

# Safer Farms 2024

Agricultural Injury and Fatality **TREND REPORT**



*in safe hands*



**Farmsafe**  
AUSTRALIA

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Insurance



# Message from the Chair

Felicity Richards

**Culture is like the wind. It is invisible, yet its effect can be seen and felt. When it is blowing in your direction, it makes for smooth sailing. When it is blowing against you, everything is more difficult.<sup>1</sup>**

How true this is of a culture of farm safety. When we have one, our farms run smoothly. Everyday tasks are executed with a safe approach. Risks are eliminated or carefully mitigated against. Staff, family and visitors head home at the end of each workday, safe and well.

When we don't have a safe culture on farm, other priorities take precedence. And the result? Near misses, injuries, and in the worst case, fatalities.

As third-generation cattle farmers, my husband and I are familiar with the many competing priorities that farmers face every day. And we know how easily safety slides down the priority list.

Over the past twelve months we have faced unseasonably dry conditions, and as we approach mid-winter in Tasmania, the pressure is on to keep sufficient feed up to our cattle to carry them through this cold period and into spring in reasonable condition. In these circumstances (and many, far tougher circumstances faced by farmers all around the country, across many different commodities) it is only too easy to forego safety. We tell ourselves that we just 'had to get the job done', and that the risk we took was outweighed by the demands of the job.

Who amongst us, when looking back at the last twelve months, can easily name a few instances where we pushed safety aside? Took the ute with the unreliable brakes perhaps, the one that needs to be serviced but you just haven't found the time to take it in, because you knew that if you didn't feed out that bale of hay, the welfare of that mob would be compromised?

<sup>1</sup> Bryan Walker and Sarah A Soule, *Harvard Business Review* 2017

It is my belief that only a deeply embedded culture of farm safety will protect us from taking these kinds of risks when the pressure mounts. We will remember that getting home at the end of the day is the most important job of all. We will still get that hungry mob of cattle fed, but somehow, one way or another, (because us farmers are endlessly innovative!) we will make sure it happens without risking our lives, or the lives of our co-workers, or family.

The problem, as I'm sure you well know, is that building culture is hard. Really hard. It's not an induction process. It's not a toolbox talk or a training day. Like all the food and fibre we grow, it takes nurturing. We must grow that culture. We must tend to it daily. Just telling our staff, family members and visitors to 'be safe', or to 'use your common sense' is no more likely to build a safe culture than telling our cattle to 'get pregnant' or 'put more kilograms on!' For us, a safe culture is still some way off. We have good days, and not-so-good days. We are slowly building the language of safety into our daily conversations about farm work. We are trying to make sure we model the behaviours that show safety is always front of mind, and never second to getting the job done. We are building a library of policies and procedures that document, in simple, practical language, what safe work looks like on our property. We are using the inductions, the toolbox talks, and the training, but we know nothing will fast-track the process. Like growing good beef cattle, growing a farm safe culture is a life's work.

So I invite you to join me, and Farmsafe Australia, and start growing the culture of farm safety.

**Felicity Richards**  
Chair, Farmsafe Australia





## Messages from our EO

Stevi Howdle

**As the Executive Officer of Farmsafe Australia, I get to work at a critical intersection between farmer needs and industry and legislative requirements. My main task is to creatively message regulatory information in a way that will encourage farmers and farm workers to find practical ways to implement safer practices on their farms. It can be extremely challenging but when it resonates, it is extremely rewarding.**

This year's theme of 'In Safe Hands' has been one of the rewarding ones. It has been a campaign that has really been owned by other farmers. The simple question, 'what does it mean to have your farms and your people in safe hands?' gave the farmers involved in the campaign the freedom to personalise what 'safe' looks like to them.

For me, it's knowing that there are certain core values that are held above profit; family, community, and the preservation of our way of life. It's knowing that the land is more than a place of work or a paycheck; it is a legacy passed down through generations, a source of pride, and a symbol of hard work and perseverance.

When we connect farm safety to simply upholding our values, it changes the reason behind the rules. Understanding and implementing farm safety in our businesses cannot just be about compliance or avoiding fines—it has to be about safeguarding these very values and ensuring the continuity and prosperity of Australian agriculture.

Our farm safety information is designed with the understanding that every farm is unique. Each farm has its specific challenges, whether it's the type of crops grown, the livestock raised, the terrain, or the machinery used. Therefore, safety guidelines should not be rigid rules but adaptable tools that farmers can tailor to fit their particular circumstances. This flexibility allows farmers to integrate safety measures seamlessly into their daily routines without compromising productivity or the traditional methods that define their work.

Embracing farm safety is an act of responsibility and ownership. When farmers take the time to understand the information that is available to them and then customise it for their operations, they are actively protecting their most valuable assets—their health, the wellbeing of their workers, and the sustainability of their farm. This proactive approach minimises risks and fosters a safer working environment, ultimately contributing to more stable and resilient farm businesses.

Farm safety also aligns with the broader agricultural value of community. By prioritising safety, health and wellbeing, farmers set a positive example for their family, neighbours, the next generation of farmers, and the consumers of their food and fibre.

It creates a culture of caring for each other that extends beyond the farm gate to the entire agricultural community. Sharing experiences and checking in on each other can strengthen bonds and encourage collective efforts to address common challenges.

Moreover, implementing safety measures is a reflection of the respect farmers have for their profession and the environment. It demonstrates a commitment to preserving the land and resources that sustain agricultural livelihoods.

By connecting a safer culture on our farms to protecting our common values, safety is no longer an external imposition but an integral part of responsible and successful farming. When we take this up to the industry level, the question is just as important. How can working together as an industry ensure that Australian agriculture remains 'in safe hands'?

Farmsafe Australia was built by industry organisations and over the past few years it's become very important to understand how being a part of Farmsafe underpins the values of each of our 25 members and how that is then transferred through the network to their members.

This has also become the new focus of the Supporter model that Farmsafe has entered into with a number of corporate partners. We are so grateful to the 17 brands that came on board this year to be ambassadors of safer cultures across the agricultural landscape. We know that we have a much greater chance of influencing behaviour if we speak with one voice, one consistent message. We thank our Supporters for their courage to lead.

In particular, we want to thank WFI Insurance for their commitment to seeing the Safer Farms Report continued. Their sponsorship has allowed us to grow the report and provide even more information to you, the Australian farmer.

As you read through the pages of this report, I hope you will notice that the information has been curated to provide you with simple, practical steps that you can take to build a safer culture on your farm. And if you have any questions, remember you can always reach out. We are here to help and if we don't have the answers, we will do our best to point you to someone who will.

**Stevi Howdle**  
Executive Officer, Farmsafe Australia



# Message from our Sponsor

Andrew Beer



## WFI Insurance is delighted to be partnering with Farmsafe Australia and supporting the publication of this ‘Safer Farms 2024 Report’.

This important safety report aptly themed ‘In Safe Hands’ is a vital resource which I urge farming families across the country to read. The report has a simple mission amid the complex environment of farming, and that’s to save lives and limbs.

As one of Australia’s leading rural insurers, we see first-hand the adverse outcomes of when things go wrong on farms, where events can unfold quickly in remote locations. As such, we are deeply committed to directly helping agricultural communities better understand their risks and promoting safer work practices.

Known for our personal approach, our WFI representatives are very much a part of the rural and regional communities we serve,

playing an important role in educating people on risks and ensuring they have adequate insurance protection should the worst happen.

The value we bring to these community conversations is experience and insights. Experience in identifying and mitigating risks on farms, and insights accrued over more than 100 years of service.

**Transparent in our approach, we hope that by sharing knowledge and insights, we can meaningfully contribute to building safer habits across the farming sector, and prevent further injuries and tragic fatalities from occurring.**

Nationally, over the past year, we have seen an overall reduction in liability claims across most segments including falls from heights down 75% and impact injuries reduced by 30%. This is the lowest we've seen in 4 years.

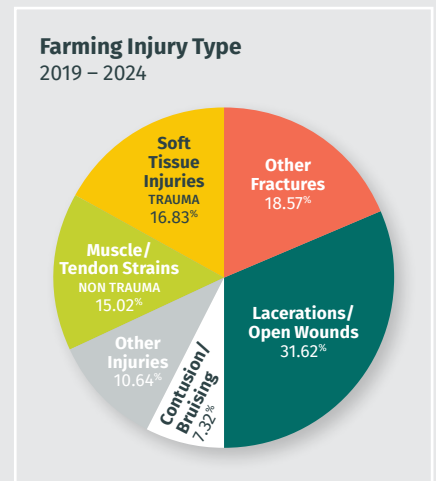
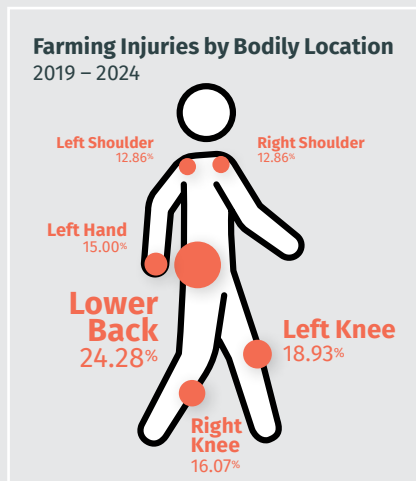
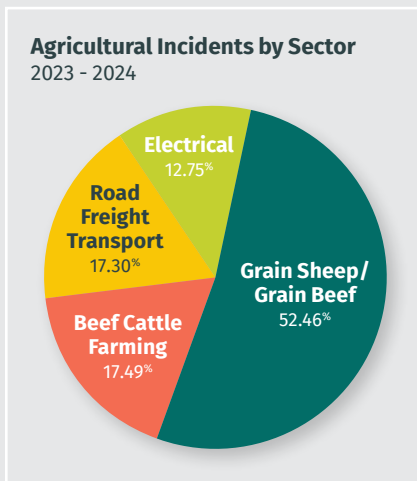
While in our workers compensation portfolio (WA only), overall incidents are down around 20% compared to FY23, with logging incidents seeing a dramatic 95% reduction. We have however, seen a significant increase in beef cattle farming incidents of 40%.

Collisions on farms has steadily declined over the past few years, reducing by 7% compared to last year, and a 23% decline from 4 years ago.

