

Farm Safety Action Plan

2013- 2015



Our vision:

A country where worker safety,
health and welfare and the safe
management of chemicals are
central to successful enterprise

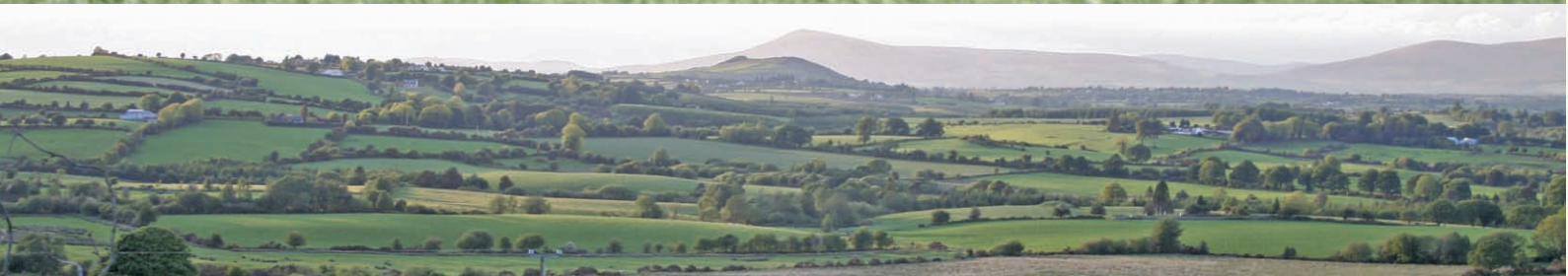


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Foreword from Chairperson

The Agricultural sector which is one of the most hazardous sectors globally continues to have a poor accident record. While farms make up just 5% of our workplaces, fatalities in the sector often account for almost 50% of all workplace deaths in Ireland. In addition a recent national survey conducted by Teagasc indicates that approximately 2,500 non-fatal accidents causing injury take place each year on Irish farms. (Source; Teagasc, National Farm Survey, 2010).

Farm accidents cause much suffering to farm families and can also lead to significant farm business losses. Research has shown that farm family members suffer over 90% of injuries occurring on farms. Most injuries actually occur in the farmyard. Most farm accidents are predictable and therefore preventable.

The Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee, an advisory committee to the board of the Health and Safety Authority, has made considerable progress in raising awareness of farm safety. There is also recognition that generally safety standards across the sector show signs of improvements. However there has been no progress in reducing the overall rate of fatalities and reducing serious injuries on farms has been slow. Achieving a cultural change is a key part in establishing a sustained reduction in the rate of fatalities and injuries in the sector.



The Farm Safety Partnership is now introducing this new 3 year plan. The overall objective of the plan is to reduce the level of fatalities and serious injuries and improve the health profile in the Agriculture sector.

The Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee has set itself 5 overarching goals, to be achieved between 2013 and 2015. Actions to achieve these goals are set out in this Plan.

I ask all member organisation to give their full and dedicated commitment to this new action plan. Enthusiastic commitment to this plan will build on previous work of the partnership and help to ensure that safety and health becomes integrated into the lifestyles of all who live and work in rural communities. Good safety and health standards will result in a safer, healthier and more profitable working environment for all.

Mary Bohan (Chairperson)



I. Introduction

The Farm Safety Action Plan (2013-2015) was developed by the Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee, an advisory committee of the Board of the Health and Safety Authority, and sets out the goals and associated action targets in relation to improving occupational safety and health in Agriculture. The new Plan builds on the achievements and actions in the previous plans.

The Agricultural sector has entered a positive expansion phase and provides an important contribution to Ireland's economy. However this sector also faces significant challenges in the achievement of the necessary improvements in occupational safety and health standards.

2. Review of Health and Safety in Agriculture, including the Farm Safety Action Plan (2009 – 2012)

The Farm Safety Action Plan (2009-2012) was developed by the Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee, a sub-committee of the Board of the Health and Safety Authority. The Action Plan set out targets for improvements in occupational safety and health in agriculture. Members of the Farm Safety Partnership committed themselves to activities to support the achievement of the targets set out in the Action Plan.

Accident Statistics in Agriculture

Unfortunately there continues to be an unacceptable level of fatalities and serious injuries in the Agriculture sector. Despite the efforts of many stakeholders fatal accident rates remain at a high level. In recent years there has been only limited progress made in reducing such fatalities and injuries in the sector. Deaths in agriculture, unlike many other sectors, predominately involve family members including children and in particular the elderly.

Fatal Accident Statistics

Total workplace fatalities in Ireland have fallen from a figure of 74 in 2005 to 47 in 2012. Ireland in general has performed well in reducing overall fatal accident rates. The most recent figures for overall rates available, for the year 2011, show that the rate of fatalities for all Sectors of our economy was 2.7 per 100,000. The rate for Construction was 4.6 per 100,000 while the rate for Agriculture was 27.3 per 100,000. The average rate of farm fatalities is 12.0 per 100,000 in the EU. However, the rate is over 30.0 per 100,000 in some EU member states and in the USA.

In marked contrast to the positive story we have to tell about Irish workplaces in general, agriculture stands out because of the disproportionately high fatality rate in the sector. While agriculture accounts for approximately 5% of the Irish workforce it often experiences up to 50% of all reported workplace fatalities. In the ten year period between 2012 and 2007, there were on average 18 fatalities per year in the farming sector.

The Census of Agriculture 2010 estimated that there were 139,829 active farms in Ireland in 2010 employing 165,370 AWU's. (Source: CSO – Census of Agriculture 2010). In total when family labour is included it is estimated that approximately 400,000 persons are exposed to health and safety risks on Irish farms.

