

Training Module: Preventing Falls

Objective: To be able to recognize hazards and be able to prevent falls.

Trainer's Note: Falls happen quickly and are unexpected. Discuss problematic areas on the farm or in the workplace. Have one of the employees demonstrate safe ladder practices (Refer to ladder module). Use the following points to discuss how falls can be prevented.

Background

Housekeeping

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Use absorbent material to reduce slipping.
- Dry floors prevent slipping.
- Be alert to potential problems.
- Be aware of the environment, personal safety and the safety of co-workers.

Floor Openings

Floor openings should be guarded by a standard fixed railing on all exposed sides. Consider using a sturdy hinged floor opening cover with removable standard railings on all exposed sides in high traffic areas.

Ladders

- Use an **approved ladder** (usually consisting of two side rails joined by regularly spaced crosspieces called steps, rungs, or cleats, allowing for up and down movement).
- Never overextend the body.
- Place the bottom of the ladder 1/4 of its vertical height from the building.
- The top of the ladder should be 36 inches higher than the level at which the employee is working.
- Keep metal ladders away from electrical wires.

Scaffolding

Scaffolds are temporary, elevated platforms used for supporting workers and/or materials. It is recommended that scaffolds have guardrails and toe boards. Guardrails are a barrier secured to uprights and erected along the exposed sides and ends of platforms to prevent falls.

Stairs

- Walk, don't run, when using stairways.
- Use hand rails. Open, exposed stairs should have a railing. It is recommended that handrails be provided on at least one side of closed stairways preferably on the right side descending.
- Uncluttered stairways with good tread are safest.

General tips to prevent falls:

- You are more likely to slip when rushed, so do not run.
- Avoid Rapid changes of direction.
- Keep floors in good repair.
- Wear shoes with pliable soles and low heels.
- Close open drawers, cabinets, doors or closets after use.

Review The Following Points

- Keeping the work area free of spills prevents slips and falls.
- All open spaces should have a fixed railing.
- Always use an approved ladder.
- Scaffolding must have guardrails and toe boards.

True or False Answer Key
1. T, 2 T, 3. F, 4. T, 5. T.

True or False

Name _____

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. To prevent slipping, all floors should be kept dry. | T | F |
| 2. Use an approved ladder. | T | F |
| 3. Shop floors and barn steps are safe storage areas. | T | F |
| 4. When spills occur in the shop it is best to use an absorbent material to reduce slipping. | T | F |
| 5. Being alert is one of the surest ways to avoid falls. | T | F |