While pleasing to see improvements across several areas which indicates safety messages are resonating and safe work practices are strengthening, we have also seen horrific life-changing injuries occur and avoidable deaths on farms over the past year, leaving devastation that extends far beyond the farm gate.

**Key risks continue to centre around heavy machinery, large animals, and exposure to severe weather events, with farm property damage claims stemming from natural peril events increasing by 32% over the past year.**

## 2024 WFI INSURANCE Key Agricultural Insights



In regard to machinery incidents, omitting important safety steps in order to execute tasks more rapidly has been a major contributing factor to incidents, with fatigue and loss of concentration also playing an ongoing role.

Self-managed repairs to broken down machinery is a leading cause of injuries, for example, when machinery has not been properly disengaged prior to repairs commencing. When interviewing injured claimants, remote locations, delayed productivity and costs were reasons why self-repair work was undertaken versus engaging machine specialists to carry out works.

In conclusion, safety must always be the central consideration, as behind these incident statistics are people, whose lives, properties and livelihoods have forever been changed.

I hope this report will inspire habits to change. While there is always much to do on farm, do not let haste undermine safety. It might take a few more minutes, however I assure you, it will lead to a better outcome.

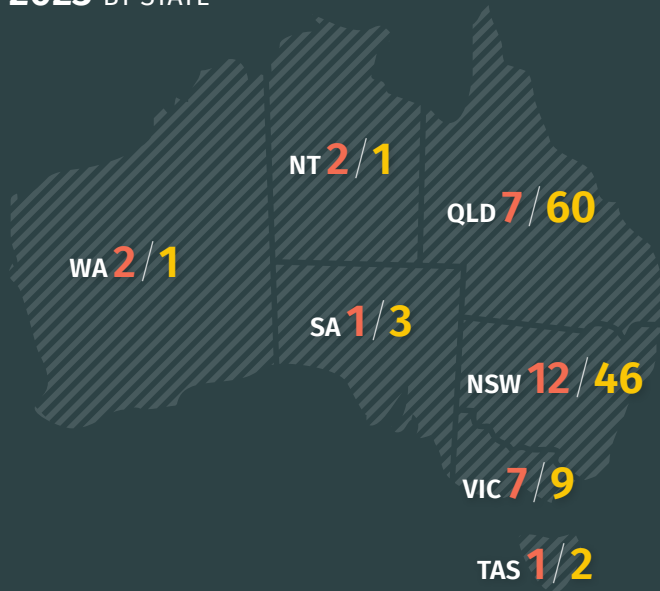
We applaud Farmsafe Australia for compiling this report, and look forward to continuing to work alongside them to help protect the safety and wellbeing of farmers, their families and their farms.

**Andrew Beer**  
Executive General Manager, WFI Insurance

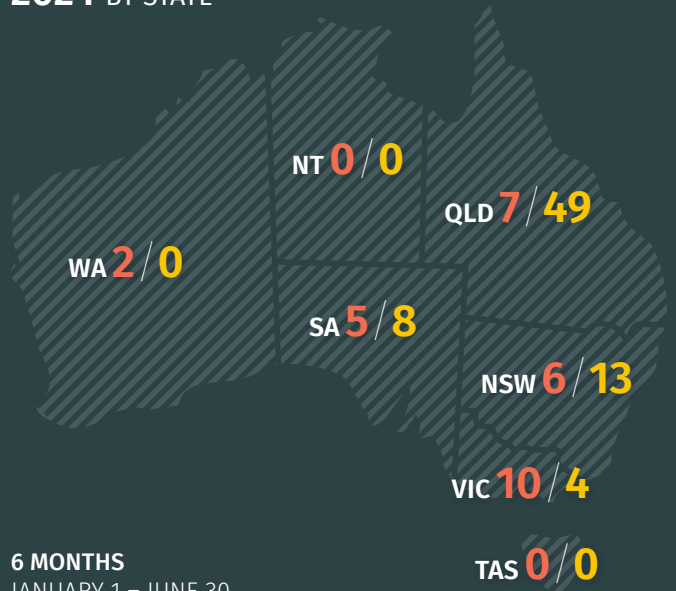
# Snapshot

Every statistic represents the loss or harm of a loved one. Lives changed forever.

## 2023 BY STATE



## 2024 BY STATE



6 MONTHS  
JANUARY 1 – JUNE 30

\*PRELIMINARY DATA AS OF 1 JULY.



2023 saw the most significant decrease in on farm fatalities on record. In comparison to 2022’s tragic number of 55 fatalities, 23 more farmers made it home alive and we are so grateful that they did.

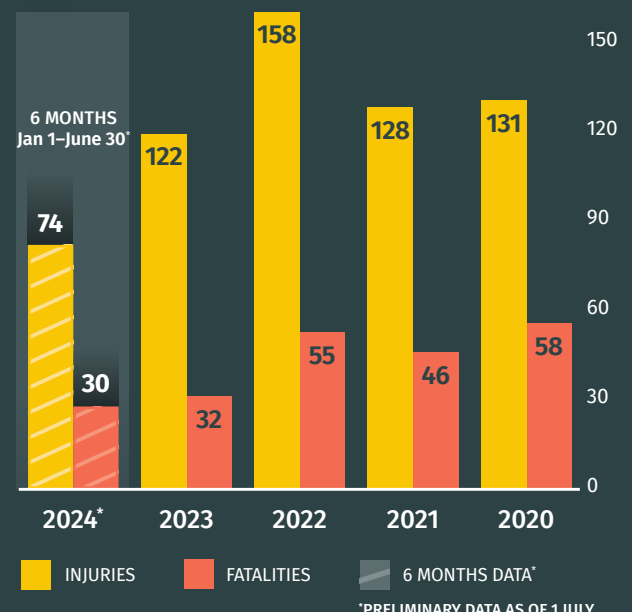
The tragedy is that 32 families and communities were left to grieve the loss of someone they cared greatly for. Even 1 fatality is too many in our industry and we need to continue to do better, year on year to reduce the impact that workplace injuries and fatalities have on farming families and rural communities.

Every farmer can do their part to embed safety culture by focussing on integrating safer habits into their daily routines; put the helmet on every time, clip the seatbelt across you, check for bystanders and actively supervise children. Don’t circumvent safety features, check in on each other, eat healthy foods and get some rest!

Simple habits and small actions can have a profound impact on the overall safety of our farms. Take time to identify the risks on your farm and then take steps daily to reduce those risks. Each issue that you address will reduce the possibility of a tragic event occurring.

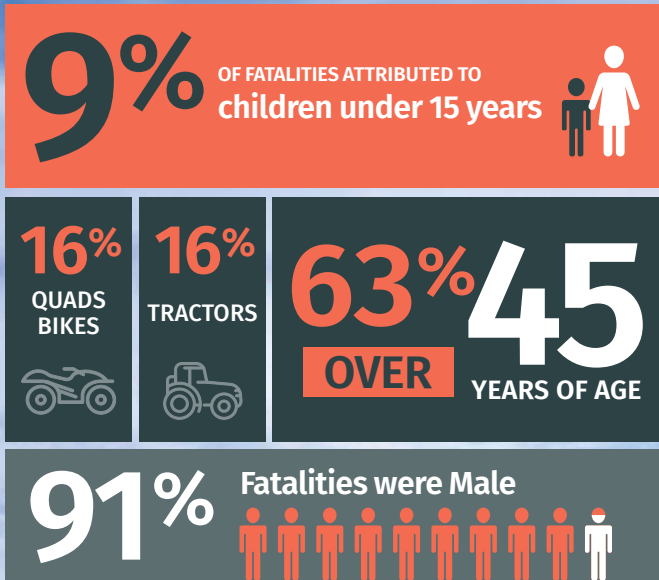
The next few pages are full of ideas; resources you can draw on, habits you can focus on, training you can undertake and organisations that can help you with every step along the journey. The farming community is small and tightly knit. The more we support and take care of each other, the stronger and more sustainable we become.

### STATISTICS BY YEAR

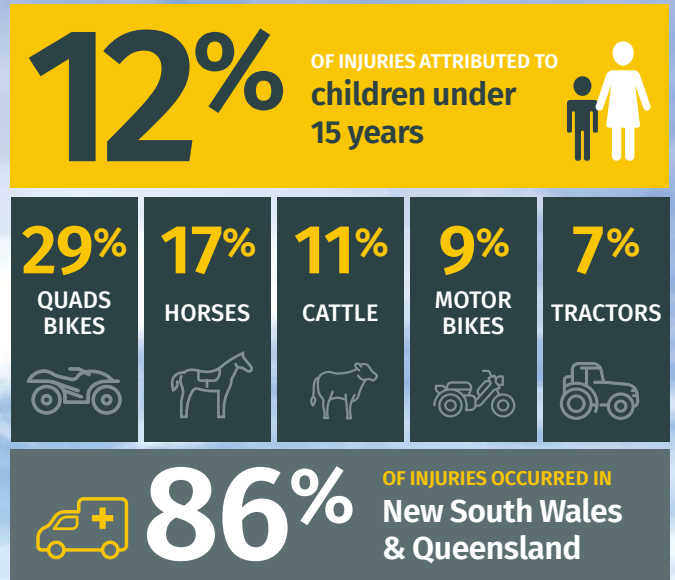


# Snapshot

## 2023 FATALITY STATISTICS

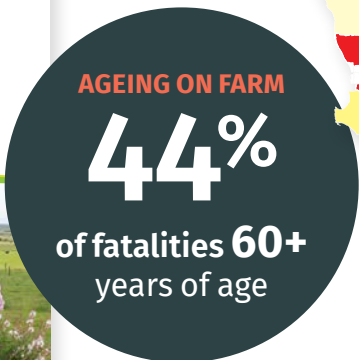
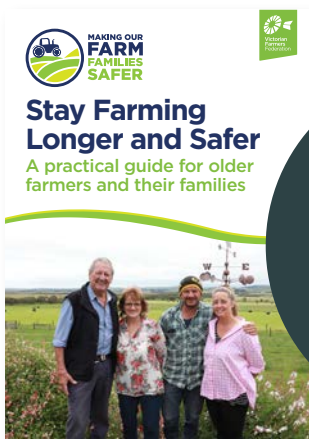


