

Spring 2020. This message is to members and supporters of Safer Farms and the Agricultural Leaders' Health and Safety Action Group. We hope you find this of interest and look forward to hearing from you. Also, feel free to forward it on to anyone who has an interest in improving safety on farm!

Safer Farms - this members' update includes:

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Clearly, we are living in uncertain times. There is no question that farmers are feeling the pressure from many directions. Having staff adds another level of responsibility, especially for the many farming and contracting businesses which have previously relied on staff from overseas. Now, with several industry initiatives aimed at attracting new people to the sector after years of a labour shortage, there's fresh workers getting involved in the agricultural industries. It doesn't matter if the workers have arrived because they want a change, or they've arrived out of sheer desperation - it's important that we all do our bit to make sure they choose to stay. Being good employers and showing people how they can have a rewarding career in our sector are a couple of things we need to get right.

We're excited about the future and Agriculture's opportunity to help power NZ's recovery. We look forward to working with you, sharing ideas and resources because together, we make farms safer places for everyone.

Safer Farms' Advisory Council workshop: Thursday 10th September 2020. Due to be held in Wellington, subject to COVID-related travel restrictions. If not held in person, we'll be hosting this online – let me know if you'd like to find out more.

ALHSAG AGM: The third AGM for the Agricultural Leaders' Health and Safety Action Group is to be held at **9.30AM Tuesday 20th October 2020** in Wellington. All members are welcome.

If this email was forwarded to you and you'd like us to email you directly, please contact me and I'll [include](#) your details on our contact list.



Tony Watson, GM

tony.watson@alhsag.com

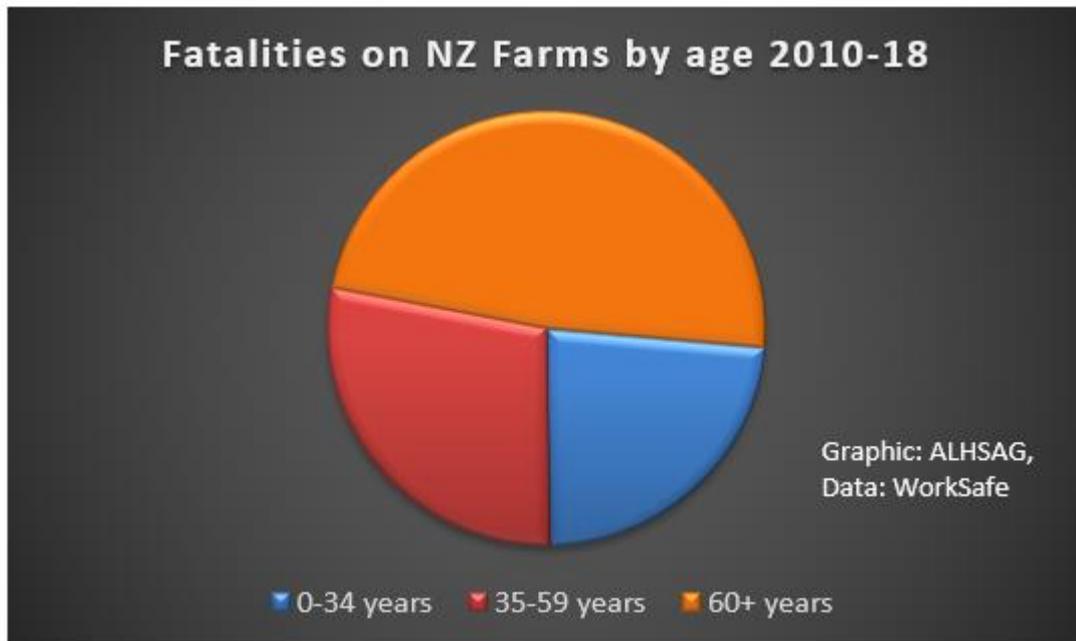
Phone: +64 27 705 6024

The Agricultural Leaders' Health and Safety Action Group (ALHSAG) is a membership organisation that brings together farmers, CEOs and senior leaders from agribusiness, agricultural industry groups and government through a commitment to make farming safer by sharing information and practical solutions to health and safety issues on farm. Businesses across the supply chain are involved, recognising that the whole sector benefits from improved health and safety.

