

Objectives

Learn about the specific hazards when working at heights on a farm, the main causes and how to avoid trips and falls.

Curriculum Links:

- SPHE Myself
 Myself and the wider world

Keywords: risk ladder roofing fragile bales heating secure hazard

1. Causes of falls

The main causes of a fall are:

- A. Bales of hay
- B. Bad use of ladders
- C. Roof repairs
- D. Untidy yard

Ask the class if they can think of any more: eg. falling from a gate, slippery surfaces or how objects that might fall on them.

2. The warning signs



3. Bales

Falling from stacks or loads is the biggest cause of injuries from bales.

Farmers can help prevent this by making sure their stacks are built secure and and binding stacks and loads

When removing bales, farmers must do so from the top first. removing bales lower down the stack will leave bales unsupported, which could tumble and fall. (think of Jenga!!)

Fire risk:

Sometimes Bales can 'heat' and go on fire when stacked. The reasons for this is the hay or straw was baled when wet or moist. If it is too wet then the chemical reaction (respiration) will cause the bales to heat up and sometimes even catch fire. That is another reason why a fire extinguisher will always be available in a shed



4. Ladders

Ladders should NEVER be used by children!

Did you know that many farmers are injured when ladders they are using slip sideways or away from the wall.

Using a platform on a telescopic handler is much quicker and safer, in fact ladders should only be used as the last resort when there is no safer way of doing the job.

Tips for farmers when using a ladder:

1. Make sure the ladder is secure
The base of the ladder must always be placed on firm, level and secure ground.
2. The ladder needs to be 'footed' or 'tied off' securely to prevent it slipping.
3. Ladders must be in good condition. Makeshift, home-made or damaged ladders are dangerous and should never be used.
4. Never carry heavy objects while climbing a ladder
5. Never reach out sideways from a ladder as this could cause the ladder to wobble and possibly turn over

See: hsa.ie and HSENI.gov.uk



5. Working at heights - roof work

In agriculture, many serious injuries occur from falls involving work on fragile roofs. These are roofs sheeted with materials that will not safely support a person's weight and can shatter without warning.

Fragile roofing materials include:

- galvanised sheeting,
- unreinforced asbestos cement sheeting,
- roof lights such as Perspex sheeting,
- linear sheets on built up roofs, and
- other materials such as glass, wired glass and wood wool slabs.

Question: what other materials can you think of that might be 'fragile'?



5. Working at heights - roof work (cont'd)

Farmers must be VERY CAREFUL when working at heights.

- Proper roofing ladder / crawling boards should always be used
- Be aware of fragile roof lights/panels
- On a fragile roof, use proper roofing ladders or crawling boards.
- Erect a suitable barrier to prevent falls while carrying out extensive work on roofs
- Hire a contractors for all work at height

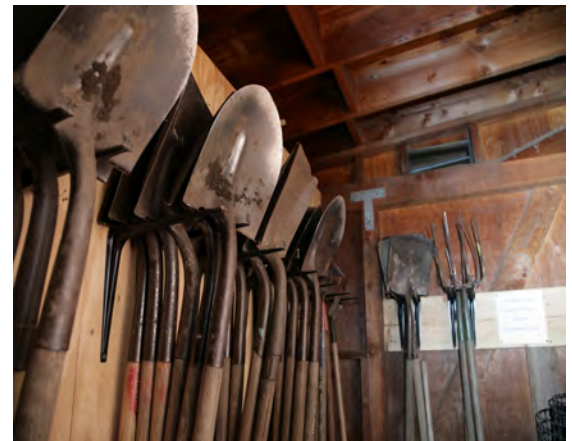
See: hsa.ie and HSENI.gov.uk



6. Tidy yard

keeping the yard tidy reduces trip, falls and falling objects in the following ways:

- prevent tripping by picking up handtools such as brushes, shovels and forks.
- Forks left on the ground could easily be trod on by a person or animal.
- Baling twine once removed should be stored off the ground
- Clear slippery areas by cleaning up oil spills & killing off algae in damper areas.
- Make sure all gates are properly hung and sturdy
- If tyres are left against a wall, they should never be climbed on as they will fall forward.



Suggested activities

- Try the lesson plans on the next page
- Ask the students to do a mini project on the areas: Bales, Roof Work or Ladders
- Ask the students to draw a picture of a farmer using a ladder safely and unsafely
- Play a game of jenga and use it to discuss how unbalanced the stack gets when pieces are moved from below (just like a stack of bales)
- See videos on the topic in our the Extra resources section

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Lesson Plan

Objective

To show scenarios on a farm involving heights, falling or trip hazards and giving the children the opportunity to predict what might happen or what should be done to prevent an accident.

Instructions

Print out this page and show the class the pictures below. Now divide the class into groups and assign one





Look at the above picture. Can the children identify key trip and fall hazards?

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