## 2023 INJURY STATISTICS



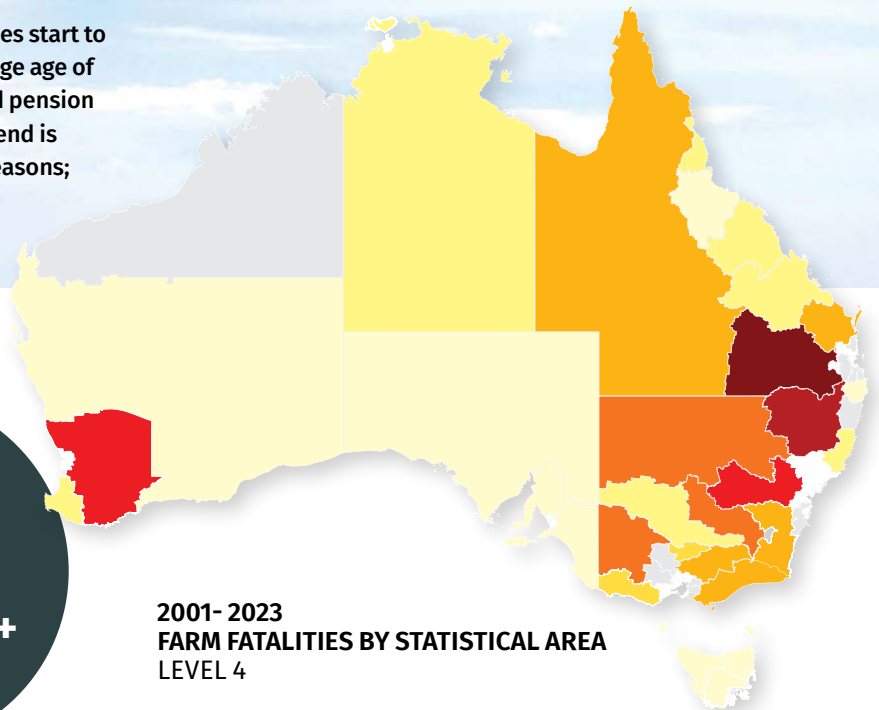
### Deep Dive into the Statistics

60 years of age is often when those in other industries start to consider their impending retirement, with the average age of retirement at 64.8 (according to the ABS in 2022) and pension services kicking in at 67. However, this retirement trend is rarely seen on the farm and there are a number of reasons; from financial to emotional.

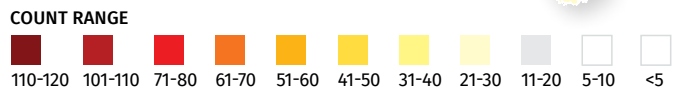


However, recognising ageing as a safety risk is very important with over 44% of 2023 fatalities occurring in farmers over the age of 60.

The Victorian Farmers Federation have developed a wonderful handbook 'Stay Farming Longer and Safer' (pictured above) that provides practical advice in a sensitive manner and it can be found at: [makingourfarmssafer.org.au](http://makingourfarmssafer.org.au).



**2001- 2023 FARM FATALITIES BY STATISTICAL AREA LEVEL 4**



AgHealth Australia acknowledges the National Coronial Information System as the database source of data, in the heat map and the Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety as the organisation source of data.

Please note: Farmsafe Australia reports on both recreational and work-related incidents on Australian farms and as such finds the data set that AgHealth Australia releases to be the most current available data set for the purposes of this report. We do not discount the importance of revisiting our data when Workers' Compensation and Coronial data becomes available to further enhance the narrative of the statistics. \*Statistics are acquired from AgHealth Australia through the Agrifutures Australia Non-intentional Farm-Related Incidents in Australia Report and the Australian Farm Deaths and Injuries Media Monitors Snapshot.

# The Swiss Cheese Model of Accident Causation

Dr Elizabeth Lord, Tasmanian GP



## Do you ever wonder what one variable makes the difference is between a near miss and a tragic event?

**The collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore earlier this year shocked people around the world. Video footage showed the moment the large container ship ‘Dali’ struck one of the bridge’s piers after losing power. Multiple spans of the 2.6km bridge collapsed, killing six roadworkers who were on the bridge at the time. In my home state of Tasmania, a similar incident happened almost 50 years ago when the bulk carrier ‘Lake Illawarra’ collided with two piers of the Tasman Bridge in Hobart, bringing down a large section of the bridge. Twelve people died as a result.**

Investigations into the Tasman Bridge collapse identified a number of factors that led to the disaster. These were that only the central piers were designed to be able to withstand a ship hitting them, there were strong tidal currents on the night of the incident and the ship’s captain had not paid adequate attention to its course as it approached the bridge. This meant that the ‘Lake Illawarra’ was off course. The captain then tried to go between two outer piers but struck them instead, causing the disaster.

It is most likely that when the investigation into the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge is completed, a similar picture will be seen and that the disaster was caused by a number of smaller factors, each of which on their own may not have been capable of causing the extent of damage that occurred.

The Tasman Bridge disaster highlighted that there is usually a layer of human factors that fail such as fatigue, inexperience or inattention. Today it is well understood that in the majority of major incidents, there is usually a mix of failures both in the systems involved and in the human factors.

But what do these examples have to do with farm safety? The Tasman Bridge and most likely the Francis Scott Key Bridge are good examples of what is known as the ‘Swiss Cheese Model of Accident Causation’.

Think of layers of swiss cheese, each with holes in different positions, as risk mitigation techniques. Each layer protects against a potential incident happening by providing a layer of safety coverage and potentially covering the holes in the previous layers.

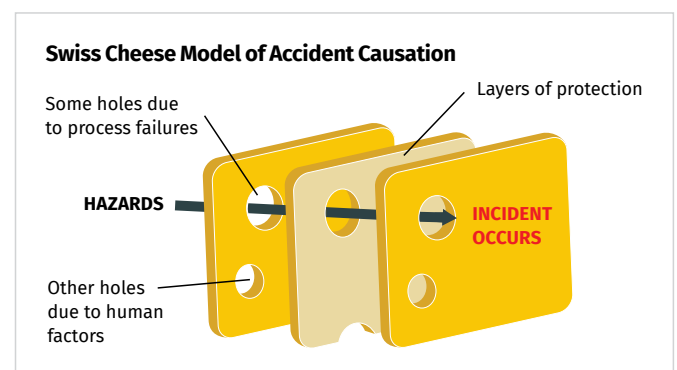
But every once in a while, the holes in the cheese will line up – and this is when a major disaster happens.

With farm machinery like tractors, there are several key layers you can put in place to prevent incidents from occurring. The first layer might be having a proper induction process for new workers so that everyone is confident operating the type of tractors that you have on your property. Another layer could be regular maintenance of your tractors. Another layer to add in is training refreshers for all workers, for example when you purchase a new attachment or at the startup of each year. Having a workplace culture where people feel comfortable bringing up safety concerns, maintenance issues, or near misses, is another very important layer. This can be implemented as part of the weekly toolbox meeting. Can you think of any other layers of protection that could be implemented to increase the safe use of tractors?

Quad bikes are another great example where there are several really important layers of protection; training, helmets, speed limits, assessments of terrain, regular maintenance and having crush protection devices fitted on every quad can all provide different layers of protection across a range of possible incidents.

*When you are doing risk assessments on your farm, try to think about how many different layers of protection you have in place to prevent an incident from occurring and where protection might be missing due to the ‘holes’.*

**Because nobody wants to be in a situation where the holes line up.**







# National Farm Safety Week 2024

*in safe hands*



# National Farm Safety Week 2024

*in safe hands*



**The hands of a farmer are strongly emotive. They are a powerful symbol of the agricultural life—dirty and calloused from labor, yet undeniably strong and capable. Each wrinkle and scar tells a story of resilience, hard work, and dedication to the land.**

These hands, which nurture crops and tend to animals, embody the very essence of farming. However, they are also what we rely on to ensure safety on the farm. With the same care and strength that they use to cultivate the earth, farmers' hands must also adhere to safety practices, operate machinery cautiously, and support their fellow workers. In doing so, they not only sustain the farm's productivity but also protect the wellbeing of everyone involved, ensuring that the legacy of their hands continues for generations to come.

This year, Farmsafe Australia is asking farmers what it means to them to have their businesses 'in safe hands'. As we crossed the country to interview farmers across state and commodity lines, one common thread seemed to unify every farmer and farming family.

*Being 'in safe hands' meant that each and every person on farm would come home in one piece every night. Being 'in safe hands' meant cultivating a positive safety culture where every member, whether staff or family, felt protected, valued, and empowered to prioritise their safety in their daily activities over everything else.*

This Campaign is Proudly Supported by the



**This campaign has been driven by values instead of a list of do's and don'ts. This approach extends beyond mere compliance with safety protocols and encompasses a holistic commitment to the wellbeing of our workforce and our families.**

### Building a Positive Safety Culture

A positive safety culture is founded on mutual respect, open communication, and continuous education. It starts with leadership setting a clear example and demonstrating a genuine commitment to the lives and limbs of everyone on the team. This involves actively listening to concerns, providing the necessary training and resources, and fostering an environment where safety is everyone's responsibility.

When farm workers and family members know that safety is the highest priority, they are more likely to follow policies and procedures, report hazards, and look out for each other. This sense of security enhances overall morale, reduces the incidence of injuries, and ensures that safety becomes a natural part of the farm's daily routine.

### Tying Safety to Our Values

Agricultural communities are built on values such as hard work, family, sustainability, and mutual support. A strong safety culture aligns seamlessly with these values. It underscores the importance of protecting the individuals who work tirelessly to sustain the farm and, by extension, the community.

*This sense of security enhances overall morale, reduces the incidence of injuries, and ensures that safety becomes a natural part of the farm's daily routine.*



#### We protect our loved ones

By creating a supportive environment where each person can thrive without fear of preventable harm.

#### We protect our community

When one farm prioritises safety, it sets a standard for others, promoting a culture of care and responsibility throughout the region.

#### We protect our legacy

By reducing injuries and maintaining the health of workers, so our farms can continue to operate efficiently and sustainably for generations.

#### We lend a hand

Encourage looking out for one another and fostering a community of mateship where everyone feels responsible for each other's wellbeing.



