



Keeping Kids Safe from Farm Machinery Runovers

Byline: Canadian Agricultural Safety Association

One of the most unique aspects of family farms is that they are both homes and workplaces.

Growing up on a farm is a great experience where kids learn early on about responsibility, the value of hard work, and the importance of being stewards of the land. But it also means that children and youth face a higher risk of injury in agriculture compared to other industries, especially when safety is not prioritized.

Machinery runovers are the most common cause of fatal farm injuries among children and youth. According to the latest Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting data, from 1990 to 2020, there were 435 child and youth fatalities on Canadian farms. Of these, 32 per cent were caused by machinery runovers, with runovers identified as the leading cause of farm-related fatalities for children between the ages of one and nine.

Fortunately, runovers are preventable when safe machinery practices are followed. Below are safety best practices that will help keep kids and others on the farm safe from runovers.

- Always walk around machinery before starting it to check for bystanders.
- Supervise children at all times near machinery and set up a safe play area that is away from machinery routes and work areas.
- Remember one seat, one rider — never allow passengers on farm machinery.
- Lights and back-up cameras on farm vehicles improve operator visibility. Keep these clean and regularly inspect them to ensure they are working properly.
- Teach kids about machinery blind spots and that seeing the operator doesn't necessarily mean the person can see them.
- Make sure children understand that tractors and other farm machinery aren't toys and that they should not play on or near them, even when parked and turned off.
- Teach youth working on the farm how to get the attention of an operator before approaching the machinery.
- Never start machinery from anywhere other than the driver's seat.
- Slow down when using machinery near where kids and other people are on the farm.
- Do not leave running machinery unattended.
- When machinery is not in use, always set the parking brake, take the keys, and lock it.
- Use wheel chocks when machinery is parked to prevent it from rolling.
- Avoid parking on a hill whenever possible. If parking on a slope is necessary, keep people away from the machinery's potential path.



While farm machinery runovers often have devastating consequences, simple proactive safety practices can help prevent them and protect everyone’s safety on the farm.

For more information on keeping children and youth safe on the farm, visit www.kidsfarmsafe.ca.

About Kids FarmSafe Week

Kids FarmSafe Week is an annual public awareness campaign hosted by the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association to promote the safety and wellness of children and youth on Canadian farms. Now in its third year, Kids FarmSafe Week takes place May 11-17, 2026, and is presented by BASF Agricultural Solutions Canada Inc. More information can be found at www.kidsfarmsafe.ca.

About the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association

The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and safety of farmers, their families and agricultural workers. CASA is funded in part by the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership. For more information, visit www.casa-acsa.ca.