COTTON AND GRAIN FARMING

WORK HEALTH & SAFETY INJURY DATA

2019-25 FATALITIES

46 deaths

$3.15 million average cost of a death

$125.8 million estimated economic cost

PRIMARY AGENTS

2021-22 TO 2023-24 WORKERS COMPENSATION

TOTAL CLAIMS (YEARLY AVERAGE)

0-4 days **800 (265)**

5+ days **1,355 (450)**

$63.4 total cost (all claims)

NATURE OF INJURY (YEARLY AVERAGE)

155 JOINT / MUSCLE

155 FRACTURES

95 WOUND / LACERATION

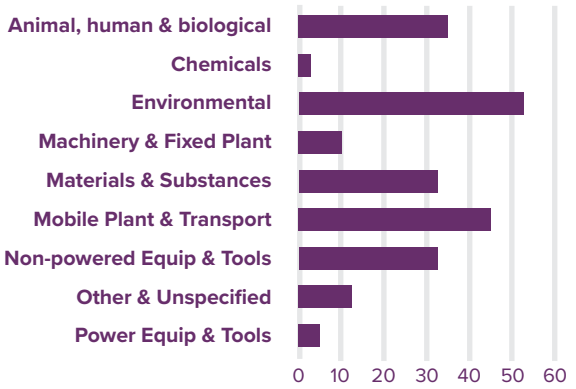
BODILY LOCATION (YEARLY AVERAGE)

80 TRUNK

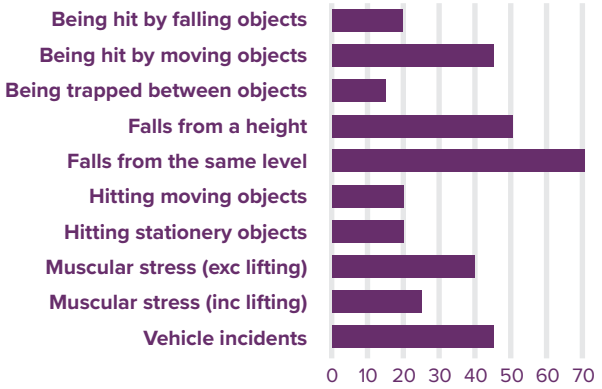
175 UPPER LIMBS

175 LOWER LIMBS

AGENCY OF CLAIM (YEARLY AVERAGE)



MECHANISM OF INJURY (YEARLY AVERAGE)



SOURCE: National Farm Injury Dataset, National Coronial Information System and Safe WorkAustralia National Data Set for Compensation based Statistics Claims Dataset.
PRODUCED BY: AgHealth Australia for the Rural Safety and Health Alliance

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STAY SAFE ON FARM

FOCUS ON THE RISKS YOU CAN CONTROL

No one expects an injury on farm, yet machinery incidents, falls and manual handling injuries remain the leading causes of harm across Australia's cotton and grain industries. Many of these incidents are preventable through planning, maintenance, safe work practices and early hazard identification.

Tractors

Tractor incidents are preventable. Maintenance, safe operation and training save lives.

- Ensure guards are fitted and maintained.
- Always engage the handbrake and place the tractor in park before dismounting.
- Ensure tractors have Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS); never remove or modify them.
- Ensure operators are trained and competent.
- Wear a seatbelt while operating the tractor.
- Conduct pre-start checks and regular maintenance.
- Operate at a safe speed on stable terrain.
- Plan work and assess risk before starting.
- Use flashing beacons and lights in low visibility or near other vehicles or bystanders.

Harvesters: headers, pickers, strippers

Stay clear of moving parts. Safe operation and maintenance prevent tragedies.

- Ensure guards are fitted and maintained.
- Always place the harvester in park before dismounting.
- Never bypass or disable safety mechanisms.
- Ensure operators are trained and competent.
- Conduct pre-start checks and regular maintenance.
- Never clear blockages while the machine is running.
- Plan work and take regular breaks.
- Use flashing beacons and lights in low visibility or near machinery or bystanders.

Telehandlers

Safe loads, trained operators and proper use prevent fatal incidents.

- Ensure operators are trained and competent.
- Wear a seatbelt while operating the telehandler and keep passengers off.
- Always engage the handbrake before dismounting.
- Never bypass or disable safety mechanisms.
- Conduct pre-start checks and regular maintenance.
- Do not exceed load capacity.
- Ensure loads are secure and stable; beware of overhead powerlines.
- Plan work and assess risks before lifting.
- Use flashing beacons and lights in low visibility or near machinery or bystanders.

Falls

A well-maintained workplace prevents falls. Identify and address hazards before they cause injury.

- Keep walkways clear of tools, hoses and debris.
- Maintain even, well-lit surfaces and repair damaged flooring or potholes.
- Clean up spills, mud, grain and oil promptly.
- Wear slip-resistant footwear suited to the task.
- Carry loads safely and avoid obstructing your view when walking.
- Report and fix hazards before they cause injury.

Manual handling

Manual handling injuries are preventable. Plan tasks, use mechanical aids and reduce strain.

- Reduce manual lifting using mechanical aids where possible.
- Store materials at a safe height to minimise bending, twisting and reaching.
- Break heavy or awkward loads into smaller loads and seek help if required.
- Rotate repetitive tasks to reduce muscle and joint strain.
- Use suitable tools and equipment, and keep them well maintained.
- Report discomfort early and address the cause.

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