**Being 'in safe hands' is about more than just following safety rules—it is about embedding agriculture's core values into the farm's culture.**

Farmsafe Australia hopes that you enjoy having a 'stickybeak' into the lives and business operations of the Australian farmers, producers and cattlemen who have opened up their gates to share what being 'in safe hands' looks like on their properties and hopefully spark some ideas that you can customise to continue to build a culture of safety on your own farm.

**Head to [farmsafe.org.au](https://farmsafe.org.au) and watch the daily videos.**

*Disclaimer: The next few pages have information that is intended as a general guide only and is designed to be used to increase risk awareness and safe work practices - it is not legal advice and does not take the place of proper individualised on-farm workplace inductions, work, health and safety training, or any other tailored steps which may be necessary to protect health and safety at specific worksites.*

MONDAY  
15 JULY

## Support and Wellbeing

### FEATURING

David (DJ) Jochinke, NFF President  
and Wimmera Region Broadacre Farmer

David Jochinke, or DJ as he is better known by, is passionate about support and wellbeing in the workforce and leads by example not just in his own operation, but also at the industry level with his work as the head of the National Farmers' Federation.

Support and wellbeing are essential ingredients for ensuring safe decision-making and improving resilience in the face of inevitable challenges. Farming can be stressful, with long hours, physical demands, and the pressures of weather and market fluctuations. These stressors can affect the decision-making abilities of farmers and farm workers, leading to increased risk of injuries and reduced overall wellbeing.

"Look for us, safety is not only a part of the conversation, it's gonna be a part of the culture. And when we talk about being in safe hands, we always mean making sure everyone, goes home in the same condition, if not better, than when they got to work," DJ says, "It's really simple for us. It's making sure that people are healthy in their body, in their mind, in their enjoyment of work. If you can create the environment where you're looking after people, making sure you're giving them responsibility and respect, and then they're enjoying their job, that makes the workplace an absolute pleasure to work in," he says.

But he also knows that it's not shying away from the tougher conversations. "If people are feeling friction, or a bit of a rub, we try to address that as soon as possible. And we want people to have leadership in these conversations. We want them to take responsibility and identify if there's an issue or be proud of their work by simply being in charge of the task at hand. So it is all about having those right conversations, communicating in the right way, but also understanding what needs to be achieved as a team. So with that, we tend to try to empower people and let them enjoy their work."

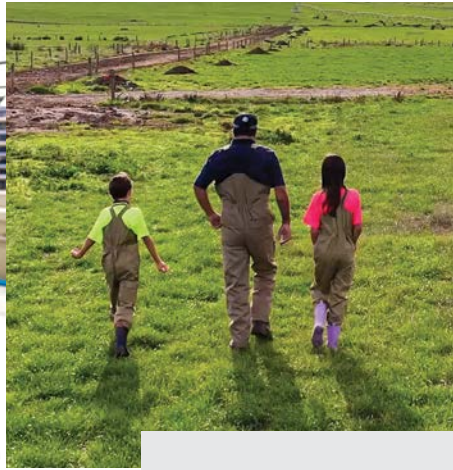
As part of his work at the national level of industry, DJ has a strong desire to see industry collaborate to tackle the mental health issues in the bush, everything from situational distress through to the high rate of suicide that our industry is facing.

### Importance of Support and Wellbeing

The ability to make safe decisions on the farm is closely linked to strong mental health in the face of situational distress. Stress, anxiety, and fatigue can impair judgment, leading to mistakes that could result in severe injuries and fatalities. By fostering a supportive environment, farmers and farm workers can enhance their ability to think clearly, make safer decisions, and maintain productivity.

### 5 Strategies to Support Farmers and Farm Workers

- 1. Open Communication:** Encourage open dialogue about support and wellbeing. Create a supportive atmosphere where workers feel comfortable discussing their challenges and seeking help without fear of judgment. Regular check-ins can help identify issues early and provide an opportunity for support.
- 2. Provide Access to Resources:** Offer access to mental health and wellbeing resources, such as counseling services, helplines, and wellness programs. Providing information on stress, mindfulness, and other mental health resources can empower workers to take proactive steps towards maintaining their wellbeing.
- 3. Encourage Work-Life Balance:** Promote a healthy work-life balance by ensuring reasonable work hours and encouraging regular breaks. Rotating tasks and allowing time off during less busy periods can help prevent burnout and reduce stress.
- 4. Create a Supportive Community:** Foster a sense of community and mutual support among workers. Team-building activities and social events like an after-work BBQ, can strengthen relationships and provide a network of support during difficult times. It doesn't have to be fancy just a way to provide an opportunity for connection.
- 5. Offer Training and Education:** Offer training on stress management, mental health awareness, and safe decision-making. Educating workers about the signs of situational distress and the importance of taking care of their mental wellbeing can empower them to recognise and address problems early.

TUESDAY  
16 JULY

## Child Safety

### Active Supervision on the Farm

#### FEATURING

*Clovelly Dairy (Ingleby Farms), Bridport Tasmania*

**We all know that one of the main differences between farming and other industries is that there is often a blurred line between the home and the work environment. This presents a unique set of hazards for agricultural workers who have to manage the possibility of children in the workplace.**

Stephen Creese, Country Manager at Clovelly Dairy in Bridport Tasmania provides great insight into how the staff at Clovelly Dairy balance family life with the demands of dairy farming.

"Safety is paramount for us, for our staff, and also for children, because we do encourage the children on the farms. One of the things with dairy farming is because it's a seven day a week operation, it does involve a lot of family life, and that's why we see a lot of children on the farm as well," he explained. "But children cannot just roam around the farm on their own. They have to be with their parents, a guardian or someone who is responsible for them."

Active supervision goes beyond mere observation; it involves being close enough to intervene immediately, understanding the specific risks in different areas of the farm and anticipating potential dangers, while continuously assessing and managing these risks.

*It requires full attention, without distractions, ensuring that children are always within sight and reach.*

Communication is also a key part of their policies, with workers and parents being required to clearly communicate where and when children will be on farm. This allows workers to be extra vigilant and ensures that everybody is watching out.

After raising five children on farm, Stephen believes in the importance of children learning the valuable skills that farming can teach at a young age, but making sure that it's done in the safest way possible. This might mean that you have to explain to a child why they aren't old enough yet to complete specific tasks or why some jobs involve training to acquire specific skills.

#### Importance of Active Supervision

Active supervision is the cornerstone of child safety on farms. By staying vigilant and engaged, creating safe spaces, setting clear boundaries, involving children in age-appropriate activities, and leading by example, you can significantly reduce the risk of injury and create a safer environment for the youngest members of the farming community.

#### 5 Tips for Active Supervision

- 1. Stay Close and Attentive:** Always keep children within arm's reach and ensure they are never left alone near hazardous areas such as machinery, animals, or water sources. Being physically close allows you to respond instantly if a dangerous situation arises.
- 2. Designate Safe Play Areas:** Create and clearly mark safe, enclosed play areas away from work zones. Ensure these areas are free from potential hazards and regularly inspect them to maintain safety.
- 3. Set Clear Boundaries and Rules:** Educate children about off-limits areas and the reasons why they are dangerous. Establish and consistently enforce rules about where they can and cannot go.
- 4. Engage in Safe Activities Together:** Involve children in age-appropriate farm tasks under close supervision. Use these opportunities to teach them about safety while allowing them to participate in farm life safely.
- 5. Lead by Example:** Demonstrate safe behavior at all times. Children learn by watching adults, so always wear appropriate safety gear, follow safety protocols, and explain why these measures are important.

"I found, as a parent, it was very important to say to them, look, you can't go and do what you can see someone else doing because they're 15 years older than you. You know, there's a reason why you can't do it, but you will get there one day," he continued, "And I think one of the other important things is not to just tell them 'you can't go over there'. Tell them why they can't go over there, or they can't touch that. Because it's important that they learn that there's a reason why you don't want them to do certain things, and there's a reason why, once they're older, they will be allowed to do those things."

WEDNESDAY  
17 JULY

## Lone and Remote Work – The Importance of First Aid & Training

### FEATURING

DK Grazing - Bridge Creek, Northern Territory

First aid is a critical skillset for anyone working on a farm to have, especially in rural and remote areas where access to immediate medical care may be limited. While prevention is the cornerstone of safety, the reality is that injuries can still happen. Proper first aid training ensures that when something goes wrong, you can respond quickly and effectively, potentially saving lives and minimising the severity of injuries.

Don & Kelly White, owners of DK Grazing at Bridge Creek in the Northern Territory, have made first aid training a priority on their stations. They implement training at the startup of each year and ensure all staff are trained or renew their certification.

With different stations located at varying degrees of the 'remote' definition, Don considers the training his highest priority. Even at Bridge Creek, which isn't considered 'remote' by Aussie standards (only 200km from Darwin), it is still important to ensure that workers are able to look out for each other.

Kelly, Don's wife and partner in the business, spoke at length about the importance they place on training their people, not just in first aid, to keep their business 'in safe hands'.

"When people start here, they work closely with Don and he really watches them and makes sure what their capabilities are, what they can do. And if he doesn't feel they're confident enough to do what he wants them to do, well, then he'll start from the beginning and go through it with them until he feels that they're ready to go," she says, "And he doesn't just send them off like, you'll be fine. He's very on top of it. So, we don't have an induction week, as such. It's like probably the first three months that they're here."

### The Importance of First Aid Training

First aid training empowers individuals to provide medical assistance to patients until professional help arrives, thereby reducing the risk of fatalities and long-term injuries. In remote areas, the response time for emergency services can be significantly delayed, making it essential for workers to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to provide immediate care.

### 5 Vital Skills Acquired in First Aid Training

- 1. CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation):** Learning CPR is vital for responding to cardiac emergencies. It can keep oxygenated blood flowing to the brain and other vital organs until more advanced care is available.
- 2. Bleeding Control:** Knowing how to control bleeding can prevent severe blood loss and shock.
- 3. Recognising and Responding to Shock:** Understanding the signs of shock and how to manage it can be critical in maintaining vital functions.
- 4. Fracture and Sprain Management:** Learning how to immobilise broken bones or support sprains with splints or bandages can prevent further injury and reduce pain.
- 5. Burn Treatment:** Knowing how to properly treat burns can prevent infections and promote healing.