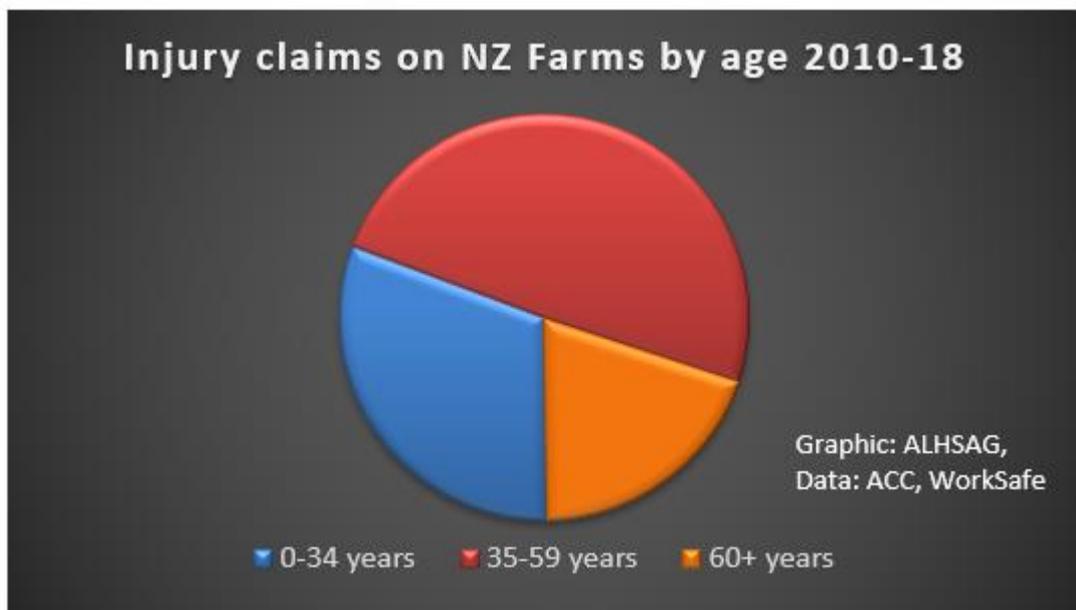
Better keep an eye on Grandad...

Almost half of those who have been killed at work on NZ farms are over 60 years old - yet this age group accounts for only 20% of workplace injury claims. It's a bit of a generalisation but as people grow older, their health declines. The increasing likelihood of fatality on farm could be linked to:

- Problems with eyesight and/or hearing
- Reduced strength and ability to 'get out of harms' way'
- Slower reaction times



The 35 to 59 year old age group make up around half of reported injuries and around a quarter of fatalities - what could be going on here?



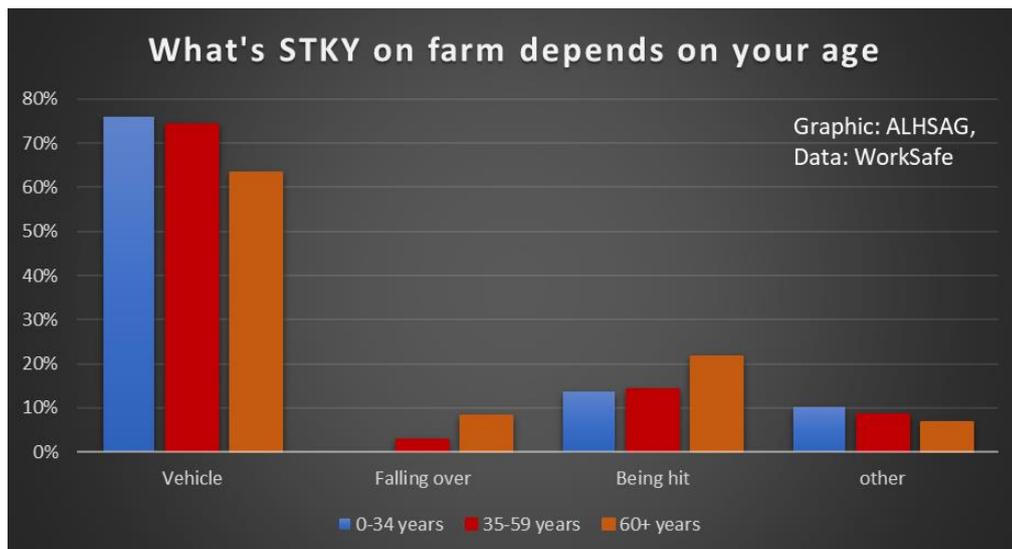
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Getting long in the tooth? Different things are killing older farmers.

“I’ve done this job hundreds (or thousands) of times,” we hear them say and it’s true. [Survivor bias is a thing](#), however changes in the environment or in their own situation can lead to a different, sometimes tragic, result.