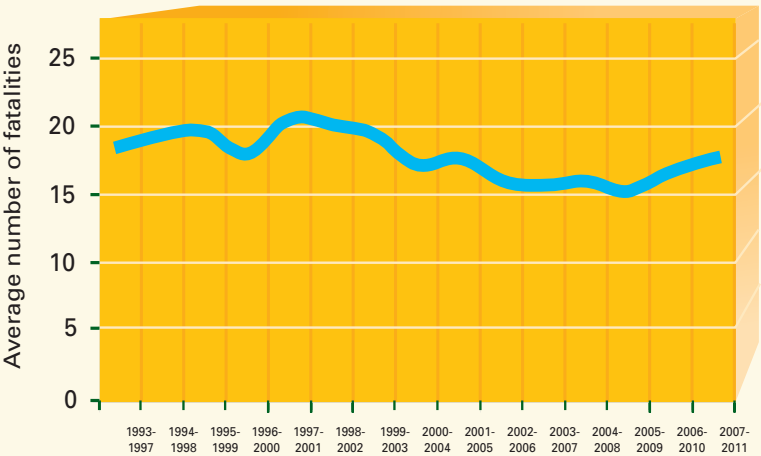
Fatal accidents in Agriculture and Forestry sectors in the last Five Years:

Spiking of fatal accidents (11 in 2009 to 25 in 2010) is typical of this sector so are best presented in a rolling 5 year graph which showed a general downward trend since 1997. However, the significant increase in farm deaths in Ireland since 2010 is of great concern and has interrupted and reversed this general downward trend. (See Fig. 1)

2008	21
2009	11
2010	25
2011	22
2012	21

Average number of farm fatalities

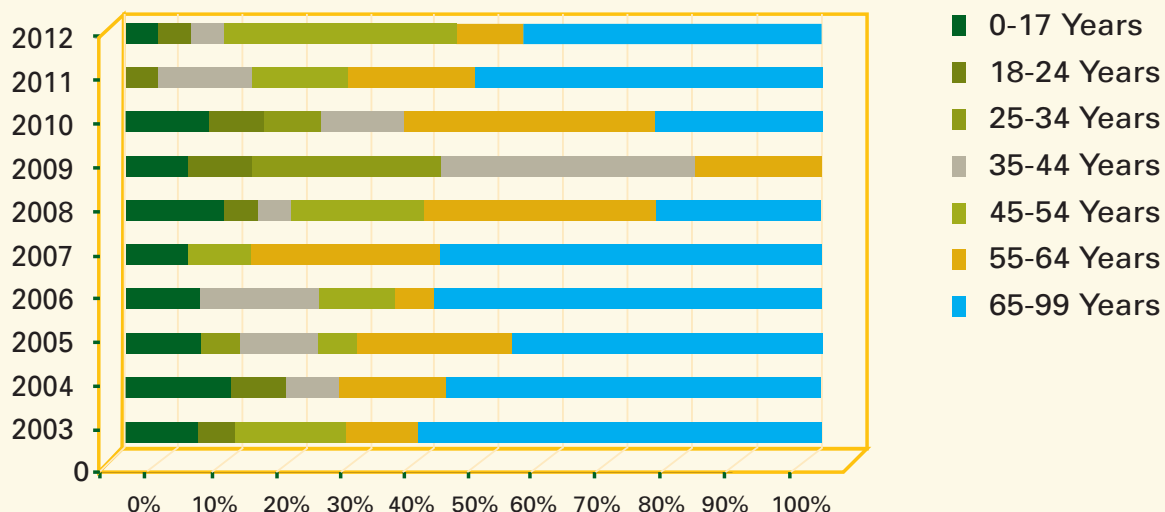
Deaths in agriculture, unlike many other sectors, generally involve family members including children and elderly persons. Age is a major contributory factor in farm accidents in Ireland (both fatal and non-fatal) with the average age of an Irish farmer now standing at 57 years and increasing. A serious accident, which a young farmer will often survive, if experienced by those over 65 years of age is more often fatal. Of particular concern in Ireland and across the EU is the aging workforce particularly in agriculture as farmers tend not to retire. In Ireland as with many other EU member states almost half of all farm deaths now involve farmers over 65yrs of age. Indeed deaths in Ireland to farmers over 55 years of age have often made up over 70% of all farm deaths as indicated for 2007 & 2011. (See Fig. 2)



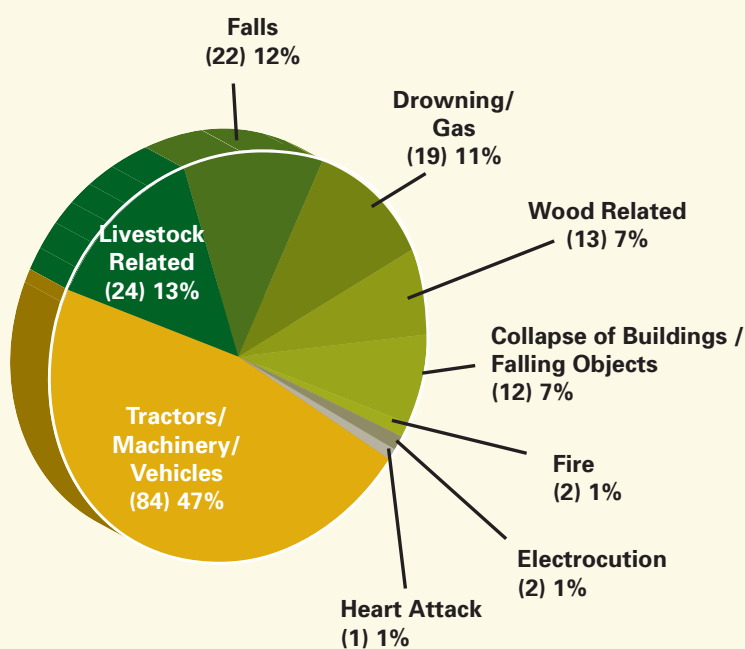
(Figure 1) Average Farm Fatalities 1993 – 2011 (Shown as 5 –year rolling average)

(Source; Meredith and McNamara, Teagasc 2012).





(Figure 2) Age distribution of fatal accidents in Agriculture 2003-2012



(Figure 3) Causes of Farm Deaths in the 10 year period (2003-2012)

As can be seen in Fig 3, almost half of all fatal accidents have involved tractors or machinery (47%). The next most hazardous activities causing death are working with livestock (13%), falls from Height (12%), drowning while working close to slurry or water (11%) and working with timber on the farm (7%).

Injury and illness in Agriculture

Statistics on fatalities do not provide the full picture and they generally only represent the tip of the iceberg when serious non-fatal accidents are considered. While little gets reported to the authorities there are significant numbers of serious amputations and accidents causing long term

disability within every rural community. In relation to farm injuries, it is important to bear in mind that the statistics are more difficult to compile than those for deaths. This is due to the gross under reporting of non-fatal accidents and injuries by farmers, with average reported to the H.S.A. of just 100 per year, despite their legal obligation to do so.