### How can you integrate first aid training into your workflow?

- 1. Schedule Annual Training Sessions:** Find a less-busy time in your farm's schedule and book it in annually.
- 2. Incorporate First Aid into Safety Drills:** Simulating real-life scenarios helps reinforce first aid skills and ensures that all farm workers know how to respond in various emergency situations.
- 3. Designate a First Aid Officer or Team:** Tasks can include ensuring that first aid kits are regularly stocked and in date, training materials are up-to-date, and new employees receive proper first aid orientation.
- 4. Ensure Workers Are Equipped With a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB):** PLBs can significantly reduce the time it takes to receive medical attention by ensuring that responders know where to find the injured person.
- 5. Refresher Courses and Toolbox Meetings:** Conduct short refresher courses or toolbox meetings to keep first aid knowledge fresh. These can be brief sessions focusing on different aspects of first aid, such as CPR, wound care, or dealing with fractures.

THURSDAY  
18 JULY

## Livestock Handling

### FEATURING

*Bald Blair Angus Stud, Guyra New South Wales*

**Sam and Kirsty White, owners of Bald Blair Angus in the New England region of NSW have a particular affinity for low stress stock handling that has served them well from both a human safety and an animal welfare perspective.**

They invest heavily in the training of their staff and their stock to ensure that they get the best outcomes for both. Effective training not only enhances the safety and wellbeing of both the handlers and the animals but also improves the overall efficiency of farm operations. Low-stress handling methods are based on understanding animal behaviour and using calm, gentle techniques to guide and manage livestock, minimising fear and aggression amongst the herd.

Long-term stockman, Tom, is an experienced low stress handler and his training extends to his dogs and horses to ensure that he has the best team working with him in the paddock and in the yards.

"I find it very important to have a good handle on your working dogs. With less frantic movements from both the dogs and the cattle, it allows for the job to be a lot less stressful on everyone, including myself, and we get the best possible job done, easily," Tom says.

He explains how working horseback has helped improve his positioning skills and allows him the time to think through each movement to get the best outcome, "I find moving stock with horses is the most beneficial way; you are above your stock, you can see your dogs, your dogs can hear and see you. And because you can't just, you know, zoom over in one corner over there like you can in a buggy, you've got to predict and operate yourself more efficiently to get the job done because of the simple fact it takes you bit longer to get somewhere. So, I find you actually start to think about your positioning more when you're on a horse."

By understanding how to handle livestock with low stress, Tom is doing his best to ensure that the cattle that he is working, his team of dogs, his horse and his fellow workers are all 'in safe hands'.

"To me, being in safe hands means that I get to work in a great working environment with a great team, that we're all on the same page going in the same direction. I get to work with great equipment and yards and facilities, and I get to go home to my wife and kids at the end of the day, safely."

### Importance of Livestock Handling Training

Livestock can be dangerous due to their size and their speed. Low-stress techniques help to create a more predictable and safer environment by teaching handlers to understand behavioural cues and reducing the animals' stress levels, which in turn lowers the likelihood of defensive or aggressive behaviors that can lead to injuries. This training emphasises patience, observation, and the use of non-threatening body language, resulting in calmer, more cooperative animals and safer working conditions.

### 5 Tips For Working with Livestock

- 1. Understand Animal Behaviour:** Take the time to learn about the natural behaviours and instincts of the livestock you are working with. Recognise signs of stress, fear, or aggression, and use this knowledge to anticipate and prevent potential problems.
- 2. Use Calm and Consistent Movements:** Approach animals slowly and avoid sudden movements or loud noises that could startle them. Consistent, calm movements help to keep animals relaxed.
- 3. Maintain Proper Equipment and Facilities:** Ensure that all handling facilities are in good condition and designed effectively. Regularly inspect and maintain facilities to prevent injuries.
- 4. Work as a Team:** If possible, work with at least one other person. Clear communication and coordinated efforts can reduce the risk of injury by ensuring that all handlers are aware of the animals' movements and behaviours.
- 5. Provide Regular Training and Refresher Courses:** Provide education on the latest livestock handling techniques and research. Regular training sessions and refresher courses help to keep skills sharp.

### Did You Know that the Australian Pork industry has a low-stress stock handling course?

ProHand™ was developed by the Animal Welfare Science Centre at The University of Melbourne with funding from the Australian Pork Limited and Australian Meat Processor Corporation. The free, online training program specifically targets those key attitudes and behaviours of livestock handlers that have been shown to have a direct impact on pigs. It seeks to improve the interaction between livestock handlers and pigs by minimising handling stress and improving animal welfare, safety outcomes, productivity, staff performance, and job satisfaction.



## Ageing on Farm

### FEATURING

*Kielli Cotton Farm, Jimbour Queensland*

Jamie and Susie Grant of Kielli, a cotton farm near Jimbour Queensland, acknowledge that they've noticed a few changes as they've aged. "What I've noticed in the last few years, I guess, is that what I used to laugh at my old man for, because he used to, you know, stumble up things and do this and do that, and I called him silly old bugger. But now it's happening to me. It's a reality. But what I've found you gotta do is you gotta keep doing it. You've gotta stay fit and alert. And if you end up in the situation where you're not fit and alert, you're gonna be a walking hazard," Jamie admitted.

He sees a role for all ages on farm, as long as there is understanding of the different stages that farmers go through as they age. "You know, you start off as a young fellow, you gotta double check yourself and everything, because you don't really know what you're doing. Between 30 and 60, you pretty much know what you're doing because you are doing it more. And then after 60, you start to have to recheck yourself again. You need to ask for help."

About five years ago, Jamie decided to implement the use of robotics on his farm to reduce some of the more manual tasks. Not only does this take some of the strain off of his body, it helps to mitigate the risk of complacency that comes with doing some of the mundane and boring tasks on farm, even for the younger workers. Redesigning work processes can have a significant impact on safety outcomes and the use of modern technology can be a game changer on farm.

Jamie likes to have a strong focus on training, both formal and informal. With a team that varies widely in ages, he can see the benefits of the older farmers advising the younger staff while the younger staff can provide physical support to the older staff when needed.

"I think it's a nice balance when you have got a younger team coming through that you're teaching and training, but you've got older people that are there to help impart their wisdom on them and also teach the young people."

### The Importance of Mitigating Risks of Ageing on Farm

Recognising ageing on the farm as a safety risk is crucial for maintaining a safe and productive agricultural environment. As farmers age, physical and cognitive changes can increase the risk of injuries. Reduced strength, slower reaction times, and declining vision and hearing can all impact the ability to perform tasks safely.

#### 5 Important Strategies to Consider

- 1. Changing Work Design:** Modify tasks to be less physically demanding. This might include investing in new technologies, using ergonomic tools, automating heavy lifting with machinery, and redesigning workflows to reduce physical strain.
- 2. Training and Education:** Regular education and training, both formal and informal, is a great way to reduce risks. Training can even be tailored to the needs of older workers to ensure they are aware of increased health and wellbeing risks and new technologies that can make tasks safer.
- 3. Succession Planning:** Preparing the next generation to take over more physically demanding tasks can reduce the burden on older farmers. This involves mentoring and gradually transferring responsibilities to younger family members or employees.
- 4. Health and Wellness Programs:** Promoting regular health check-ups and providing access to wellness programs can help older farmers stay physically fit and mentally sharp, reducing the risk of injury.
- 5. Flexible Work Schedules:** Allowing older farmers to work flexible hours or part-time can help manage fatigue and reduce stress.

*"The young people learn that the old people still have a lot to give. So, the younger ones have to nurture the older fellow, like the older fellows used to nurture the young fellows. You know, it all goes around the circle."*



SATURDAY  
20 JULY

## Machinery & Vehicle Safety

### FEATURING

Irvine Wines, Angaston South Australia

**Vehicle and machinery safety is paramount when working on a farm due to the high-risk nature of agricultural operations. Tractors, combines, Quads and SSVs, and other heavy machinery are essential tools in modern farming but can be dangerous if not used properly. Ensuring the safe operation of these vehicles and machines is crucial for preventing injuries and fatalities.**

Irvine Wines has a significant amount of machinery and vehicles that are used by their staff and contractors and Peter Miles, owner of Irvine Wines, is all about instilling safety as the main priority of the business. "We breed a good culture with our staff that we just want everybody to look out for each other and make safety number one."

Peter points to maintenance of machinery as one of the more important keys to safety. "We make sure everything is in working order. The guards are always where they're meant to be and we just check the machine that it's safe to operate when the time comes. You know, everything comes into the workshop and gets checked to ensure that all guards and all stickers are all on you know, we re-sticker, we re-paint things. We put safety stickers on everything so it's easy to see, and everything has safety stops on it so that you can just shut it down if something goes wrong. And at the end of each season, I get them to write down a list for maintenance and stick it straight onto the machine when we pack it away."

Peter makes sure that the staff know that he wants them to communicate if there is a problem. He also ensures that his staff have proper PPE including full gear for chemical handling, helmets for SSVs, gloves, safety glasses and sun protection. Seatbelts are mandatory in all vehicles and machinery, including SSVs and tractors.

Peter's son Ben runs their Karu Harvesting contracting team and spoke about the importance of property inductions to keeping contractors safe. "Every property is different so we do ask the owner of the vineyard to identify the hazards before we go into the block. It could be powerlines, obstacles in the vineyard or uneven terrain. We get them pointed out by the owner and then we assess them and try and do our best to get around them."

### Importance of Vehicle and Machinery Safety

Vehicles and machinery are a leading cause of farm-related injuries and deaths. Proper safety protocols and training are vital for minimising these risks. Safe operation not only protects the operator but also safeguards other workers and family members who may be in the vicinity.

### 5 Tips for Staying Safe with Vehicles and Heavy Machinery

- 1. Always Wear Seatbelts:** Seatbelts are a critical safety feature that can save lives in the event of a rollover or collision. Make it a habit to buckle up every time you operate a farm vehicle.
- 2. Conduct Regular Maintenance and Inspections:** Regularly inspect and maintain all vehicles and machinery to ensure they are in good working condition. Check for any signs of wear and tear, leaks, or other issues that could lead to malfunctions. Keeping a maintenance log can help track the condition and service history of your equipment.
- 3. Receive Proper Training:** Ensure that all operators are thoroughly trained in the safe use of each piece of equipment they will be using. This includes understanding the controls, safety features, and proper operating procedures. Refresher courses should be provided regularly to keep skills up to date.
- 4. Follow Manufacturer's Guidelines:** Adhere to the safety guidelines and operating instructions provided by the equipment manufacturers.
- 5. Maintain a Clear Work Area:** Ensure that the area around vehicles and machinery is free of obstructions and hazards. Clear communication with other workers about the movement and operation of machinery is essential to avoid incidents.

