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Farmsafe Australia Launches a New Campaign: Farming Not Harming

Farmsafe Australia recently launched a new campaign, aimed at reminding farmers of the roles that they play in shaping a safe, healthy and productive working environment on their farms. The campaign highlights the opportunities that farmers have to be mentors, teachers and supporters and how demonstrating those leadership styles may reduce or eliminate psychosocial risks on their farm.

“Farmers are generally aware of the physical risks and hazards on their farms, but there are less obvious risks that are important to draw attention to as well,” Farmsafe Australia’s Chairman Charles Armstrong explained, “Psychosocial risks such as high work demands, bullying, isolation, and even having little control over the weather or the market are often the source of high levels of stress. High stress environments can contribute to or even cause, work-related incidents that may lead to serious injury or even fatality.”

Agriculture consistently ranks as one of the most dangerous industries to work in here in Australia. Farmers have a duty under WHS legislation to provide a healthy and safe workplace, and that includes the mental and emotional wellbeing of their employees.

“Whether they realise it or not, farmers and managers are shaping the workplace culture on their farms through their actions and behaviours. By role modeling safe and supportive practices, having zero tolerance for bullying and harassment, and shaping a strong safety culture on farm, you ensure that your workers know that you take your obligations seriously. And you may also improve your productivity.” Mr Armstrong continued.

According to the Australian Workplace Barometer Report commissioned by Safe Work Australia, depression costs Australian employers on average approximately \$8 billion every year through sick leave and/or loss of productivity due to working while sick. \$693 million of that figure is attributed to job strain and bullying.’

Guide Available for Download

As part of this campaign, a [new resource](#) has been added to Farmsafe Australia’s library of information, available on the Farmsafe website www.farmsafe.org.au, as a guide for farmers and managers to navigate some of the less obvious risks and hazards on farm. The guide provides examples of psychosocial risks and provides suggestions on how to mentor, teach and support staff to mitigate these risks.

By investing in and creating a safe, healthy and productive working environment, Australian farmers can ensure that on their farm, they are farming not harming.

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