

AGRICULTURAL SAFETY CONSULTING SERVICES

Offered through the National Farm Medicine Center

A CHANGING DAIRY INDUSTRY

Dairy is changing. Large Herds are getting bigger and dairies fewer. Larger herds mean more milking shifts, longer hours and an increased reliance on hired workers. Wisconsin dairy farmers are experts at producing high-quality milk. But they find themselves in ever-expanding business management roles, dealing with human resource requirements and insurance coverage that includes workers' compensation and government safety regulations and practices.

INCREASED SCRUTINY

As the industry changes, previously unseen safety issues emerge. While the overall number of occupational deaths in Wisconsin dropped slightly from 2009 to 2010, agricultural deaths increased 66 percent, accounting for 32 of the 91 total occupational deaths. In 2011, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) initiated a Local Emphasis Program to begin to inspect dairy farm operations in Wisconsin, focusing on common hazards in dairy farm activities.

FARMERS AS SAFETY LEADERS

Agriculture Safety Consulting (ASC), a program of the National Farm Medicine Center at Marshfield Clinic, was developed to assist and support dairy farmers and this changing agriculture industry. ASC offers assistance in safety program development, implementation and management. ASC, with its multicultural and bilingual staff, has unique capabilities in addressing the Spanish language training needs of Hispanic employees.

WHAT ELSE DOES ASC OFFER?

ASC services include:

- Identifying and addressing hazards created by mechanical systems, equipment, farm operations, work practices/behaviors and environmental exposures that can cause a workplace injury or illness.
- Educating the farmer on safety and health regulatory compliance and program requirements related to confined space, hazardous communication, machine hazards, herdsman techniques, electrical exposures, and personal protective equipment.
- Conducting safety and health training services (in English and/or Spanish) that assist in regulatory compliance and promoting safety awareness/safe work practices.
- Identifying workplace exposures that create a need for further occupational health services such as hearing tests, respiratory medical evaluations and fit-testing.
- Assisting and supporting management in understanding the importance of a commitment to safety.
- Demonstrating how an investment in safety is a critical part of a sustainable business plan.