So, what does it mean to Peter to have his businesses in safe hands?

"Well, it means I can sleep at night without having to worry. Machines go out in good condition and the operators know that and they're trained that they can operate the machine in a safe manner so that they can go home and see their family, you know?"

# Farmsafe Australia Resources



We also have plans to release a suite of 12 'Toolbox Talks' that focus on basic first aid.

## Toolbox Talks

Downloadable practical information to help lead your next safety meeting

### Current Topics

- Risk Management Tools
- Working at Heights
- Tractor Operation
- Chainsaw Operation
- Safe Chemical Handling
- Q Fever
- Hazardous Substance and Chemical Use
- Manual Handling
- Child Safety On Farms
- Noise on Farm
- Safe Handling of Cattle in Yards & Pens
- Fencing
- Working Near Water
- Electrical Powerlines & Systems
- Quads, ATV and SSV Operation
- Working in Confined Spaces
- Lone and Remote Workers
- Common Zoonotic Diseases
- Grain Auger Operation
- Working With Horses

### New Topics COMING SOON

- Fatigue in Farming
- Drugs & Alcohol
- Loading & Unloading Trucks
- Emergency Management
- Visitors on Farm
- Planning
- Workshop Safety
- Psychosocial Risk
- Ageing on Farm

Farmsafe Australia has a number of great resources on our website that are free to download, customise for your farm and use to help make your farm a safer place to live and work. Make sure you jump on our website and check them out!

One easy way to ensure safety is front of mind for you and your workers, is to hold regular safety chats that we like to call 'Toolbox Talks'. These chats can be formal or informal but should be documented. It's a simple and effective way to provide your staff with important safety information, allow them to ask any questions they may have and build a strong safety culture amongst your team, ensuring that they know that their lives are important to you.

We've upgraded the resources to include a 'Facilitator's Guide' which provides the farm owners and managers a format to follow, making it easy to start the conversation and ensure that they are getting the most out of the discussion.

## AgCard 2024

Last year we introduced you to the AgCard which was developed by Primary Employers Tasmania (PET). The AgCard was generously donated by PET to Farmsafe Australia to ensure continued access of this great tool to all Australian farmers.

The AgCard is a free, pre-farm employment induction program, designed to assist farm employers and employees to identify and manage workplace health and safety risks, while increasing awareness and understanding of WHS procedures and human resource principles.

The AgCard is a huge step in the right direction for entry level learning and is designed to be completed prior to stepping foot on a farm. The content is relevant for everyone from school aged students through to those re-entering the agricultural sector. It is also a tool that can be used to provide safety and human resource information to our migrant workforce.

*The AgCard is similar to the Farmsafe Induction Tool, however it is a much more comprehensive resource, with two full courses to complete; Safe Farming and Human Resources. It also includes a Certification of Completion that is provided following the successful execution of the modules.*

### Current Modules

- Safe Farming
- Wool Harvesting
- Managing Livestock for Red Meat Production
- Biosecurity
- Human Resources





# Research to Underpin Safety and Health on Australian Farms

**The Rural Safety & Health Alliance is a collaboration of seven Research Development Corporations that invests in research to improve safety and health on Australian farms.**

RSHA Members are AgriFutures Australia, Australian Eggs Ltd, Australian Pork Ltd, Australian Wool Innovation, Cotton Research & Development Corporation, Dairy Australia and Grains Research & Development Corporation.

RSHA's objective is to identify challenging cross-sector issues around safety on farms and fund research required to fill the existing knowledge gaps. Co-development of projects relevant to multiple agricultural industries and joint investment through RSHA has proven to be highly efficient and has enabled research on some challenging issues that could not have been achieved by one commodity alone.

*The focus for RSHA in the last 18 months has been on safe use of mobile plant, fatigue and meaningful metrics for farm safety.*

RSHA is doing the important research needed to underpin solid technical information and support Farmsafe Australia campaign messages.





**Tractors & Quad Bikes**  
are associated with approx.  
**1 in 3 Fatalities**  
on Farm

### Mobile Plant *an Essential but Risky Part of Farming*

Tractors and quad bikes are associated with approximately 1 in 3 fatalities on farm. The scope of this research was on the other mobile plant types which can also cause serious injury and are associated with one in 10 farm fatalities.

Two hundred and twenty nine growers were surveyed to describe their current practices and perceptions around 10 different types of mobile plant: what was used on the farm, how often, and what they saw as riskiest.

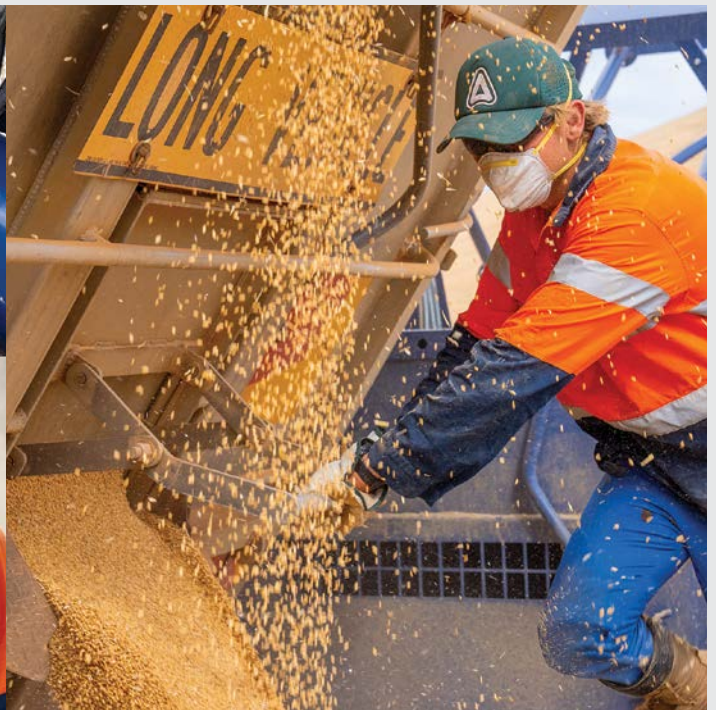
**The survey confirmed mobile plant was an essential part of farming, with farms typically using 6 of the 10 plant types.**

Post-hole diggers/drivers and augers were nominated as the riskiest to use on 1/3 of farms that had them.

Most growers (90%) believe others on farm expect a high standard of safety when risky plant is used.

In contrast to a similar study in 2006, where there was a prevailing attitude of ‘it won’t happen to me’, the 2023 study shows that the potential for injury from mobile plant use concerns many in the agricultural industry.

**Work practices support safe operation of the riskiest equipment. Many check equipment before use (90%), restrict who can use it (66%) and give safety briefings before starting high risk jobs (73%).**



**People see the big risks to safety as time pressures, fatigue, distraction, lack of operator competency, machinery neglect and machinery modification.**

# Farmers to Contribute to Fatigue Management Project

## *A first for Agriculture*



**In a joint initiative led by the Rural Safety & Health Alliance (RSHA), the *Farming and Fatigue: Growing Sensible Solutions* project aims to guide industry to understand, measure and manage fatigue on-farm. By merging industry insights with cutting-edge research, this project aims to deliver comprehensive, user-friendly guidance tailored to the unique demands of farming.**

The team assigned to deliver the project is a collaboration between the Appleton Institute and the Ag Education and Extension team at CQUniversity Australia and AgHealth Australia at The University of Sydney. The team plans to explore the root causes and impacts of fatigue on farms, aiming to enhance safety, productivity and wellbeing across the agricultural sector. Fatigue on-farm has been identified as an industry wide priority for the RSHA, a collaborative partnership between Rural Research & Development Corporations investing to improve primary production’s health and safety record centred on innovative research and development.

**Director of the Appleton Institute, Prof Sally Ferguson, is leading the project team.**

“The mining industry has been doing this for years - analysing specific elements of their operators’ work that cause fatigue, understanding the specific consequences based on how their performance is impacted and managing that risk,” Prof Ferguson explained.

*“That’s what we want to learn for the farming sector.”*



**... At the end of the day, we want all of our employees to be safe at work and be able to go home to their families, and this project is working towards that goal.**

Additionally, Prof Ferguson emphasises that managing fatigue in the agricultural industry is about tailoring solutions to individual situations.

***“[The RSHA] wants producers to have a clear understanding of what causes fatigue and how their current working patterns can be tweaked a little bit to manage the risk better. It's not about saying to farmers, ‘You have to change your entire schedule’. It's about saying, ‘What do you need to be thinking about while you're working to keep yourself safe, happy and productive?’”***

Sally explains that managing fatigue is not about “downing tools after X number of hours” – fatigue is inevitably higher at some times of the year and at certain parts of the day for different individuals working in different industries.

Mr Bernie Bierhoff, a member of the Cotton Australia board and a member of the Walgett Cotton Growers Association, emphasised that fatigue presents in many different ways.

“As people get fatigued their sense of what is safe and what is not is blurred. Employers limit work to a maximum number of days before a break, however senior staff like owners, supervisors and managers often don't take the time off they need, despite the best efforts of employers,” Mr Bierhoff explained.

“Their day doesn't end with physical labour; it continues with planning and office work at home before the next day even starts,” Mr Bierhoff said.

Centred on the industry, the voice and views of farmers on the causes, consequences and controls for fatigue will be collected.

***“We are running workshops through our networks in the agricultural sector including regional industry bodies like GippsDairy, and independent producer-run organisations Ag Innovation and Research Eyre Peninsula (AIR EP), just to name a few,” Prof Ferguson said.***

Findings from these workshops will inform the design of a survey that will be distributed more broadly to ensure farm owners, managers, workers, contractors, and family members nationwide have the opportunity to contribute.

Researchers will then develop risk profiles unique to each sector and create guides that will support individual farmers to develop their own evidence-based fatigue management programs.

“We're starting with four sectors – dairy, eggs, cotton and grains – and eventually we will build a model that would allow rollout to the wider agricultural industry,” Prof Ferguson said.