The 2011 National Farm Survey results are set out below which estimated that farm injuries have increased by 35% to 2,459 injuries per 100,000 farms reported for the year 2010 compared to the previous survey estimate of 1,815 per 100,000 farms in 2006. This is still a reduction in the numbers recorded in 2001. (See Fig 4)

Injury Categorisation

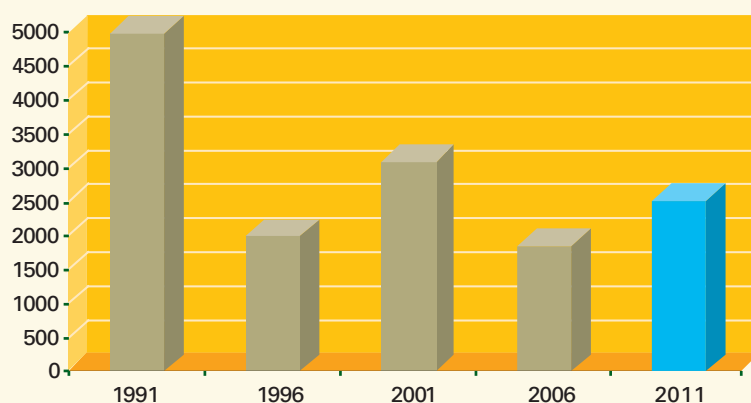
Injuries from trips, falls and blows are most frequent, accounting for 42% of injuries. Other major causes are livestock-related injuries (33%) and vehicle and machinery (11%) and chainsaws (3%) and other (8%). The trend over the various surveys indicates that machinery injuries have declined significantly which is welcome, but the proportion associated with livestock has increased.

Person Injured

The farmer or farm operator is predominately the person who has an injury and accounts for 73.3% of injuries. Other categories of persons injured are farm workers (8.9%); spouses (who could be male or female), 8.6% and family members (7.5%) and others (1.7%). A key message from this finding is that farm family members suffer over 90% of all injuries on farms.

Location of Injury

The farmyard is where 71.5% of injuries take place. Other locations are farm buildings (18.7%) and in fields (9.8%). The farmyard is where the vast majority of farm work activity takes place, such as moving around on foot leading to having slips, trips and falls or being struck by falling objects along with the common work of tractor – machinery coupling/de-coupling & use, dealing with livestock in sheds or confined spaces, etc.



(Figure 4) National Farm Survey – Non-Fatal Farm Accidents per 100,000 farms

(Source; Teagasc)

Indicators of Injury Severity

Ninety five per cent of reported injuries required medical treatment which is an indicator of severity as farmers are generally slow to seek medical attention. Of these 49% required hospital inpatient treatment and 36% required hospital A&E treatment. Almost 90% of injuries caused 4 or more lost work days and 71% lost ten or more work days with 41% causing more than 20 days to be lost and 15% causing more than 100 days. It is clear from the data that the majority of injuries reported in the National Farm Survey are serious.

Occupational Ill Health

There are many risks to health in farming. Farming as an occupation predisposes people to health problems. The principal causes of ill health in farming are musculoskeletal conditions, skin and respiratory diseases and hearing damage from noise exposure. A recent Teagasc / HSA / UCD research indicated that almost 1 in every 10 farmers suffer a musculoskeletal injury annually with over 80% of injury victims being unable to work for three days or more.

The Farm Safety Action Plan 2009 – 2012

was focused on critical issues to be addressed and set out proposed actions in relation to 7 principal goals with named lead stakeholder organisations.

The goals presented in the plan were:

- To raise national awareness of occupational safety and health in agriculture

(Lead organisation: HSA)

- To increase the uptake of training on farm safety and occupational health

(Lead organisations: Teagasc, FRS Network)

- To achieve a reduction in the incidence of fatal accidents to elderly farmers

(Lead organisations: IFA, Irish Rural Link)

- To achieve a reduction in the incidence of fatal accidents to children

(Lead organisations: ICA, FBD, Macra na Feirme)

- To achieve a reduction in the incidence of accidents involving livestock

(Lead organisations: Teagasc, FRS Network, ICMSA)

- To achieve a reduction in the incidence of accidents involving tractors and machinery

(Lead organisations: PAC Ireland)

- To achieve improvements in the level of occupational ill health among farmers

(Lead organisations: HSA, ICA)

The committee's "Farm Safety Action Plan 2009-2012" set ambitious targets in health and safety and identified specific activities to achieve these targets.

Much was produced during the course of this plan in response to the serious challenges faced in agriculture, all of which is available on the authority website **www.hsa.ie** such as;

- On-line farm risk assessment tool
www.farmsafely.com
- A revised code of practice for child safety on farms
- A leaflet on the safe use of tractors called "Tractor Safety and You"
- Guide to safe working with timber and chainsaws
- Guidance on safety around overhead power lines
- Guidance and information sheet on safe handling of livestock at marts and lairages
- Guidance and information sheet on safe handling of cattle on farms
- DVD on Safe handling of cattle on farms
- DVD and online video clips of real farmers sharing real accident experience on Survivor Stories
www.hsa.ie/farmaccidents
- An extensive media campaign on national TV, national & local radio and in the print media

A comprehensive listing of specific actions undertaken in support of the action plan is set out in Appendix 4. The material developed, published and available on the HSA web site is focused on the major issues, is user-friendly, compliments existing guidance and gives practical tips on safety, designed to help farmers be more aware of current risks. It is hoped that this will enable farmers to better protect themselves, their families and any visitors to their farms.

3. Goals for the Farm Safety Action Plan (2013-2015)

The following are the **5 goals** for the Farm Safety Action Plan (2013-2015).

- 1. To establish and implement appropriate Safety and Health Training and Educational programmes for farmers and persons who are employed in the Agricultural sector.**
- 2. To develop programmes to prevent accidents and injuries to vulnerable persons (Children and older persons) in Agriculture.**
- 3. To achieve cultural and behavioural changes related to risk taking in Agriculture.**
- 4. To influence farmers to manage high risk work activities and to improve standards in the use and maintenance of Tractors, Machinery and Farm Vehicles.**
- 5. To implement programmes to assist in protecting the occupational health of persons working in Agriculture.**

