

safety Agriculture matters

Toolbox Talks for Buffalo Ridge Insurance

From your safety partners at Buffalo Ridge Insurance

Preventing Lower Back Injuries While Farming

According to the National Safety Council (NSC), back injuries are the most common occupational injury suffered by American workers. Agricultural workers are especially susceptible to these types of injuries due to many of the activities they engage in throughout the day. These activities include lifting objects heavier than 25 pounds (bales of hay or sacks of feed), working in awkward positions, driving vehicles that cause whole body vibrations (tractors and trucks) and working in conditions that are conducive to slipping and falling.

To minimize your risk of back injuries while on the job, follow these safety recommendations:

- Ensure that all loads are light and compact.
- Lift only items that can be handled safely by testing the weight before picking it up. If the load is unmanageable, ask a co-worker for assistance.
- Get a solid grip on items before lifting and lowering them by placing your feet close to the load and using smooth motions with your legs.
- Only lift and lower between the level of your hands and shoulders when standing with your arms hanging in a relaxed position.
- Avoid grabbing objects that are out of your reach or blocked by other items. Instead, get close to the object you wish

to grab and move obstacles out of the way before proceeding.

- Always rotate your entire body by moving your feet instead of twisting at the waist while carrying large loads.
- Use mechanical lifting devices such as lift tables, hoists and conveyors to assist in tasks.
- Use vehicles with suspension seats to reduce whole body vibrations. Also, look for vehicles with good lumbar back support and various seat positioning options.
- Develop a fitness routine outside of work and stay healthy by eating a balanced diet and getting plenty of sleep.

Rutgers University claims that workers who are in good shape are less likely to develop injuries. To reduce your risks, develop a fitness routine outside of work and stay healthy by eating a balanced diet and getting plenty of sleep.



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