The project will deliver a practical, user-friendly guide as a final product that will assist agricultural enterprises of all sizes to understand, measure and manage fatigue on their farm.

“Ultimately the goal is to support health and safety, both short term wellbeing as well as longer term, because we already know that work practices that challenge your body not only affect productivity, but also put pressure on physical and mental health. By extension we hope that this work will reduce on-farm injuries and even deaths,” Prof Ferguson emphasised.

The fatigue management guide will include tools to help farmers identify ‘hot spots’ - where and why fatigue might be an issue in their operation, and how to deploy controls to reduce potential harm of fatigue without impacting production.

“I think it's important for producers to know that this project is driven by their own industries.

“We have people in the research team who run farms and have lived experience doing these jobs - we're excited to be contributing to the mission,” Prof Ferguson said.

Bernie also looks forward to the outcomes of the project and hopes it will improve safety outcomes for all agricultural workers.

“No job is worth getting killed over’ is something I hear constantly from my wife when she is telling me to slow down.

“She is definitely right, and that's what makes this such a worthwhile project. At the end of the day, we want all of our employees to be safe at work and be able to go home to their families, and this project is working towards that goal,” Mr Bierhoff said.

The Farming and Fatigue project is administered by AgriFutures Australia and funded by the Rural Safety & Health Alliance (RSHA) which is a collaborative partnership between AgriFutures Australia, Australian Eggs, Australian Wool Innovation, Australian Pork Ltd, Cotton Research and Development Corporation, Dairy Australia and Grains Research and Development Corporation.

#### **FIND OUT MORE**

Rural Safety & Health Alliance at [rsha.com.au](http://rsha.com.au)

AgriFutures Australia's Research at [agrifutures.com.au/knowledge-hub](http://agrifutures.com.au/knowledge-hub)

**If you would like more info or to register interest in the project, please email the project team at [ageducation@cqu.edu.au](mailto:ageducation@cqu.edu.au)**



# Police Encouraging Farmers to Consider PLB's



A push of the button triggered a call and help was on its way, and Graeme was soon rescued.

**In June this year Search and Rescue coordinators from Queensland Police Service held a meeting with industry stakeholders to encourage solo farmers and caretakers to consider carrying a Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) when they are doing lone or remote work.**

A spate of recent tragic incidents in western Queensland prompted the QPS to reach out to delegates from Farmsafe, Agforce and other interested parties in the hope of promoting the use of PLB for farm workers.

Earlier in 2024 the Police reported on two incidents where solo caretakers had set off in vehicles to perform a routine task, only to experience difficulty and be required to walk for help. The conditions took its toll with fatal consequences. Police had undertaken searches to look for the missing farmers and reported both could have been saved with the push of a button.

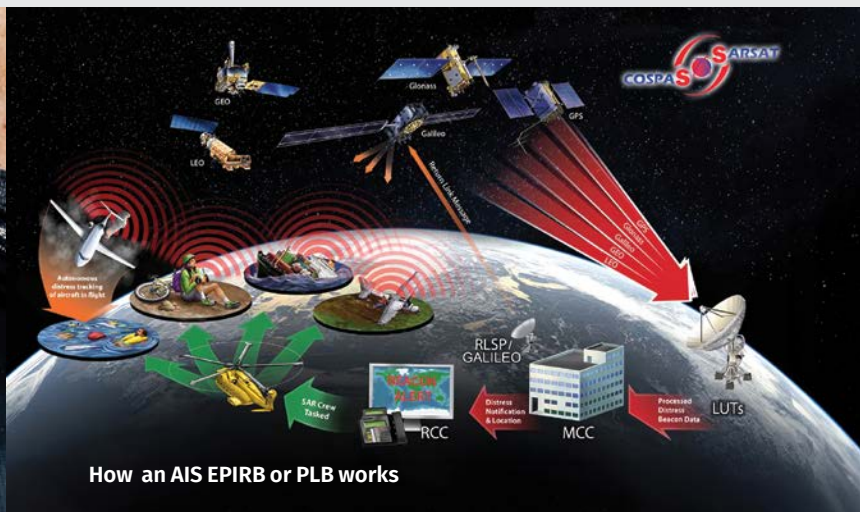
*Above. Bollon Station farmer Graeme Ware in hospital with life-threatening injuries.*



*“In our role as the Search and Rescue authority we attend many incidents that could have been avoided or easily resolved. It’s just sad for the family and the emergency service workers involved” says Inspector Chris Smith the senior officer for Western Queensland.*

Despite numerous stories with sad outcomes, the Police have also reported instances where a PLB has saved lives. Bollon Station farmer Graeme Ware, who in 2016 suffered an attack by one of his bulls, leaving him with significant life-threatening injuries. Luckily for Graeme, he had a PLB close by.

Only a few months earlier Graeme had been injured on farm and local policeman Jim Dolby encouraged Graeme to buy a PLB ‘just in case’. Needless to say, everybody was thankful he heeded the advice... it simply saved his life. Graeme admits, he never thought he would need it, and Sgt Shaun Halson of Water Police quipped “We hear that all the time - if I had a dollar...”



### Important Information to know about PLB's

When we talk about preventative actions that farmers can take to reduce the risk of serious and life-threatening injury, one of the most important is investing in and wearing a PLB, especially if that farmer works regularly in remote areas or on their own.

#### What is a PLB?

- PLB stands for Personal Locator Beacon and is commonly called a distress beacon, similar to an epirob used in boats.
- A distress beacon is an electronic device that, when activated in a life-threatening situation, assists rescue authorities in their search to locate those in distress.
- Distress beacons are commonly carried in vessels, but are now also widely used by hikers, 4WD travellers, adventurers and people working in remote locations where there is little to no mobile phone coverage.
- Typical costs are \$300-\$400
- Battery life (standby) can vary from 5 to 10 years
- When operated, the beacon is designed to operate for a minimum of 24hrs
- Small/compact so easily carried on a belt or in a pouch.

#### Advantages

- Small size and easy to carry
- Long battery life
- Relatively inexpensive
- Simple operation (typically, extend the antenna and push a button)
- Once activated, emergency services can detect your location within a 120m radius – has strobe light and 121.5MHz honing frequency
- Registration of your beacon will have all your details and your emergency contacts.

#### PLB takes the search out of ‘Search and Rescue’

#### Disadvantages

- NONE. They save lives!
- Perhaps some inconvenience until you get used to taking with you & carrying.

**Information on PLB's can be found on the Australian Maritime Safety Authority website: [beacons.amsa.gov.au](http://beacons.amsa.gov.au)**

*AMSA does not endorse any particular brand or model of distress beacon.*



FARMSAFE MEMBER INITIATIVE

# AgForce Training

## *Pioneering Agricultural Education with Farm Essentials*

**AgForce Training stands at the forefront of agricultural education, offering innovative and industry-focused training programs. One of AgForce's flagship initiatives, the Farm Essentials program, exemplifies their commitment to providing practical, relevant, and impactful education tailored specifically for the agricultural sector. This article delves into the essence of Farm Essentials and AgForce Training's broader ambition to deliver training programs for the agricultural industry, by the agricultural industry.**

### **The Farm Essentials Program**

#### **A Foundation for Success**

The Farm Essentials program is designed to equip farmers, farm workers, and aspiring agricultural professionals with the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary for effective and safe farm operations. Recognising the diverse needs of the agricultural community, Farm Essentials offers a comprehensive curriculum that covers a wide range of topics, from farm safety and equipment operation to livestock management and sustainable farming practices.

### **Tailored Training for Practical Application**

What sets Farm Essentials apart is its focus on practical, hands-on training. Each module within the program is crafted to ensure participants not only understand theoretical concepts but can also apply them in real-world scenarios. For instance, our farm safety module includes interactive sessions on hazard identification, risk assessment, and emergency response planning. Participants engage in simulated exercises that prepare them for actual farm emergencies, ensuring they are well-equipped to handle any situation that may arise.



*AgForce Training prides itself on developing training programs that are deeply rooted in industry needs and trends.*

### Industry-Relevant Curriculum

AgForce Training prides itself on developing training programs that are deeply rooted in industry needs and trends. The curriculum for Farm Essentials is continuously updated to reflect the latest advancements in agricultural technology, best practices, and regulatory requirements. This dynamic approach ensures that our trainees receive education that is both current and relevant, enabling them to stay ahead in an ever-evolving industry.

### Expert Instructors with Real-World Experience

The success of any training program hinges on the quality of its instructors. At AgForce Training, we are fortunate to have a team of seasoned agricultural professionals who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the classroom. Our instructors are not just educators; they are active participants in the agricultural industry, with firsthand knowledge of the challenges and opportunities faced by modern farmers. This practical insight enriches the learning experience, providing participants with valuable perspectives that go beyond textbook learning.

### Designed by the Agricultural Industry, for the Agricultural Industry

AgForce Training's mission is to deliver educational programs that are not only designed for the agricultural industry but are also created by those who are deeply embedded within it. This philosophy ensures that our training programs are genuinely reflective of the needs and aspirations of the agricultural community.

### Responding to Industry Needs

The agricultural industry is constantly evolving, with new technologies, practices, and regulatory requirements emerging regularly. AgForce Training is committed to staying at the forefront of these changes, continuously adapting our programs to meet the evolving needs of the industry. Our proactive approach involves regular feedback sessions with program participants, industry surveys, and advisory panels, enabling us to identify emerging trends and adjust our curriculum accordingly.



### Building a Skilled Workforce for the Future

One of the overarching goals of AgForce Training is to contribute to the development of a skilled and knowledgeable agricultural workforce. By providing high-quality education and training, we aim to empower individuals with the skills they need to succeed in their careers and contribute to the growth and sustainability of the agricultural industry. The Farm Essentials program, with its emphasis on practical skills and industry relevance, plays a crucial role in this mission.

### The Impact of Farm Essentials on the Agricultural Community

The Farm Essentials program has already made a significant impact on the agricultural community, with numerous success stories highlighting its effectiveness. Participants have reported increased confidence in their abilities, improved safety practices on their farms, and enhanced productivity. Additionally, the program has fostered a sense of community and collaboration among participants, creating a network of informed and empowered agricultural professionals.