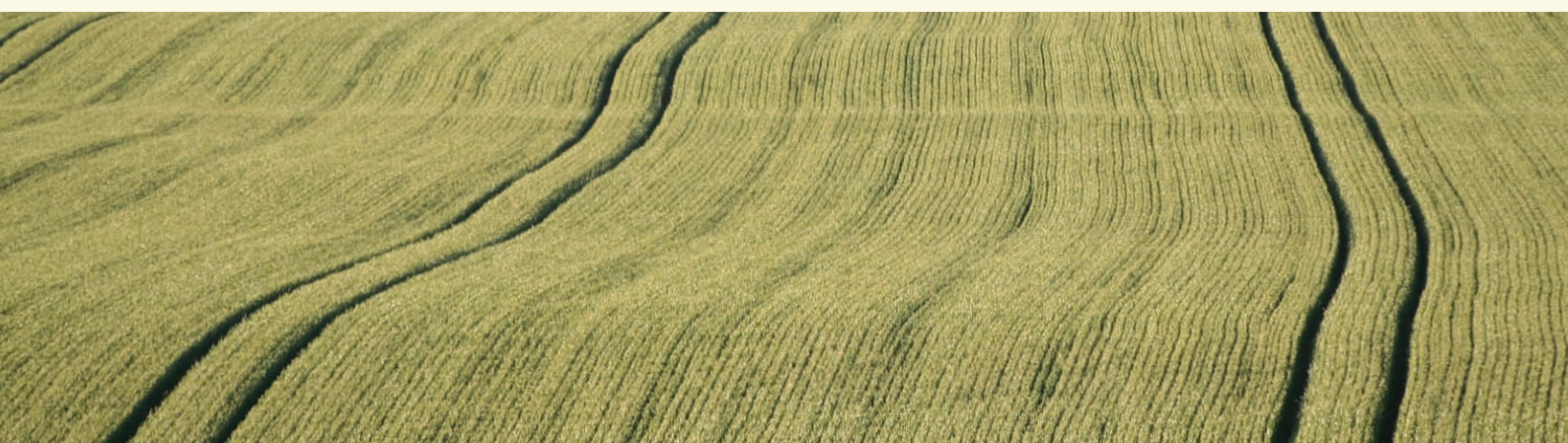


4. Actions to meet Goals for the Farm Safety Action Plan (2013-2015)

The following are the series of proposed actions to achieve the Goals of the Action Plan.

Goal 1. To establish and implement appropriate Safety and Health Training and Educational programmes for farmers and persons who are employed in the Agricultural sector

Action No.	Specific Objective	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.	Ensure awareness of all available farm safety training programmes e.g. through placing links on H.S.A web site and other FSPAC members web sites.	HSA FSPAC Members	2013-2015
2.	Support the running of Farm Safety COP training.	FSPAC Members	2013-2015
3.	Consider the introduction of mandatory Health and Safety training courses in specific areas e.g. Chainsaws.	FSPAC Members	2013-2015
4.	Organise and expand Farm Safety Advisory walks.	FSPAC Members	2013-2015
5.	Incorporate farm safety in farmer discussion group meetings.	FSPAC members	2013-2015
6.	Use modules of the Farm Safety DVD's at meetings of farming groups.	FSPAC members	2013-2015
7.	Organise and provide Safe tractor driving skills courses for young entrants to farming.	FSPAC members	2013-2015
8.	Incorporate health and safety elements in Farming and Rural Development Schemes.	DAFM FSPAC members	2013-2015
9.	Incorporate health and safety training at all levels of education, particularly at Agricultural Colleges and 3rd level courses.	HSA Teagasc	2014-2015
10.	Develop e-learning Tools for critical farm safety tasks.	FSPAC members	2014-2015



Actions to meet Goals for the Farm Safety Action Plan (2013-2015)

Goal 2. To develop programmes to prevent accidents and injuries to vulnerable persons (Children and older persons) in Agriculture

Action No.			
1.	Publish, launch and distribute a DVD to deal with the safety of older farmers.	HSA FSPAC members	2013
2.	Run appropriate media campaigns (TV, Radio and Newspapers) focusing on children and safety of older farmers.	FSPAC members	2013 -2015
3.	Target rural schools for safety talks and the distribution of child safety booklets.	FSPAC members	2013 -2015
4.	Organise national child safety competitions.	FSPAC members	2013-2015
5.	Target cattle marts for safety talks/promotion among older farmers.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
6.	Encourage the development of farm retirement measures to reduce the risks and the excessive level of fatalities among older farmers.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
7.	Develop relevant information booklets and guides for elderly farmers.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
8.	Use Farm Safety DVD's to alert older farmers to the dangers on the farm.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
9.	Develop on-line interactive Safety Tools for Children	HSA FSPAC members	2013-2015



Goal 3. To achieve cultural and behavioural change related to risk taking in Agriculture.

Action No.	Specific Objective	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.	Consider the need to introduce Farm Safety on the agenda of future CAP (Common Agriculture Policy) reform negotiations.	HSA FSPAC members	2013-2015
2.	Organise Farm Safety exhibits at national Agricultural events.	HSA FSPAC members	2013- 2015
3.	Visit farms to promote the control of physical risks on farms and influence behaviour.	HSA FSPAC members	2013- 2015
4.	Organise National Seminars and Conferences on Farm Safety themes.	HSA FSPAC members	2013- 2015
5.	Sponsor relevant research projects and publish findings.	FSPAC members	2014- 2015
6.	From the outcome of research, design and implement strategies to reduce the prevalence of risk taking in agriculture.	FSPAC members	2014- 2015
7.	Organise media campaigns to promote cultural change.	FSPAC members	2013-2015



Actions to meet Goals for the Farm Safety Action Plan (2013-2015)

Goal 4. To influence farmers to manage high risk work activities and to improve standards in the use and maintenance of Tractors, Machinery and Farm Vehicles

Action No.	Specific Objective	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.	Publish a guide to tractor and machinery safety for farmers.	HSA FSPAC members	2013- 2014
2.	Publish Farm Safety articles on high risk work activities in relevant industry Journals and newsletters.	FSPAC members	2013-2015
3.	Work with national and local media to ensure that the farm safety message is prioritised.	HSA FSPAC members	2013- 2015
4.	FSPAC members to place a link on their website homepage which highlights safe management of high risk work activity (for example Slurry handling, operating tractors/machinery and Quad bikes, and working at heights). Topic should be changed quarterly.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
5.	Use texting and social media to increase awareness of high risk work activities on the farm.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
6.	Work with farm Machinery manufacturers to improve design and safety mechanisms in farm machinery and the general awareness of major risks.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
7.	Implement initiatives such as workshops and field days in the Farm Forestry area to improve safety awareness and reduce accidents.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
8.	Publish and distribute advisory leaflet for Vets visiting farms.	FSPAC members	2013-2015
9.	Develop DVD Safety Clips for high risk work activities on farms.	FSPAC members	2013-2014
10.	Publish and distribute Safety leaflets for Forestry/Working with timber.	FSPAC members	2013-2014



Actions to meet Goals for the Farm Safety Action Plan (2013-2015)

Goal 5. To implement programmes to assist in protecting the occupational health of persons working in Agriculture.

