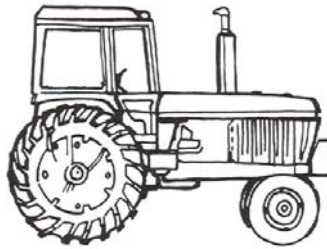


Occupational Health and Safety Act



Occupational Health and Safety Policy & Programs for Farming Operations

Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act applies, with certain limitations and exceptions, to all farming operations that have paid workers.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act requires employers that regularly employ more than five employees to prepare and review at least annually a written occupational health and safety policy, and to develop and maintain a program to implement that policy. This document has been prepared to assist employers in understanding these obligations.

Occupational Health and Safety Policies

An occupational health and safety policy is a statement of an employer's commitment to worker health and safety. A clear, concise occupational health and safety policy, signed by the highest level of management at the workplace, should state the employer's commitment, support and attitude to the health and safety program for the protection of workers.

The employer's attitudes, relationships between management and workers, community interests and technology all combine to play a part in determining how health and safety are viewed and addressed in the workplace.

Workplaces with exceptional health and safety records have established a clear line of responsibility for correcting health and safety concerns. This action enhances working relationships between management and workers.

An example of a good health and safety policy follows:

Health and Safety Policy

[Employer name/Farm operation] is vitally interested in the health and safety of its employees. Protection of employees from injury or occupational disease is a major continuing objective.

[] will make every effort to provide a safe, healthy work environment. All supervisors and workers must be dedicated to the continuing objective of reducing risk of injury.

[], as employer, is ultimately responsible for worker health and safety. As the employer of [], I give you my personal promise that every reasonable precaution will be taken for the protection of workers.

Supervisors will be held accountable for the health and safety of workers under their supervision. Supervisors are responsible to ensure that machinery and equipment are safe and that workers work in compliance with established safe work practices and procedures. Workers must receive adequate training in their specific work tasks to protect their health and safety.

Every worker must protect his or her own health and safety by working in compliance with the law and with safe work practices and procedures established by the company (or farm operation).

It is in the best interest of all parties to consider health and safety in every activity. Commitment to health and safety must form an integral part of this organization, from the owner to the workers.

Signed: []

Employer (Farm operation)

Health and Safety Program

In addition to preparing a health and safety policy like the one above, the employer who regularly employs more than five employees must also have a program in place to implement that policy. This program will vary, depending upon the hazards encountered in a particular workplace. Program elements may include all or some of the following:

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1. Worker training (e.g., new employees, new equipment, new job procedures)
 2. Workplace inspections and hazard analysis
 3. Analysis of the accidents and illnesses occurring at the workplace
 4. A health and safety budget
 5. A formal means of communication to address promptly the concerns of workers
 6. Confined space entry procedure
 7. Lock-out procedure
 8. Machine guarding
 9. Material-handling practices and procedures
 10. Procedures specific to the individual farming operation, e.g., harvesting fruit, large animal handling
 11. Preventing occupational disease, e.g., preventing the transmission of diseases from animals to humans
 12. Maintenance and repairs
 13. Housekeeping
 14. Personal protective equipment, e.g., respirators, hearing protection
 15. Emergency procedures
 16. First-aid and rescue procedures
 17. Electrical safety
 18. Fire prevention
 19. Engineering controls (e.g., ventilation)

This is not a comprehensive list.

For further information on the Occupational Health and Safety Act:

- Contact your local Ministry of Labour office listed in the Blue Pages of your phone book.
- Contact the Ministry of Labour toll free information line at 1-800-268-8013.
- Visit the Ministry of Labour's website at www.labour.gov.on.ca.

