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Farmsafe Australia dispels myths around ‘young’ farming fatalities

19 to 30-year olds... The generation most well-known for ambitious confidence, risk-taking behaviour and lack of experience, or so the perception goes.

This stereotype, however, fails to stand up when the facts are peeled back. The evidence is clear, in the last decade, it is actually the farmers aged 50 years or older that have accounted for half (50%) of all Australian farming fatalities. This is in contrast to an average 12.1% of fatalities being those aged 15-29.¹

Following the launch of National Farm Safety Week on Sunday, Farmsafe Australia is unpacking the facts on farm safety, advocating for greater adoption of effective risk mitigation and safer farming practices to protect all farmers, from the next generation of energetic custodians through to the most experienced.

This year’s campaign aims to highlight the key safety issues and risks that are most prevalent throughout the life of a farmer, ‘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 explained that rural communities need to draw the generations of farmers closer together in a process of mentorship that ensures all practices are safer for everybody.

“Our next generation of farmers are energetic, eager to learn and excited to ‘do the doing’. This is something we should celebrate. But with this excitement also comes responsibility, and as current leaders of Australian agriculture, our role is to take the time to teach our people safe ways to get any job done.”

“We should encourage them to ask questions more frequently, guide them in a way that builds professional confidence and a repertoire of diverse experiences, all while ensuring they feel comfortable to request assistance. We are role models to this high learning age group, especially when it comes to acceptable workplace culture, and instilling safety in every aspect of farming life will almost guarantee success in the future,” said Ms Howdle.

Farmsafe Australia is a national non-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

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