### Looking Ahead

#### AgForce Training's Vision for the Future

As we look to the future, AgForce Training remains dedicated to our mission of delivering top-tier educational programs designed by the agricultural industry, for the agricultural industry. We are committed to expanding the reach of the Farm Essentials program, making it accessible to more individuals across Australia. Additionally, we plan to continue our collaboration with industry stakeholders, ensuring that our programs remain relevant and responsive to the needs of the agricultural community.

# About Farmsafe



## Who is Farmsafe Australia?

The Farmsafe Australia network grew out the establishment of a number of locally based farm safety action groups and state Farmsafe Committees in the late 1980's.

Today, Farmsafe Australia is the national entity connecting state farming organisations, peak commodity bodies, influential advocacy bodies and other groups that share a common interest in agricultural health and safety.

**We are 100% not-for-profit.**



## What do we do?

Supply free information and resources to help Australian farmers and farm workers successfully navigate work, health and safety requirements.

Raise awareness of key health and safety issues on Australian farms through media campaigns and engagement with communities and stakeholders, focussing the national conversation around emerging trends in the agricultural WH&S landscape and what we, as an industry, can do to turn those trends around.



## Why do we exist?

Agriculture consistently ranks among the most dangerous industries to work in. Farming has a very high-risk profile and when you couple that with the fact that farming is a lifestyle, not just a job, and that there is a myriad of cultural behaviours that go along with that, you begin to understand why it is so hard to make farms safer.

We exist to help farmers find practical solutions to these challenges and ingrain safe decision-making into their everyday on farm activities.

## Our Commitment

### Farmsafe Australia is committed to keeping you safer on Australian farms.

Our campaigns and resources are based upon the philosophy that the primary responsibility for farm safety rests with individual farmers, farm workers, and their families.

However, as individual farming organisations or stakeholders in the agricultural industry, we have a responsibility to farmers to make a commitment to support them in producing food and fibre safely and ethically.

We exist to inform, educate and engage farmers as they navigate through WHS legislation and obligations - providing information about hazards and risks often attributed to the farming environment and the importance of the human assets with the farming environment.

# FSA Committee

## ELECTED EXECUTIVE



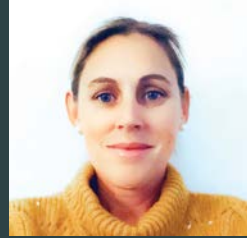
**Felicity Richards**  
Chair

Felicity runs a family farm with her husband and was elected as Chair in 2021. She also chairs the Tasmanian Biosecurity Advisory Committee. She is a graduate of the AICD Foundations of Directorship, has a law degree and ten years' experience in policy development and regulatory frameworks. Her experience and knowledge gives Farmsafe clear direction and focus.



**Ruth Thompson**  
Deputy Chair

Ruth hails from a mixed farming operation in central west NSW but now resides in SE Queensland. She has held diverse roles including agronomist, Territory Manager for Nufarm and Projects & Installations Manager for Clipex Stockyards. Ruth is currently a Policy Director for AgForce QLD, looking after the Grains commodity, as well as Workforce & Safety and Telecommunications & Social Policy.



**Kerri-Lynn Peachey**  
Secretary

Kerri-Lynn is the Farm Safety Research Officer for AgHealth Australia, School of Rural Health, University of Sydney. She has worked on health and safety programs and research in the agricultural sector since 2001. She is currently involved with monitoring all fatal and non-fatal incidents that occur in a rural setting and advising on farm safety, health and wellbeing to the broader farming community.



**Ben Rogers**  
Public Officer / Treasurer

Ben Rogers joined the National Farmers Federation team in June 2017 bringing his experience in workplace relations and law to the role of General Manager, Workplace Relations and Legal Affairs. Ben comes with a wealth of experience in the Industrial Relations/ Workplace Relations area as Principal Solicitor in the ACT Government, and previously with Comcare and private legal practices in NSW.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS



**Barbara Vaschina**

Barb grew up on a dairy and beef property in Southeast Queensland. Her career took her into the laboratory side of agriculture before moving into public service with CSIRO. An opportunity arose to specialise in Health and Safety, working in both advisory and management roles. In 2017, the calling to get back to nature and land management saw Barb move out of the public service and into the conservation sector to work for Bush Heritage Australia as their Health and Safety Program Manager.



**Caroline Rhodes**

Caroline has more than two decades of agribusiness experience, including the former SA Farmers' Federation and the Grains Council of Australia. She was the CEO of GPSA prior to joining PPSA, and has served on a number of industry and community sector boards. Current board appointments include the Australian Farm Institute, the SA Cricket Association, Foodbank SA and Rural Business Support. She is a Member of the SA Skills Commission, and Chairs the Agribusiness, Food & Wine/Beverages Industry Skills Council.



**Chris Stillard**

Chris is a fifth-generation farmer operating a mixed business of persimmons, hay/grain production and livestock finishing with his family in the Southern Riverina irrigation area of NSW. He is currently serving as a Board member and Chair of Workplace Relations for NSW Farmers and other associated committees. Chris also serves as President of Persimmons Australia.



**Mike Norton OAM FAICD**

Mike has been in family farming partnerships all his working life, at present with his two sons and wife. Mike is a beef, sheep meat, wool and crop producer, but has also been involved in dairy, vegetable and horticultural production. Mike has served agriculture on many boards and committees including Cattle Council of Australia, WA Farmers, Safe Farms WA, and Farmsafe Australia.



**Dr Richard Franklin**

Richard Franklin, PhD, is a pracademic who uses an evidence-based approach to developing real world solutions for improving health, safety and well-being. He is an Associate Professor in Public Health and a Director for the World Safety Organization Collaborating Centre at James Cook University. He has worked in Public Health with a focus on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion since 1996.

# Our Members



*Our 25 member organisations reach farmers and rural communities across Australia.*

# 2024 Supporters



*Partnering with us shows your direct support for the safety and wellbeing of all farmers, now and into the future.*

Your brand will be at the forefront of all engagement with our members and farmers - we thank those who support Farmsafe Australia and their commitment to safer farms.

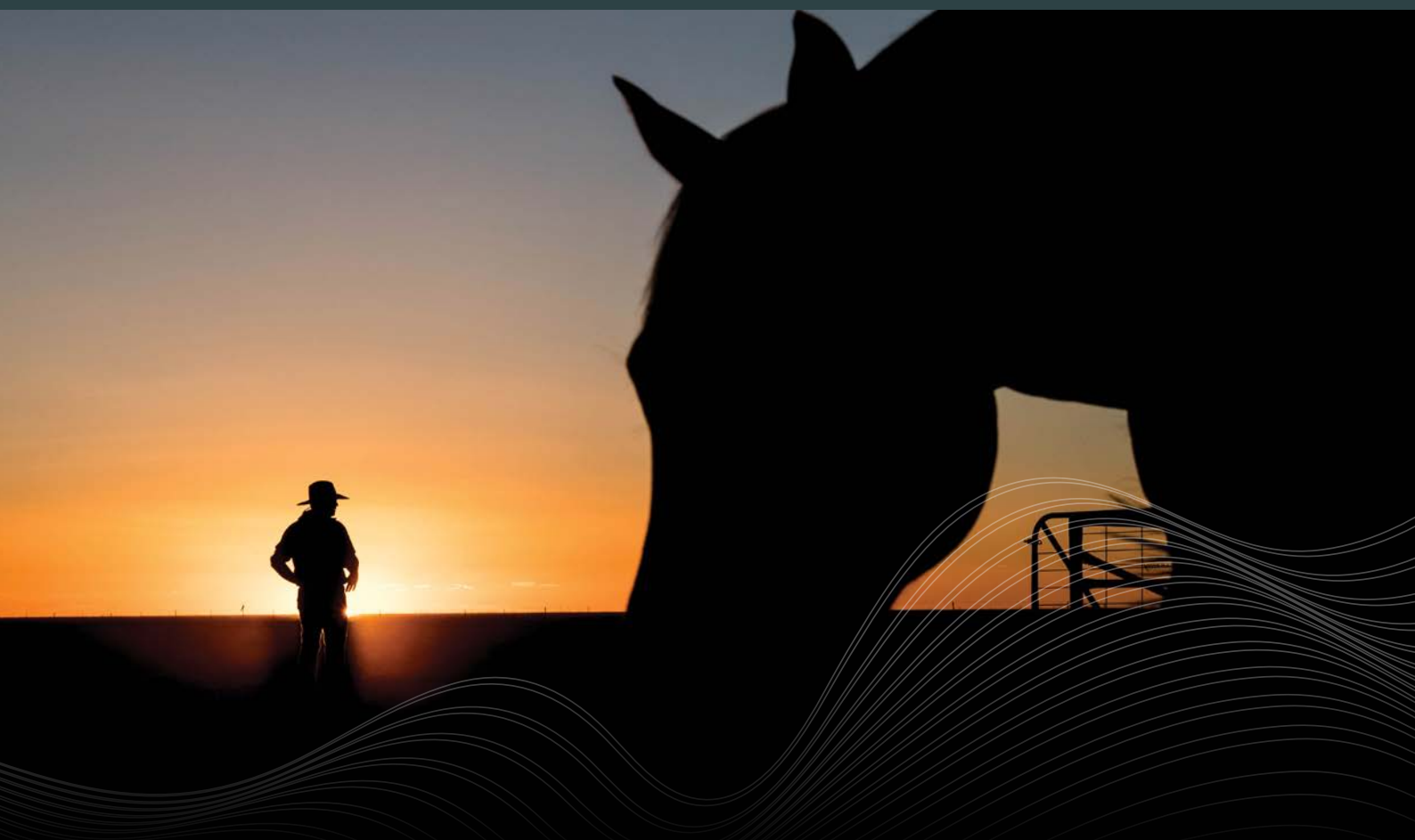
Brand safe 30+ years working with industry  
Targeted farming audience  
Exposure to the wider agriculture industry



*Committed to keeping you safer on Australian farms*



**Farmsafe**  
AUSTRALIA



Insurance

The 2024 Safer Farms Report is Proudly Sponsored by WFI Insurance.

**NFF House**

14-16 Brisbane Avenue Barton ACT 2600

**Stevi Howdle** – Executive Officer

P. +61 2 6269 5622

E. [info@farmsafe.org.au](mailto:info@farmsafe.org.au)

[farmsafe.org.au](http://farmsafe.org.au)

