**Preventing Back Injuries**

Lifting & Carrying:

Inhale deeply before the lift and exhale while lifting. Follow these steps for lifting:

1. Test the load.
2. Get Help.
3. Clear the path before the lift.
4. Carry object close to body.
5. Face the object being lifted.
6. Bend at the knees & engage abs.
7. Rotate body by moving feet.
8. Use back brace or support.
9. Use equipment instead.

Working with Livestock:

Prevent back injuries by getting help where needed, use feeding equipment or equipment to handle bales of hay, watch for smaller animals underfoot, and prevent falls from horses. Use animal handling equipment to restrict movement and better position the animal for work as well as handling/safety equipment to reduce direct exposure to the animals such as chutes, pens, and transportation devices.

Often on the farm, there is equipment and machinery that need regular maintenance and back injuries can occur while performing this task.

Prevent back injuries while performing maintenance by:

* Set the height of benches and equipment to prevent bending forward.
* Keep tools and material used often at waist or shoulder height.
* Use anti-fatigue mats if standing for a long time.
* Use long handled tools to increase leverage and to prevent extra bending & reaching.

Preventing Slips, Trips & Falls:

* Good Housekeeping
* Work at Ground Level
* 3 Points of Contact
* Good Lighting
* Correct Footwear
* Rid of Distractions
* Use Handrails
* Fall Protection working at heights
* Open rather than climb gates

Whole Body Vibration

Occurs when there is mechanical vibration to the human body through a contact surface such as a seat when operating a tractor, skidsteer, forklift, ATV, and similar equipment. Continuous use of this equipment can cause adverse health effects such as speech interference, muscle fatigue and cramping, disruption of balance and perception, increased heart rate and blood pressure, increased breathing rate and low back pain and spine damage. To prevent whole body vibration use shock absorbing seats with suspension and maintain the seat in good condition, replace older seats with new ones that have lumbar support, and full cushions.

Other tips to reduce Whole body vibration are:

* Keep tires inflated.
* Maintain vehicle suspension system.
* Reduce vehicle speed over rough terrain.
* Rotate worker between tasks.
* Avoid physical demanding tasks for a short time after leaving machinery to allow the back to recover.

Maintaining Back Health through strengthening & flexibility by:

* Routine activities to protect & strengthen the back.
* Strengthen core muscles.
* Stretch to maintain flexibility.
* Good posture, especially when seated.
* Sleep on your back with supportive pillows for alignment.

Other Healthy Habits:

* Wear boots with high-quality insoles.
* Rotate strenuous tasks with those less strenuous.
* Push rather than pull objects.
* Manage stress to prevent muscle tension.
* Good diet to give muscles the nutrients they need to work.
* Know your limitations and get help.

**Preventing Back Injuries – DISCUSSION RECORD**

**Agenda:**

* Are there machines or lifting devise to help with manual handling of objects and materials on the farm?
* Practice the steps for lifting and carrying.

Comments or safety concerns as a result of the discussion or observed since the last rally?

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Follow-up to concerns raised at previous rally?  
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Action Items?  
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Near Miss/Incidents/Unsafe Acts/Conditions to Report?

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Topics recommended for future Rallies: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank the rally members for their participation.**

**Quiz Answers:** 1. T, 2. T, 3. e, 4. T, 5. T

**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. Prevent back injuries by getting help where needed, use feeding equipment or equipment to handle bales of hay, watch for smaller animals underfoot, and prevent falls from horses.

True or False

2. Often on the farm, there is equipment and machinery that need regular maintenance and back injuries can occur while performing this task.

True or False

3. Steps for safe lifting and carrying include:

1. Test the load.
2. Clear the path.
3. Bend at the knees and engage abs
4. Carry load close to body.
5. All of the Above

4. Continuous use of vibrating equipment can cause adverse health effects such as speech interference, muscle fatigue and cramping, disruption of balance and perception, increased heart rate and blood pressure, increased breathing rate and low back pain and spine damage. True or False

5. Maintaining Back Health through strengthening & flexibility is important.True or False

**Attendance RECORD**

\*This is to acknowledge that I understand and agree to actively participate in the safety meeting.

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