Action No.	Specific Objective	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.	Finalise and publish a guide to protecting farmer's health.	HSA FSPAC members	2013
2.	Organise regional seminars and media campaigns to raise awareness of occupational health in Agriculture.	FSPAC members	2013-2015
3.	Provide 'Health Checks' to visitors to the Farm Safety stand at Agricultural events.	FSPAC members	2013- 2015
4.	Sponsor further research in the area of occupational health in agriculture.	HSA FSPAC members	2013-2015
5.	Develop a DVD identifying the 5 most common farming health problems and their prevention.	HSA FSPAC members	2013-2015



Appendix I: Terms of Reference of Farm Safety Partnership

- To identify and prioritise the key issues related to improving safety on Irish farms.
- To identify the actions necessary to deal with these issues.
- To establish working groups/sub-committees to assist in the achievement of the agreed goals.
- To set agreed targets for :
 1. A reduction in injuries.
 2. An improvement in compliance in the sector.
 3. To develop a national action programme, co-ordinating the actions of the representative organisations and assigning tasks.
 4. To publicise, effect and monitor the programme.
 5. To carry out appropriate research and liaise with relevant agriculture organisations.
 6. To report regularly and formally at least annually to the Board of the Authority.



Appendix 2: Membership of Farm Safety Partnership

Chairperson,

Mary Bohan - HSA Board Member,
(replaced Pat Kearney)

- John Byrne (replaced Breian Carroll)
(Agricultural Consultants Association)
- Jim Dockery (Farm Relief Network)
- Michael Larkin (Macra na Feirme)
- John McNamara (Teagasc)
- Dr Patricia Torpey (replaced Oliver McEvoy)
(Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)
- Tom Murphy (Professional Agricultural Contractors
Association (PAC Ireland)
- Vincent Nally (Irish Rural Link)
- Willie O'Donoghue (replaced John O'Donnell)
(Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association)
- Dr Noel Richardson (Replaced Biddy O'Neill)
(Health Services Executive)
- Ciarán Roche (FBD Insurance)
- Margaret Healy (Irish Farmers Association)
- Maura Canning (Deputy for Irish Farmers
Association member)
- Gerard Mawn (Coillte)
- John Flynn (ICSA)
- Michael Cusack (replaced Declan Gibney) (IOSH
Rural Industries Section)
- Pat Kirwan (Veterinary Ireland)
- Sean O Laoide (Veterinary Council of Ireland)
- Anne Brady (Agri Aware)
- Pat Griffin (Health and Safety Authority)
- John Kennedy (replaced Anthony Morahan)
- Maura Kavanagh (Secretary) (Health and Safety
Authority)



Appendix 3: Chairing of Working Groups

GOAL 1.

To establish and implement appropriate Safety and Health Training and Educational programmes for farmers and persons who are employed in the Agricultural sector.

(Teagasc)

GOAL 2.

To develop programmes to prevent accidents and injuries to vulnerable persons (Children and elderly persons) in Agriculture.

(FBD/IFA)

GOAL 3.

To achieve cultural and behavioural changes related to risk taking in Agriculture.

(HSA/IRL)

GOAL 4.

To influence farmers to manage high risk work activities and to improve standards in the use and maintenance of Tractors and Machinery.

(FRS)

GOAL 5.

To implement programmes to assist in protecting the occupational health of persons working in Agriculture. (HSE)



Appendix 4: Review of Actions taken under the Plan (2009-2012)

This section outlines the various actions taken to achieve progress on the targets set out under the 7 Goals of the (2009-2012) Action Plan.

Goal 1 – To raise national awareness of occupational safety and health in Agriculture

1. Promote occupational safety and health in national Agricultural media, publications, newsletters and HSA Website

There was on-going and extensive coverage of farm safety topics across all media including coverage on national and local Radio stations and on national television. Articles on Farm Safety have featured in the national and local press including the Irish Farmers Journal, Farming Independent, etc. Farm safety articles were published in the Teagasc 'Today's Farm' magazine. Other stakeholders such as Macra na Feirme produced features on farm safety in their magazines and newsletters and on their websites.

Survivor stories which are video testimonials of real farmers telling their real stories about their experience with farm accidents were produced and widely distributed to the farming industry. Farm TV were contracted to show the Survivor stories and the Livestock Safety DVD at livestock marts across the country and at major farm shows.

The Survivor stories were also launched via social media onto You Tube, Facebook and other web sites and generated over 100,000 online views of these video clips in 2012 predominately by the target group, i.e. male farmers aged between 45 and 65 years.

Irish Rural Link launched a new programme in 2012 titled 'Farmers inspiring Farmers to be Safety Aware'. The aim of the programme is to empower farmers themselves to assist with a change in perception and habits regarding farm safety. Farmers in counties Meath, Westmeath, Longford and Cavan were participants in the pilot programme. It is envisaged

that the farmer mentors will inform and educate other farmers on how to improve safety and change the safety culture in farming.

AgriAware, in association with FBD, the IFA and ESB Networks launched a Farm and Countryside Safety educational initiative which ran during 2012 and AgriAware also ran a farm safety colouring competition from which a calendar was produced.

The HSA in association with the Irish Farmers Journal organised a '*Kids – staying safe on the farm colouring competition*' in 2012.

The HSA also launched a farm safety poster and slogan competition in association with Education Centres in 2012 which was open to primary school children nationwide. This competition was aimed at raising awareness of child safety on farms where children were asked to draw or paint a poster and slogan highlighting the dangers on farms from which a calendar was produced for national schools.

Macra na Feirme in conjunction with FBD Insurance has significantly increased the 'safety' element of the 'Young Farmer of the Year' competition.

Farm safety is now incorporated into the 'Farm Yard of the Year' awards. This is a national competition organised and sponsored by FBD Insurance, the Irish Farmers Journal and Teagasc.

Farm machinery safety is now regularly featured in the FTMTA News (Irish Farmers Journal).

FBD sponsored the Feirm Factor programme on TG4. Health and Safety was a key issue addressed in this competition.

The Agriculture pages of the Health and Safety Authority website were updated and expanded.

