

## Tractor Safety: Operators

Tractor safety is a critical part of every farm operation because of the size of the equipment. An accident can hurt the operator and those near the vehicle, and can also damage the equipment itself. It is estimated that seat belts, rollover protection, and guards can prevent 40% of farm machine injuries. Keeping all equipment in good working condition is the first priority.

Keep the operator platform and steps stable and free of debris or slippery material.

Make sure lights and flashers are operational and that hydraulic leaks are repaired.

Check that guards and other protective barriers are in place and well-secured.

Install a 20-pound ABC fire extinguisher for tractors with cabs and a first aid kit in an easy-to-reach compartment.

Carefully select and train operators to use each piece of equipment.

Take extra precautions if giving hayrides and when working around other people, equipment, or hazards like power lines.

Use 3-point contact: keep both hands and one foot, or both feet and one hand, in contact with the tractor when mounting or dismounting. This reduces the risk of losing balance and falling.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health estimates that tractor drivers over age 65 are two to three times more likely than people in other age groups to be involved in a tractor accident. Watch for fatigue, stress, or other physical factors that can affect driving.