

Farming company fined after employees injure fingers in machinery

A farming company has been fined after two employees severely injured their fingers while trying to replace a part on farming machinery.

Lincoln Magistrates Court heard that on 12 April 2018, two employees of Beeswax Dyson Farming Ltd had the ends of their index fingers severed whilst attempting to re-insert a 37kg shaft into the housing of a pump. The employees were holding the shaft as it was pressed back into its housing with the aid of a hydraulic press when it dropped through a gap. The workers were unable to support the weight with their fingers and unable to get their hands out of the way in time. The employees both underwent amputation of their index fingers following the incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive found the company had failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment to ensure that the risks from dismantling, transporting and then inserting the shaft into the pump housing were adequately controlled. They had failed to appropriately plan a safe system of work and employees had not been provided with adequate information, instruction, training or supervision to carry out the task safely.

Beeswax Dyson Farming Limited, of The Estate Office, Cyclone Way, Nocton, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Regulation 3(1) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The company was fined £100,000 and ordered to pay costs of £27,685.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Charlotte Cunniffe said: "Employers have a duty to carry out an assessment of the risks and put in place safe system of work for activities, including for infrequent maintenance work. It should not be left to employees to decide on the most appropriate means of carrying out a task. If safe working practices had been implemented this incident would have been prevented."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors

through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. www.hse.gov.uk

2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/

3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>