

# Take a safety snooze!

by Theresa Whalen  
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The most frequent causes of farm-related injuries include the unsafe use of machinery or material-handling practices, followed by fatigue, trying to save time and miscommunication between workers, says the Census of Agriculture 2001. And common sense tells us: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

On average, 115 people are killed and at least 1,500 are hospitalized for farm-related incidents in Canada each year reports the Canadian Agricultural Injury Surveillance Program. In 2006 alone, a total of 13,801 Canadian farms reported one or more medically treated or lost time injuries, reports Statistics Canada.

Rushing, fatigue, frustration and complacency are too often the root human factor causes of farm-related injuries. During planting and harvest seasons it is common for farmers to work 18-hour days and that's when human factors can easily turn into tragedy.

*"PPE only works if you use it!"* is this year's Canadian agricultural safety campaign theme with a focus on the use, fit and access of personal protective equipment (PPE) in agriculture. The yearlong campaign was launched last March with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week.

"Most people think of personal protective equipment as being work boots, goggles and hardhats. In fact, it can be anything that makes doing a job safer," says Laurent Pellerin, president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. "I think the most important personal protective equipment is a person's attitude and that could mean walking away from a frustration for a few minutes or taking a 20 minute snooze when you are exhausted."

Although the human factor is a significant cause of farm-related hazards – humans are also the most important factor in farm safety solutions. Your safety is about your choices. It just takes a moment to make a choice that could literally be the difference between life and death. Choose safety.

For both the worker and the business – good safety makes good sense.

More information on this and other farm safety topics is available at [www.casa-acsa.ca](http://www.casa-acsa.ca) or [www.cfa-fca.ca](http://www.cfa-fca.ca).

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