farm health and safety management system also has:

- > Record-keeping and document management – e.g. hazard register, farm map, training records, maintenance records, visitor registers and induction processes etc.

- > Rules and procedures – eg always wear a helmet when driving a quad bike.
- > Training and capability – employees should only perform tasks they are trained for.
- > Assigned roles and responsibilities – eg who can do which jobs on the farm.
- > Monitoring employee fitness and wellbeing – eg for fatigue, stress, alcohol and drugs.
- > Monitoring environmental issues (that could influence employee health) – eg chemicals, dust/dirt, noise, vibrations.
- > Employee involvement – employees must be involved in discussions about farm health and safety policies, including the initial identification of hazards and ongoing discussions.
- > Accident reporting and investigation – record and review all accidents and near misses and report serious injuries to WorkSafe.
- > Farm inspections – to identify hazards and ensure farm rules are followed.
- > Maintenance – should be regular and planned, not just when things break.
- > Emergency plans – eg assembly points, who to ring, first aid, fire extinguishers etc.
- > Managing contractors and sub-contractors – farm owners/managers must collaborate with contractors to ensure they understand the relevant hazards.

If you follow these steps, your farm has a sufficient health and safety management system.