Looking into the cause of fatality on farm, we can see STKY (the shit that kills you) changes as farmers age. Clearly, vehicles are implicated in a majority of fatalities on farm but what’s also clear is that older farmers are also being killed as a result of falling over or being hit by objects on farm.

Falling over or falling from height is more likely when people lose strength, mobility, balance and flexibility. It can also be harder to detect that runaway machine or animal if a persons’ eyesight and hearing isn’t what it used to be.



So, what can we do about it?

Prevention is the key and there’s plenty of advice about keeping fit, wearing eye protection and looking after your hearing. But firstly, we as aging farmers have to accept that we’re ‘not as young as we once were’ and there may be some limitations in what we can do safely on farm. Some strategies include:

- Keeping workshop and yards well-lit and tidy so there’s less chance of tripping over stuff
- Keep vehicle maintenance up to date, make sure reversing mirrors, handbrakes and lights are working properly





• If eyesight is reduced, grab a bunch of reading glasses and leave them in places they will be handy – near the chemical storage, workshop, in vehicles, in fact in any place where fine work is being done or labels, manuals or instructions need to be read.



- Add an extra step or handrail to make it easier to get in and out of the tractor
- Grab an extra hand or observer if working with livestock
- Some all-round useful pointers for looking after yourself can be found on [Farmstrong's website](#), too.

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Safer Farms in schools!

Safer Farms health, safety and wellbeing advocate Harriet Bremner has taken her expertise into Windwhistle Primary School in a bid to positively influence our next generation to keep safe on the farm.

And BOY OH BOY was the response just incredibly amazing! So much so, that we're contemplating if we can do it again...

Check out this article written and published in [Farmers Weekly](#).

FARMSTRONG: Book to help kids through tough times



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Pike River 10 years on – what’s changed in health and safety in NZ?

And – are farms safer places for people?

What has changed?	What hasn't changed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independent taskforce on workplace health and safety• New legislation introduced• WorkSafe was formed• More farmers have signs on farm and health and safety folders in the office• A few farm businesses have been prosecuted for failing to provide a safe work environment• Clearer responsibilities for directors and managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attitudes to 'health and safety' on farm• Health and safety on farm is still seen as more paperwork, bullsh*t compliance or 'ticking the box'.• Injuries on farm• Fatalities on farm

Despite the sustained effort from many people and organisations, we haven't really seen any improvement on farm if the measure of success is reducing the rates of injury and fatality.

Maybe the focus has been in the wrong places. Health and safety is a tainted brand in many workplaces – farms included. Many farmers have a well-honed bullsh*t detector, quite rightly pointing out the only time paperwork makes a difference is if they're trying to provide evidence they did everything they could to prevent something going wrong in the first place.

What we need is a change in approach, one that recognises that people on farm work in a dynamic work environment, often under time pressure, with conditions dictated by the weather. When people are working alone, with heavy machinery and often in a fatigued or distracted state, it's hardly surprising the Ag sector's injury and fatality numbers are still high.

Farmers are a creative bunch – modifying tools and equipment to get the job done. Often these well intentioned 'new uses' can have unintended consequences, especially if people don't ask the simple questions:

- What could go wrong?
- What am I doing about it? And is that enough?

Innovation is finding new ways to fix old problems, we just need to make sure we get it done safely and the changes we've made to machinery isn't going to adversely affect the operation of the machine or its performance.

Farmers are practical people, and by and large, can appreciate logic. Safety is about logic. We know it makes sense to do the job safely, we just need to work out the best way to do the job safely.

Legalisation of cannabis and what it means for impairment at work

Thanks to our friends at Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum, you're able to access a [recorded webinar](#) to understand and learn from Canada's experience in legalising recreational cannabis in 2018. This information is neither for nor against legalising cannabis in NZ - just evidence and experience-based discussions on effective approaches to managing impairment and cannabis.



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When was the last time you checked the tyre pressure on your quad bike?

Farmers who came along to a quad bike safety workshop with their bikes were found to have tyre pressures “all over the place”.

Late last year, FMG’s Manager of Advice Services, Stephen Cantwell attended an FMG supported workshop run by 4-wheel drive training experts *Natural Instincts*. One thing that really stood out for him were the uneven tyre pressures.



“I’ll always remember how Natural Instincts checked all the attendees’ quad bike tyres while they were getting a briefing in the woolshed. They found that most of the quad bike tyre pressures were all over the place—there was even one that had four different pressures on the one bike,” says Stephen.