A new electronic version of the Agriculture Code of Practice was developed by the HSA with the support of FBD. This on-line Risk Assessment can be accessed by farmers at **www.farmsafely.com**
The on-line version is user friendly and easy to complete and update.

Appendix 4: Review of Actions taken under the Plan (2009-2012)

In 2012 the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine facilitated the sending out of an A5 flyer of the “I’m the Lucky One” image along with key farm safety messages to farmers in their single farm payment correspondence.

The IOSH Rural Industries Section was established in 2011. IOSH Rural Industries held an information event on firearms and road safety in March 2012. A conference titled ‘Cultivating a Safer Future’ is planned for March 2013.

The Health and Safety Authority were the sponsors for the new series of Ear to the Ground, which commenced in November 2012.

Other voluntary and youth groups have organised initiatives to raise the awareness of farm safety. For example, Farmoise, is a farm safety campaign aimed at young people developed by a group of teenagers from the Rosemount Foroige Club in Co Westmeath.

FBD sponsored the FRS tractor training skills demonstrations at the National Ploughing Championships in 2012 (this event attracted considerable national media) and also part sponsor tractor skills training for teenagers.

Mr Peter Gohery addressed the Women & Agriculture Spring Series in 2012 on farm safety and spoke about his experience of losing his leg in a PTO accident and about how simply it could have been prevented. Mr Gohery has also addressed several other Farm Safety events.

FBD sponsored the Agri aware Green Dragon competition on television. The winner of the farm safety section of the competition developed a sensor for the back of a tractor that will automatically cut off the PTO if the danger zone is entered.

2. Strengthen the HSA farm inspection and enforcement processes – Increase the Inspector/ Farmer contacts to 2000 per year

The Health and Safety Authority has increased the number of farm safety visits completed by its Inspectors. Approximately 3,000 farm visits are now completed each year. In addition Inspectors have addressed an increasing number of farmer meetings, farm walks and discussion groups.

3. Achieve an increase in the percentage of farms in compliance with the Farm Safety Code of Practice

Half day training courses on the Farm Safety Code of Practice are run by Teagasc and are also available from ACA consultants. The Teagasc National Survey of Farm Injuries conducted in 2011 indicated that 55% of farmers have now completed the Farm Safety Code of Practice risk assessment and that 22% of farmers have attended a short training course on the Code of Practice.

4. Organise and promote Farm Safety Campaigns

Several Farm Safety campaigns focusing on specific issues were organised during the life of the plan, often involving several stakeholders from the FSPAC. An example of this was the “Champions for Safety Campaign” which involved Teagasc, FBD, ESB, HSA and Mr. Peter Gohery. Over 1,000 students at agricultural colleges were given information talks by all of the above on the importance of farm safety particularly prior to them going on farm placement.

Appendix 4: Review of Actions taken under the Plan (2009-2012)

All were also given a farm safety information pack which included all the recent guidance & DVD's produced by the FSPAC. It is hoped that they will follow good safety practice and be champions for safety at their host farm and homes.

5. Organise and promote Farm Safety Inspection Blitzes

Farm Safety inspection campaigns involving focused farm visits were organised by the HSA generally during the month of April in each year of the plan, these Farm Safety campaigns were supported by promotional activities organised by FSPAC members.

6. Organise a biannual National Seminar on Occupational Safety and Health

During the lifetime of this Action Plan a National Farm Safety Conference was held each year generally attracting over 160 delegates to each event along with several regional or topic based seminars to highlight critical safety issues.

The national Farm Safety Conference 2012 'Securing Safety in an expanding Agriculture' took place in Co Cork as a reaction to the disproportionate level of farm deaths in the Munster area, generally in the Dairy sector.

In August 2012, Teagasc and the HSA organised a 'National Seminar on Improving Occupational Health of Farmers in Ireland'. The seminar highlighted health issues affecting farmers and brought attention to significant research findings in the area of farmer's health. It was attended by over 120 delegates.

In 2011 Teagasc and the HSA hosted the Irish meeting on Agricultural Occupational Health and Safety as an occasional meeting within the rota of Nordic meetings on Agriculture Occupational Safety and Health. This international meeting included delegates from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, UK, Germany, Italy, USA and New Zealand and was held in Dublin with over 40 papers presented.

7. Issue Press Releases to inform the farming public on important farm safety issues

During the period covered by the Action Plan Press Releases relating to Farm Safety were issued by the HSA and other members of the FSPAC. The press releases generated good media coverage at both local and national level and helped raise awareness of current issues.

8. Farm Safety adverts in the Irish Farmers Journal

FBD has sponsored a Farm Safety Advert in the Irish Farmers Journal in recent years. This advert has covered relevant safety topics and also promoted the use of www.farmsafely.com.

In addition the HSA and other FSPAC members have provided material for several farm safety features in the Irish Farmers Journal.

Appendix 4: Review of Actions taken under the Plan (2009-2012)

9. Benchmark Agriculture Safety and Health standards internationally. Liaison with other organisations where information, knowledge and practices can be exchanged

There is ongoing exchanges and communications on Farm Safety issues with relevant parties in other countries. The Irish Meeting on Agricultural Occupational Health and Safety held in Dublin in 2011 provided an element of benchmarking Ireland against international standards and provided valuable contacts for the future.

10. Organisation of Farm Safety Exhibits at the National Ploughing Championships and at two regional Agricultural Shows

The HSA, in conjunction with the FSPAC, have organised a major Farm Safety Stand at the National Ploughing Championships since 2006. In addition a Farm Safety Stand and exhibition was held at the Tullamore Show in three consecutive years, also assisted by Teagasc and other members of the FSPAC.

11. Develop the 'Safe Farm concept' based on the standards and requirements set out in the Farm Safety Code of Practice

An initial briefing document was prepared by PAC Ireland and FBD and submitted to the FSPAC. This would be a voluntary scheme aimed at all farmers who wished to demonstrate that safety is a high priority on their farm. Following costing of a pilot program and roll out stage, this is now seen as not feasible due to funding restrictions.

12. Investigate the provision of appropriate incentives for the farming sector to improve health and safety

No work was done in this area largely due to the significant downturn in the economy and budget restrictions.

13. All FSPAC members will have an annual plan of action for farm safety

The majority of FSPAC member organisations now prepare their own annual plan of action for farm safety which provides organisational focus on the issue.

