

***“Farm Safety Curriculum Development and Pilot Course Delivery”***

**Research and Workplace Innovation Program Project Final Report**

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**Submitted to:**

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At the conclusion of this project, the School of Agriculture would like to thank and acknowledge Manitoba's Workers Compensation Board for their demonstrated commitment to improving farm safety within our province. The financial support that has been provided through RWIP funding has allowed the School of Agriculture to develop expertise in the area of Workplace Safety and Health as it applies to agricultural jobsites, and insight on how to best educate the next generation of farmers in this subject area. The financial investments made in this project have been significant and will have long-reaching impacts on farm safety within the province. The creation of on-line course materials will allow this information to be shared with a large number of people working in the industry to begin shifting the culture, to one where personal safety is a priority.

The four projects funded by RWIP for "*Farm Safety Curriculum Development and Pilot Course Delivery*" have been successfully completed:

1. The course "*Introduction to Farm Safety (Awareness, Risk Assessment and Safe Operating Procedures)*" was converted to distance delivery.
2. The course "*Introduction to Farm Safety (Awareness, Risk Assessment and Safe Operating Procedures)*" was offered as pilot project to (42) students, which included Agriculture Diploma students and Manitoba farmers.
3. The one (1) day "*Introductory Farm Safety Workshop (Awareness, Risk Assessment and Safe Operating Procedures)*" was delivered to three audiences of Manitoba farmers. The workshops were held in Brandon, Dauphin and in Winnipeg attracting 75 farmers from across the province who were attending the KAP Annual Meeting.
4. The course "*Advanced Farm Safety (Farm Safety Plan)*" has been developed. The School of Agriculture is planning to offer this course to Agriculture Diploma students and Manitoba farmers in 2017.

The RWIP "*Farm Safety Curriculum Development and Pilot Course Delivery*" project has been successful in terms of the number of new and existing farmers that were informed about farm safety through the course or workshops, and the capacity for future reach. The farm youth who participated in the *Introduction to Farm Safety* pilot course now have the ability to influence their farm families and future employers through a strong knowledge base in workplace safety and health, and the communication skills required to create positive change. Overall, the students in the course were open and receptive to the farm safety message and to creating positive change. Because farm safety is not a topic commonly broached in agricultural communities, students enjoyed the

opportunity to speak openly about their concerns regarding personal and family safety within a production-focused rural culture.

The introductory and advanced courses will be offered each year to Agriculture Diploma students. The introductory course is scheduled for January 2016 and the advanced course will be scheduled for January 2017. The School is also connecting with other agricultural colleges to determine the feasibility of offering this course for credit to diploma students across Canada and the feasibility of offering it to Agriculture Degree students and agricultural professionals who provide services to Manitoba farmers.

The content of the introductory and advanced courses has been created in individual sections so that each component may be used individually for a variety of teaching and learning applications in the area of farm safety. This flexibility ensures that the information will be applicable for multiple audiences. The School plans to expand its training services to Manitoba farmers with a focus on farm management and especially farm safety. The School will continue to consult with KAP, MCGA and other producer organizations so that the training will meet the needs of Manitoba farmers and the agricultural industry.

Upon publication of the *Introduction to Farm Safety* on-line course (January 2016), we would invite the WCB RWIP staff to view the materials and engage in the course. Please provide Thea Green with a list of names and e-mail addresses so that she can provide course access.

Throughout the project it was noted that people working in agriculture demonstrate low awareness levels on how Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulations apply to farms, and were often afraid to ask questions as a result. Basic information and awareness sessions are still needed for this sector to build a higher level of WSH knowledge and empower farm owners to plan for safety. However, it was also noted that many times farmers and farm workers make choices regarding level of risk when completing a task; they will choose a high-risk option when they value production over personal safety. This observation has led to the belief that future interventions in the area of farm safety must also address the behavior and the drivers of the high-risk choices that farmers are making. Workshops and courses that only focus on transfer of information are unable to create positive changes in behavior at the farm level.

In conclusion, the School of Agriculture's Farm Safety team would like to thank the WCB for their financial support of this project, and for their valued partnership in promoting farm safety within the province. This industry will benefit from continued supports and services directed at producers and their families who want to get started in farm safety. The project's success is tied to the attention and information provided by Jeff Shaw of SAFE Farms Manitoba. He has been an invaluable resource throughout the project and a wonderful mentor in the area of practical farm safety. Thank you for creating this connection between the School of Agriculture and SAFE Work Manitoba.

