



Farm Implements on the Road

Every vehicle driven on the road is subject to the Highway Traffic Act (HTA). This factsheet provides a brief overview of key requirements for farm vehicles and towed implements driven on a highway (highway means **any** public road).

Driver's Licenses

You do not need a driver's license to operate a farm tractor or self-propelled implement of husbandry (SPIH) along a highway, but you must be at least 16 years old. Children younger than 16 can only drive farm vehicles **directly across** a highway. A driver with an impaired driving license suspension **cannot** drive farm machinery on a highway.

Where to Drive

Although it is legal to drive farm equipment on some road shoulders, you should drive on the travelled portion of the highway. The shoulder may not be able to support the weight of your farm equipment, and there may be obstacles on the shoulder.

Although farm equipment is exempt from HTA vehicle width rules, you **must** yield $\frac{1}{2}$ the roadway to oncoming vehicles. If you leave your lane to travel on the shoulder, you must yield to any traffic in the roadway before re-entry.

Lights

Farm vehicles on a highway between $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before sunset and $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after sunrise, or when vehicles are not clearly visible from 150 metres, must have at least 2 white headlights facing forward, and 1 red taillight facing rearward.

When towing implements, the rear-most unit must have at least 1 red taillight. Farm vehicles or towed equipment over 2.6 metres wide must have 2 taillights, and over width equipment have other specific requirements. HTA 109.

Farm implement or combinations over 6.1 metres long need side marker lights; 2 green or amber lights at the front and 2 red lights at the rear; clearly visible from 150 metres.

SMV Signs

Every farm tractor or self-propelled implement on a highway must display a Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) sign centered on the rear of the vehicle, 0.6 to 2 metres above the road. They must be clearly visible from 150 metres. Any vehicle using an SMV sign cannot exceed 40 km/h.

If your slow-moving vehicle is towing something, you need to display the sign at the rear of the towed object. Farmers may tow implements behind a pickup truck. The truck/implement combination cannot exceed 40 km/h. Replace faded SMV signs.

When loaded on a truck or trailer, a slow moving vehicle is a load; it is no longer an SMV. Remove or cover any SMV sign on the load. Slow-moving vehicle signs are for SMVs only. You cannot attach them to fixed objects such as mailboxes, fences, or gate posts visible from the road.

High-Speed Tractors

All farm equipment, including those capable of road speeds over 40 km/h **must** obey the 40 km/h speed limit and use the SMV sign. This is based on HTA 76 (SMV Signs). Section 76 identifies farm tractors and SPIHs as slow moving vehicles, requires **all** slow moving vehicles to display the SMV sign when on the roads, and requires **all** SMVs displaying the sign, including high-speed tractors, to obey the SMV 40 km/h speed limit.

Safety Chains

The HTA requires farm wagons and implements drawn along a highway behind a farm tractor, SPIH, pickup or car, to have two separate means of attachment, so if one fails the towed implement will not separate from the towing vehicle. The draw bar/hitch provides the first means of attachment; a safety chain/cable the second. A single safety chain is the most common way to meet this requirement. A safety chain must be strong enough to hold the weight of towed implements plus their loads. When towing multiple implements, each draw bar/hitch combination must have its own safety chain.

A three-point hitch does not require a secondary means of attachment. Two chains, crossed under the draw bar is needed for heavy truck trailers. See MTO Farm Guide for chain strength tables.

Self-Propelled Implements of Husbandry (SPIH)

SPIHs are vehicles manufactured, designed, redesigned, converted, or reconstructed for a specific use in farming. When converted from former road vehicles, an SPIH must exhibit significant outward, physical change to the cargo-carrying portion of the vehicle. The modifications should enable it to perform its specific farm use and not its previous function.

SPIH can travel on a highway without license plates only if travelling from a farm to farm, to perform a farm use, or to or from places for maintenance or repairs. **All** other uses, including farm to commercial elevator or processing plant, require plates.

It is the responsibility of the farmer to clean any debris from the road as per municipal bylaw. Remember to place warning signs before and after the entrance of the farm or field where the farm equipment is working. This way, motorists are warned that there may be mud on the road and that they should proceed with caution.

See [OFA Resources](#) to review the MTO FARM GUIDE and OFA fact sheets; Farm Trucks, Trailer Towing Checklist, SPIH, Farm ATV/ORV Use, Road Safety and Farm Vehicles

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