14. Farm representative organisations will be encouraged to consider the appointment of executives with key health and safety responsibilities to provide safety support to their membership

A small number of representative organisations have appointed a dedicated staff member to provide such a service and champion farm safety for their clients.

15. Continue Joint Prevention Initiative with Teagasc for further 3 year period, focusing on Code of Practice implementation

Teagasc and the Health and Safety Authority continue to work together and are co-ordinating their efforts in the promotion of farm safety. During the lifetime of this Action Plan there was a renewal of the HSA–

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Teagasc Joint Prevention Initiative which implements coordinated prevention projects particularly in relation to research, benchmarking, dissemination of best practice and the running of farm safety events.

16. Address under-reporting of accidents and incidents in Agriculture

This is regularly raised by the HSA in its contact with the farming sector. Under-reporting of accidents remains an issue despite the legal requirement to report such accidents and incidents. The Authority will continue to rely on the scientifically based National Household Survey to identify trends particularly in the area of accident type and causation.

17. Sponsor and support Research work in relevant areas

Several research projects on a wide range of Farm Safety topics primarily with Teagasc have continued and were completed during the period of the Action Plan.

Research Projects undertaken during the lifetime of the Farm Safety Action Plan

Project Title

Impact of Disability on the Farm Business

Safety with Livestock

Rural Suicides among young farmers

Evaluation of Farm Safety Code of Practice uptake/behaviour change among farmers.

Occupational Health of Farmers

18. Encourage farmers to display the 'Farm Safety Notice' to raise safety awareness on their farms

FBD produced a Farm Safety Sign for farm use. The purpose of this sign is to improve safety awareness on the farm and to remind everyone that enters the farm about the primary dangers. The sign was reprinted several times and is available to farmers from all FBD offices. During the lifetime of this plan 35,000 signs have been printed and distributed.

19. Use existing publications and articles to promote safe work practices during construction work on farms

'Build in Safety – An advisory Booklet for Farmers' was developed by FBD, Teagasc and the HSA and sponsored by FBD. In addition a DVD titled 'Building on Success' was produced by FBD, IFA and ESB. Both were widely distributed to provide advice to farmers undertaking construction work, particularly farm building work associated with compliance with the storage requirements arising from the Nitrates Directive.

20. Promote health and safety at farm walks and discussion groups nationally

Farm walks and discussion groups are a proven means of improving technical efficiencies on farms. Farmers gain technical information and learn from the experiences of other farmers.

Farm walks and discussion groups encourage farmers to improve their farm practices.

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21. Promotion of Farm Safety at regional committee and council meetings of farming and rural organisations

Farm safety and health is now on the agendas of county, regional and national council and executive meetings of the main farming organisations. Authority inspectors provided input by way of farm safety presentations and talks at many of these meetings.

22. Develop and pilot the Farm Safety Advisory Walks and other new approaches to delivering Safety advice and support to the farming community

HSA Inspectors were active in supporting farm walks and discussion groups organised by IFA, Teagasc, ACA, Macra na Feirme and others.

23. Promote safe work practices in forestry / working with timber

The HSA in conjunction with the FSPAC published a Guide to Safe Working with Timber and Chainsaws in 2010. The Code of Practice for Managing Safety in Forestry operations was also updated. Coillte are now members of the FSPAC and have established their commitment to farm safety and to the farm forestry sector.

Goal 2 – To increase the uptake of training on farm safety and occupational health

1. Promotion and organisation of half day training courses for adult farmers on completing the Farm Safety Code of Practice

Teagasc and Agricultural Consultants provide half day courses to farmers at venues across the country. In addition, Teagasc provides a FETAC 12.5 hour course to farmers in selected areas and a FETAC course for host farmers.

The Teagasc National Farm Survey conducted in 2011 indicated that 22% of farmers have now attended a half day training course or longer course. This would indicate that approximately 25,000 farmers have attended such training since the Agriculture COP was issued in 2006.

2. Promotion and organisation of Tractor Driving Skills Training Courses for teenagers. 500 students to receive training each year

The FRS Tractor Skills training course organised by FRS Training is on-going. The course was sponsored by the Health and Safety Authority and FBD for several years. FBD Insurance are now the sole sponsors this important training. Approximately 200 students completed the course in 2012. FRS organised tractor training skills demonstrations at the National Ploughing Championships in 2012. This was sponsored by FBD.

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3. Inclusion of health and safety module in agricultural training courses. Students completing 3rd level training will complete safety module. Teagasc vocational training courses (FETAC) will include a 25-hour module on health and safety

A compulsory Health and Safety module is now incorporated in the UCD B.Agr.Sc degree course. All Teagasc training courses include a Health and Safety module. Approximately 950 young people commence Teagasc new entrant programmes each year.

FBD, Teagasc, Health and Safety Authority and the ESB have run the "Champions for Safety Initiative" with all seven Agricultural Colleges in 2012.

4. Teagasc Advisers to receive In-Service training on Farm Safety Code of Practice and continue the role of advisers in OHS advice provision in subsequent years

This was put in place and is on-going.

5. All REPS courses will address occupational safety and health issues as they arise under particular REPS measures

All farmers who participated in the REPS 4 Scheme completed a health and safety component. About 30,000 farmers participated in the REPS 4 Scheme. The current AEOS scheme does not have a training component.

6. Incorporate Health and Safety in national training programmes and competitions

Macra na Feirme includes health and safety in their farm tasks competition.

7. Incorporate Health and Safety in the school curriculum

A submission was made to the National Council for Curriculum Assessment by the HSA in relation to updating the Agricultural Science syllabus to take account of the safety content.

The implementation of a new syllabus in Agricultural Science is tied to the implementation of the new Science subject's syllabi at Senior Cycle. This is ongoing.

The HSA also developed a formal Transition Unit information pack entitled 'Choose Safety' which is available to all Transition Year students nationwide and aims to prepare students for the world of work. While it includes risk assessment and discussion of many different safety issues in a work context, safety on the farm is not specifically addressed.

8. Organisation of safety training courses for farmers through IFA Skills Net

There was some limited progress in this area. Further Skills Net safety courses have not taken place.

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Goal 3 – To achieve a reduction in the incidence of fatalities to elderly farmers

1. Promote safety of older farmers particularly in relation to livestock and work involving tractors/farm machinery

The fatal accident rate among older farmers (65 years of age and older) continues to be very high. In recent years several media campaigns have focused on older farmers. An information leaflet on safety with elderly farmers was also published and distributed to FSPAC members and the general public.

