**Protecting Your Feet – One Step at a Time!**

# Your feet can be the root of the problem for many farm incidents and injuries as well as a worker’s ability to maintain good physical condition. Standing and walking are required for a large portion of the work on the farm. It can start with foot wear, to slips trips and falls to impact injuries involving feet getting caught, cut, punctured or broken.

Evaluate the hazards on your farm. What hazards can cause foot problems or injuries? Working with livestock? Slips, trips, & falls? Working with chainsaws? Broken or loose floor boards in the barn? Snow blower clogs? Nails or spikes coming out of floors? Contact with electricity? Poor housekeeping? Poor lighting? Incorrect footwear for the task or conditions? Ground and floor structure and condition? Runover by machine? Unguarded mowers or augers?

Consider not only injuries but conditions that can arise with standing and working on your feet all day such as blisters, calluses, bunions, plantar fasciitis, in grown toe nails and just plain tired feet. Standing all day can also have an effect on your back and joints including knees and hips leading to arthritis down the road.

**Choosing the correct foot wear:**

* Consider the potential hazards for the feet, a safety shoe or boot may be required. If so, choose one that meets CSA Standard Z195-14 “Protective Footwear” to protect against the identified hazards such as punctures and electrical shock, reduces static electricity build up, and protects the toes from falling objects or anything that impacts the toe area.
* Ensure the shoe or boot fits correctly. Too small may cause foot cramping, where too big can cause blisters and slips and trips. Ensure the heel grips the foot firmly, there is room for the toes, and a low wide flat heel.
* Safety shoes do not stretch.
* Buy shoes late in the day where the feet are apt to be at their largest.
* Waterproof to prevent leaking and to keep feet dry throughout the day.
* Non-slip tread for the surface walked on.
* Consider an insole for more cushion and shock absorption while walking.
* Consult with a doctor if you have concerns with your feet or unsure of the type of footwear to buy.
* Check that the shoe or boot provides insulation in the winter and ventilation in the summer.
* Inspect the footwear, holes, exposed steel toe or composite, worn tread, and loose soles will create additional unwanted hazards.
* Ensure workers wear the footwear as intended by lacing up the boots secure enough so they won’t come off and do not create an additional hazard.

**Take care of your feet by:**

* Wash them daily with soap and water, rinse thoroughly, and let dry.
* Wear a clean pair of socks each day. Keep spare socks on.
* Keep toe nails trim, but not too short.
* Wear shoes that fit correctly and meant for the task at hand.
* Ensure shoes are clean and dry on the inside.

**What are you walking on?**

Walking on natural surfaces can be more comfortable then walking on concrete but they typically offer more slip, trip and fall hazards. Slippery surfaces also offer more opportunity for slip, trips and falls.

Wood barn floors and rubber anti-fatigue mats on concrete are much kinder to the feet. This would be the same with safety shoes with shock absorbing insoles. Be sure the anti-fatigue mats are installed correctly and laying flat to prevent trip and fall hazards.

**Other Preventative Measures include:**

* Keeping pedestrians out of areas where mobile equipment is operated.
* Ensure machines and equipment are guarded.
* Do not remove clogs from snow blowers with hands or feet use a stick or pole.
* Wear boots specifically for protection against chainsaw cuts.
* Maintain good housekeeping.
* Check floors for nails and other objects that could puncture the foot.
* Add lighting to dark areas.
* Mark edges of stairs.
* Post signs for the various protective footwear requirements for the task on the farm.
* Practice good animal handling techniques and avoid the animal’s blind spot.
* Keep all circuits closed in the electrical panel and check cords for frays and damage.

**Protecting Your Feet – One Step at a Time! – DISCUSSION RECORD**

**Agenda:**

* Do you need more than one pair of safety shoes for the various jobs on farm and various environmental conditions?
* Discuss footwear experiences while on the job?
* Are there recommended stores to purchase shoes?
* Does the farm have a boot allowance?

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. Standing and walking are required for a large portion of the work on the farm. It can start with foot wear, to slips trips and falls to impact injuries involving feet getting caught, cut, punctured or broken.  True or False

2. Conditions that can arise with standing and working on your feet all day are blisters, calluses, bunions, plantar fasciitis, in grown toe nails and just plain tired feet. True or False

3. Other preventative measures may include:

1. Add lighting to dark areas.
2. Ensure machines and equipment are guarded.
3. Maintain good housekeeping.
4. Check floors for nails and other objects that could puncture the foot.
5. All of the Above

4. Ensure the shoe or boot fits correctly. Too small may cause foot cramping, where too big can cause blisters and slips and trips. Ensure the heel grips the foot firmly, there is room for the toes, and a low wide flat heel. True or False

5. Wood barn floors and rubber anti-fatigue mats on concrete are much kinder to the feet. 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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