

Livestock focus as national campaign bids to improve safety on Britain's farms

- Livestock incidents were the number one cause of work-related death in British agriculture in 2022/23.
- Livestock or moving vehicles were responsible for seventy-seven fatalities in the last five years.
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) supports farmers to reduce injuries and save lives.

Incidents involving livestock were the number one cause of work-related deaths on British farms.

The finding has driven the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to focus on the dangers of livestock as its Your Farm, Your Future campaign relaunches today, Monday 19 February 2024.

HSE statistics show being injured by an animal was the number one cause of work-related deaths on British farms in 2022/23, when there was a total of eight such deaths.



Injury by animal was the leading cause of death on British farms last year

Agriculture remains one of the most dangerous of all the main industrial sectors across the country.

Last year's campaign by HSE focused on transport safety, and today the organisation has relaunches the campaign with new advice on working with livestock, hosted on its [Your Farm Your Future campaign website](#), to assist farmers and workers and keep them safe.

There are sensible measures that can be taken to keep animals and people apart but handlers should be in good health, agile and have the physical ability to do the work.

Together, livestock and farm vehicle incidents account for around a half of all work-related deaths on British farms in the past five years. A total of seventy-seven people lost their lives, with each death leaving a devastating legacy on families. Hundreds more are hurt in incidents involving moving vehicles and cattle on farms. Incidents involving moving vehicles remains the leading cause of death over the last five-year period.

Adrian Hodkinson, agriculture lead at HSE, said: “Working with cattle and using vehicles are two very common activities in farming, but they bring with them a high risk of being very badly hurt.

“This campaign is focused on work with livestock and aims to stress how important it is to take sensible measures to keep animals and people apart. At the same time we’ll be continuing to highlight the key things for safe use of farm vehicles in and around the yard and sheds, but also out in the fields when checking, feeding, moving and caring for your herd.”



Adrian Hodkinson, agriculture lead at HSE

“For example, ATVs (or farm quads) are commonly used on livestock farms. HSE has looked at the reported incidents and many show the user was doing something in relation to farming the animals at the time of the overturn or crash. That’s why we are looking at raising awareness of both cattle safety but also farm vehicle safety.

“Agriculture consistently has a high rate of fatal and serious injuries of all main industry sectors in Great Britain. Over the past five years, the average fatal incident rate is twenty-one times higher in agriculture than the average across all other industries. That is a shocking statistic and sadly the impact on every affected farm is huge. Sometimes I see the incident leads to farming work stopping all together, as the key person has life changing injuries and can no longer work”

“It’s time for us to make a change together to make our farms safer, and that’s why we’re asking farmers in England, Scotland and Wales to consider these areas of their daily farming activities and take the right actions to prevent another farming tragedy.”



This year's campaign will focus on livestock as well as farm vehicles

To support farmers HSE has created new webpages and a checklist for working safely with livestock – aimed at those new to farming, and to serve as a reminder of what to consider for experienced farmers. The advice covers three areas:

- **Operating a Safe Farm – Where possible keep people and cattle apart:**
- **Safe equipment**
- **The animal**

Adrian Hodkinson added: “We understand the significant pressures faced by British farmers and want to support the farming community to show that safety on the farm doesn't need to be difficult or expensive. There are simple steps you can take today to help keep you and everyone on your farm safe.

“Farmers and farm workers should take a moment to think about what would happen to their families and their farms if they were seriously injured and unable to work.

“When people on farms start their daily routine, they should follow our advice to help plan the job and complete it safely.”

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.
2. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
3. Further details about [HSE statistics and the labour force survey](#) is available.
4. Further advice, videos and free resources [Work Right Agriculture – Work Right to keep Britain safe](#)