2. Develop guidance material / information for older farmers.

A short DVD/video clips is under development and will be released early in 2013.

3. Organise a tractor safety awareness initiative for older farmers

A new guidance document on the Safe Use of Tractors and Machinery on farms, was developed by the HSA in conjunction with FSPAC members, will be published in early 2013. This guidance addressed the particular risks to older farmers where tractors and machinery are operating on the farm.

4. Modules of the Farm Safety DVD to be shown at committee meetings of farming organisations

Farming organisations have reported that the relevant modules of the Farm Safety COP DVD are shown at committee meetings to alert older farmers, in particular, to dangers on the farm.

5. Inform the elderly of the dangers on the farm through participation in Older Peoples Forums and meetings.

The FSPAC has engaged with Age Action Ireland and they were in attendance at the HSA/FSPAC Farm Safety Stand at the National Ploughing Championships. Having a farm safety stand at the Tullamore Show was an attempt to interact with older farmers who generally attend these smaller agricultural shows.

Goal 4 – To achieve a reduction in the incidence of fatalities to children

1. Distribution of Child Safety publications to primary schools.

FBD sponsored the Agri-Aware 'Countryside Safety' initiative for all primary schools. This initiative had three elements:

1. Safety poster/art competition.
2. Safety Calendar
3. Farm Safety week at the Zoo

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The Agri-Aware Dig In resource pack, which includes a Safety section, was distributed to every primary school in early 2010.

2. Organisation and sponsorship of Child Safety competitions at Agricultural events

FBD has sponsored Child Safety competitions at the National Ploughing Championships and other large agricultural shows. FBD also sponsored the Agri Aware Green Dragon competition in 2012. The winner of this competition developed a sensor for the back of a tractor which cuts out the power to the PTO if the danger zone is entered.

3. Organise visits to primary schools to inform children on farm safety

Members of the IFA with the support of FBD have visited their local national schools to speak to children and distribute booklets.

4. Organise farm safety awareness initiatives with primary schools nationally

In 2012 the HSA organised a Farm Safety Art / Calendar competition in all national schools. A Calendar with the winning entries will be distributed to all national schools.

There was a Child Safety stand at the HSA/FSPAC Farm Safety Stand at the National Ploughing Championships. A Child Safety competition was sponsored by FBD for each day of the Championships.

5. Undertake Child Safety awareness campaigns prior to summer holidays

Child safety was addressed in the FBD sponsored half page coloured farm safety in the Irish Farmers Journal. Press releases and subsequent radio interviews also highlight the risks to children during the school holidays each year.

6. Promote water safety which highlights drowning hazards on the farm

The Farm Safety Partnership works closely with Irish Water Safety in the promotion of child safety.

Irish Water Safety have published comprehensive guidance booklets which highlight the drowning hazards for children on farms.

FBD sponsored the Inland Water Safety Guidelines brochure.

Goal 5 – To achieve a reduction in the incidence of accidents involving livestock

1. Publish and distribute guidance information on livestock safety

The following guidance information was developed, published and widely distributed:

- Guidance on the Safe handling of Livestock at Marts and Lairages
- Information sheet on the handling of Livestock at Marts and Lairages

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- Guidance on the Safe handling of Cattle on Farms
- Information sheet on the Safe handling of Cattle on Farms
- DVD on the Safe handling of Cattle on Farms

2. Promote best practice guidelines on animal handling.

The above publications provide farmers and others who work with livestock practical information on safe work practices. These publications and the Livestock DVD are now available to the farming industry and free to download from www.hsa.ie

3. Develop training module for livestock handling.

Several training courses are now available. FRS Training provides a 'Safe Handling of Livestock in Assembly Areas' programme for mart and meat factory employees. FRS Training also have courses available to farmers and farm workers.

ICOS provide a 'Drover' programme for all drover staff at marts and lairages.

4. Continue to incorporate health and safety elements in Dept. Agriculture farm building specifications.

This is on-going. Issues that arise are communicated directly to the Dept. Agriculture, Food and Marine.

Goal 6 – To achieve a reduction in the incidence of accidents involving tractors and machinery

1. Organise safety training for tractor / machine operators.

The provision of Tractor Skills Training for teenagers is provided by FRS Training part sponsored by FBD. The provision and uptake of training by farmers on tractor and machinery skills remains a difficult area.

The recommendations from PAC Ireland (who chaired this committee) are to:

Work with machinery manufacturers and suppliers to explore training opportunities particularly when new machinery is purchased.

Discuss engineering solutions in the prevention of farm accidents, with particular reference to replacing PTO's with hydraulics and the use of automatic cut out systems.

Meet on an on-going basis with the distributors of PTO covers to encourage regular marketing.

2. Ensure that all farm machines are sold with the necessary safety guards in place.

The committee recommends that more attention needs to be given to the regulation of the sale of all second hand farm machinery and tractors to ensure all safety guards are in place and functioning correctly before use.

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3. Develop and support a system for the testing and certification of tractors and powered equipment used on farms.

The committee recommends that there should be a minimum standard of safety for all farm machinery which would be certified by regular testing where appropriate.

A booklet on 'Men's Health for Farmers' is being prepared by the working group. The purpose of this booklet is to inform farmers on health issues. This booklet will be published in 2013.

3. Support research projects in area of occupational ill health.

A qualitative study of suicidal behaviour among men in rural areas was completed at UCD.

Teagasc, HSA and UCD sponsored a study on Occupational Health which was aimed at improving the occupational health profile of the farming community.

Goal 7– To achieve improvements in the level of occupational ill health among farmers

1. Improve data collection on occupational ill health in agriculture.

Representatives from the Health Service Executive on the working group have investigated the sources of data, which include SLAN, Family Resource Centres, Community Development projects, GAA, National Cancer Register of Ireland and Carlow's Men's Health.

2. Organise media campaign to highlight occupational health in agriculture.

Occupational health of farmers was highlighted in recent farm safety media campaigns and conferences.

A National Seminar on improving occupational health of farmers in Ireland was held in Co Kildare in August 2012. The seminar included presentations on musculoskeletal disorders among farmers, finding of the Teagasc Wash Fellowship on occupational health and positive mental health issues.

4. Organisation of 'Health Checks' for IFA members.

IFA organised health checks for their members in some locations.

The Health Service Executive and the Irish Heart Foundations (with the support of the Health and Safety Authority) provided health checks for farmers at the National Ploughing Championships and at regional agricultural shows.

Notes

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