

**Name of Presenter:** Keystone Agricultural Producers  
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## **BACKGROUND & RATIONALE**

The family farm is a very unique workplace when compared to almost all other industries. The farm is not only the place where we work, but also where we live and raise our families. Farmers are the owners, managers, and often the main worker on their operations; they often work by themselves and during busy seasons may work twelve to sixteen hours per day. In addition to this, members of the farm family are often the main workforce.

The best way to deal with farm safety and health issues is by continuing and expanding upon existing education programs. There can certainly be a role for agriculture representatives who have the ability to provide a continuous flow of safety information through farm meetings and farm visits.

In some sectors of our industry, there are currently education/awareness programs in place. More commodity specific programs could be useful, but would have to be developed by that specific commodity in order to reflect the needs/diverse conditions of that sector. Inspections and fines on family farm operations will achieve little. Many family farms are struggling to survive the current tough financial times and do not need more costs and another layer of bureaucracy and regulations imposed on them.

KAP also encourages stakeholders to develop, in coordination with producers, a voluntary self-assessment program of potential farm accident areas that can be used by the farm community. We believe that all farm employers should be encouraged to develop a farm safety policy plan for their operation that they can review and follow with their families and employees. Another example of how government can assist the agriculture industry in adopting safer practices is by facilitating media safety advertisements directly targeted at the particular hazards of the season, whether it be seeding or harvest time.

## **KAP'S POSITION**

Keystone Agricultural Producers, through its Workplace Safety and Health Committee, will focus its attention in several areas. Those on the forefront include:

- **Education** - Existing health and safety education programs should be expanded and continued. Government should play a more active role in creating awareness of these programs.

- **Youth** - Safety programs should begin in schools to educate our young people about the importance of safe equipment operation.

- **Employees** - All farm employers should be encouraged to develop a farm safety policy plan that they review with their employees and follow strictly. KAP supports the development of a voluntary short course on farm safety for employees and employers and believes that it should be delivered by a recognized educational institution. After the successful completion of this course, the Workers' Compensation Board and other insurance companies should recognize the value of this program.