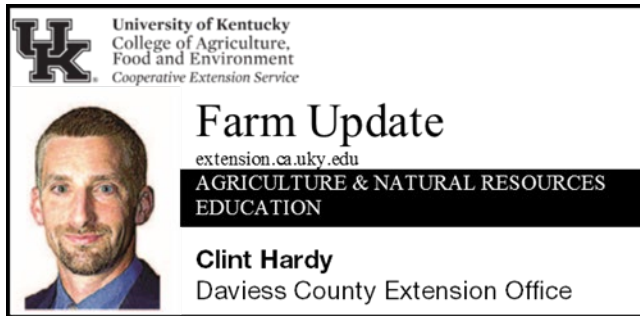


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9-24-22

National Farm Safety Week

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that production agriculture is still one of the most dangerous occupations with more than 500 annual fatalities and thousands of lost time injuries. Fall harvest time is one of the busiest and most dangerous seasons of the year. For this reason, the third week of September each year is recognized as National Farm Safety and Health Week.

The most common causes of fatal accidents are highway transportation, followed by contact with equipment. The most common causes of non-fatal injuries are contact with equipment, followed by falls and slips. There are countless ways to avoid accidents or reduce the risk of one happening but it requires adopting an attitude of concern for yourself, family farming partners, and employees to become your farm's leader in implementing safety steps.

Highway safety is where I will focus. Equipment is larger, cars and trucks on county local roads and highways are more abundant and with every additional layer of blacktop, shoulders are steeper than ever before, making the task of navigating farm machinery and heavy trucks more difficult and dangerous. Grain harvest is well underway and the road accidents and near misses are already starting. Just last week I was second in line behind a grain truck. We were on a straight stretch of road in a passing zone with no oncoming traffic. The grain truck

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started to slow down. I knew he was slowing to turn left into their bin site. The car in front of me knew he was slowing down to turn left because of his signal. The car behind me came out and passed all three of us. Fortunately, the truck driver looked in his left mirror just prior to turning left with a car in the lane next to him! We have all seen this scenario and all know it would have been a no-fault accident, but that would not have prevented property damage and injuries.

Meeting oncoming farm machinery and passing farm machinery going in your direction is dangerous. Sometimes motorists just have to wait until it is safe for the machines to pause in a safe location to let motorists pass. This means equipment not pulling off and stopping in a no-passing lane. This means equipment not pulling off and stopping where they know a steep road shoulder or culvert is going to tear up a tire. This means equipment not pulling off into a roadside ditch with no bottom resulting in getting stuck and blocking one of the travel lanes. If it is safe for the machinery to pull off and let cars by, they will. If it is not a stretch of road they can pull off safely, you just have to follow along for a while.

Both motorists and equipment operators need to put their phones down, be alert, and show some respect by using patience and courtesy to pull off to let cars by when it's safe. The most dangerous scenario for an accident is described above, the left-hand turn. If you pull out to pass a slow truck, grain cart, or header trailer make certain they are not about to turn left across your path.

Whether it is working with livestock or entering a grain bin, farm activities are dangerous and it is up to you to provide the equipment and resources needed to minimize the risk. Maintaining and utilizing machine safety components and simply wearing a seatbelt might prevent injury or death if an accident occurs. No one ever expects the unexpected. Taking

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precautions is imperative. Road travel is more dangerous in the fall than any time of the year.

Patience and courtesy are encouraged by motorists and machine operators over the next few weeks.

Cost Share Signup

County Agricultural Investment Program cost share reimbursement funded by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund and administered locally by the Green River Area Beef Improvement Group will begin soon. Investments made through November 30 of this year are eligible. Call the Extension Office to be added to the application recipient list. Information on items eligible can be found at <https://agpolicy.ky.gov/funds/Pages/program-portal.aspx>.

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