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Farmsafe Australia shine spotlight on the practices putting our kids at risk

Few Australians know that nearly one in five (15%) fatalities on a farm are children who are under the age of 15¹. More staggering is that more than half (56%) had no active supervision by an adult at the time of the incident.² Following the launch of National Farm Safety Week on Sunday, Farmsafe Australia is shining a spotlight on the importance of adopting more effective risk management practices to protect the next generation of farmers.

This year's campaign highlights the key safety risks that are most prevalent throughout the life of a farmer, aligning with the theme: 'Farm Safety Through The Ages – From 2-92'. Farmsafe Australia hopes that by providing greater access to information and sparking conversations around farm safety, it will reduce the likelihood of injury, illness and fatalities associated with agricultural production among all generations.

Stevi Howdle, Executive Officer at Farmsafe Australia says children are natural learners who mirror the behaviours of their role models, which is why it is essential to always adopt safe and responsible farming practices.

"There is no doubt that our children love to be involved in the everyday work on a family farm, and it is a wonderful opportunity for personal learning, and growth. But what our farming communities must do better is construct a safer, and less risky environment that supports this growth through active supervision by a responsible adult and age-appropriate activities," said Ms Howdle.

"Farm safety is about better childhood education that explains to our kids why they are unable to participate in certain activities or be situated in specific areas of the farm. By setting clear and consistent boundaries, such as safe play areas, 'no-go zones' and instilling a 'safety always' culture, farming families can immediately improve the environmental safety at every stage of growth, without dampening the enjoyment of a rich farming lifestyle.

"We need to allow kids to be kids on farm, while ensuring they're as safe as possible. It's a real balance."

Farmsafe Australia is a national not-for-profit entity, advocating for farmers. It aims to connect state farming organisations, peak commodity bodies, influential advocacy bodies and other groups that share a common interest in agricultural health and safety. Its initiatives are based upon the philosophy that the primary responsibility for farm safety rests with individual farmers, farm workers, and their families.

For more information on farm safe practices visit www.farmsafe.org.au.

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¹ *Safer Farms 2020 Agricultural Injury and Fatality Trend Report, December 2020*

² *The University of Sydney Projects – populations at risk*

Committed to keeping you safer on Australian Farms