“Pete Richie from Natural Instincts explained how this makes the bike work against itself, which not only makes the bike unsafe but will also increase the maintenance costs. Making sure your tyre pressure is correct is one easy thing you can do to improve your safety when out on the farm.

“It’s so easy to be thinking about the next job and not checking the tyre pressures, especially if you’re riding every day. You won’t easily notice the gradual changes of pressure.

“Before jumping on the bike or vehicle next, make sure to check the tyre pressure of your quad or farm vehicle and make sure that they’re right for your farm conditions,” says Stephen.

FMG
Advice & Insurance

FMG is continuing to work with Natural Instincts to provide quad bike and side-by-side training for experienced riders. They hosted one recently in Hawke’s Bay which was well-received by the attendees.

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COVID QR codes are for farms too!



We can all do our bit to improve contact tracing in the event we have may have been exposed to COVID. All businesses, including farms, **are required by law** to have your unique QR code on display. Laminate it or put it in a clear waterproof sleeve and display it where people visiting the farm are most likely to get out of their vehicle.

1. Download NZ COVID Tracer App on your phone



2. Download your own farm/business QR Code



3. Scan QR codes of places you visit, and request people visiting you to scan your QR code on the way in



If you turn up on farm and there's no QR code, please remind the farmer it's a legal requirement and it's actually pretty easy to do!

There are plenty of organisations and resources for farm owners and managers, but it seems employees have often been wondering where to go if they're worried things aren't quite right on farm.

Fortunately, there's a handy resource that's been put together for employees on farm – similar to what employees working in businesses in the Ag sector have had access to for years. If you're an employee, or know of one who needs help, they can phone in, have questions answered online, or check some of the resources which could help them gain a better understanding of their situation.



WELCOME TO THE RURAL **EMPLOYEE** SUPPORT HUB.

Advice and support for New Zealand rural employees.
You can also call and speak with us directly.

Call our 0800 line



This initiative is a partnership between DairyNZ, Federated Farmers and MPI, and reflects the rural sector's commitment to positive employment relationships. RESH is a six-month pilot you'll see promoted over the next few months.

RESH is a website ruralemployeesupport.co.nz and a free and confidential 0800 number (0800 694 121) to help rural employees find support and success in their careers.

1. RESH is for all rural employees
2. Employees can seek independent advice through RESH
3. Employees can trust RESH to answer their questions
4. Employees can call or the 0800 hotline for free and confidential advice
5. No question is too big or small for RESH

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Free Trades Training - what you need to know to get involved

You may already have heard about the new government support available for apprenticeships and other industry training.

Additionally, the Government has announced an “Apprenticeship Boost”, which promises to pay employers up to \$16,000 to either employ or retain apprentices across two years. The Free Trades Training is open from now until the end of 2022. All in all, you can see why we are saying there will never be a better time to train.

If you’re an employer, we are strongly encouraging you to take advantage of Free Trades Training, and also to look into how you can access money from Work and Income for the “Apprenticeship Boost”. That will pay employers \$1000/month for first-year apprentices and \$500/month for apprentices for most of their second year. Please do consider the opportunity of Free Trades Training and get in touch with the team at Primary ITO. Visit <https://www.primaryito.ac.nz/grow-your-career/government-support-programme/>, call us on 0800 20 80 20, or email info@primaryito.ac.nz.

See here for [more information](#)

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Free resources



It’s a shocking fact – annual suicide rates in NZ are close to double the number of deaths on the road.

1737 Need to talk? is a new service available to anyone who just wants someone to talk to. It can be about anything from addiction and depression, to for anyone who might be feeling a bit ‘out-of-sorts’.

Trained counsellors respond and it’s a free and confidential service for anyone and everyone.

People can phone, text, email etc to [1737](#). Easy to remember, easy to do, easy to recommend to someone... And it’s available **24/7**



And don’t forget that the [Rural Support Trust](#) is here to help, too.

These are local rural people who know from experience that severe weather, finances, relationships, and work pressures all mount up. Contact them any time. **Call 0800 RURAL HELP** - for a confidential chat about you, your business, the weather, your finances, or a neighbour, partner, friend, family member, or worker.

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Our friends at [Farmstrong](#) are also here for us. – some excellent tips to help farmers live well and farm well at all times of the year.

Free farm app for



safety



Category: Injury prevention



Reducing stress and fatigue to avoid accidents

Managing stress and fatigue on the farm is challenging at the best of times, and for some the impact of COVID-19 will increase that challenge. ...

Farmlands shareholders – check [here](#) for more information



Free farm safety app for Farmlands shareholders – check [here](#) for more information