

2022 Wisconsin Farm Related Fatalities

A COLLABORATION OF UW DIVISION OF EXTENSION AND THE NATIONAL FARM MEDICINE CENTER

INTRODUCTION

Each year, a summary of Wisconsin farm fatalities is compiled to help identify the hazards and risks for people who work in agriculture. This report includes fatalities from agriculture-related hazards for the year 2022. Fatalities from naturally occurring health events or underlying conditions, such as heart attack or stroke, or recreational or home-related activities, are not included.

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022
Fatalities	40	28	35	29

NOTE: Since 2017, farm fatality reports differ from BLS data summaries due to the inclusion of children, bystanders, non-farm motorists, and other public roadway incidents involving agricultural operations in this collection of reports.

TYPES OF FATALITIES

Twenty-nine fatalities were recorded in 2022. Using the **Farm and Agricultural Injury Classification (FAIC)**¹ code allows researchers and others to identify and categorize occupational cases and unique exposures, such as non-working children and bystanders injured in work environments.

Injury Classification	Number
Farm Production Work	17
Farm Hazard: Non-workers	1
Roadway Collision	3
Agricultural Support (e.g. farm mechanic)	1
Unable to determine	7

EVENTS THAT LED TO FARM FATALITIES

Machinery hazards are a significant source of injuries. Farm equipment conditions and the presence of safety devices such as shields or rollover protection vary widely. Even with “safe” equipment, unexpected events and improper operation can lead to injury. Blunt trauma, such as from equipment that falls while it is being repaired, trees and equipment runovers, led to 14 fatalities. Five cases were caused by falls, such as from barns, sheds, or silos. Transportation incidents led to 3 fatalities. This total includes non-farm motorists injured in collisions with agriculture-related vehicles. Two fatalities occurred on public roadways. Crushing injuries, such as between the arms of a

skid loader, caused 2 fatalities. Grass fires caused two fatalities.

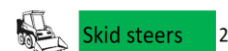
Injury Event	Number
Blunt Trauma	14
Falls	5
On-road Transportation	2
Off-road Transportation	1
Crushing Injuries	2
Fire	2
Other	1

BLUNT TRAUMA INCIDENTS

Of the blunt trauma cases, 6 (43%) involved being run over by tractors. The remaining blunt trauma cases involved one of each (7%): trees, grapple attachment, sprayer, combine harvester, ATV, and skid steer.

SOURCE OF INJURY

Roadway collisions continue to pose a threat to farmers as well as to non-farm motor vehicle operators and passengers. Tractors, including collisions and rollovers, fatally injured 9 victims. Skid steers and ATVs and UTVs used while performing a farm task fatally injured 2 individuals each.

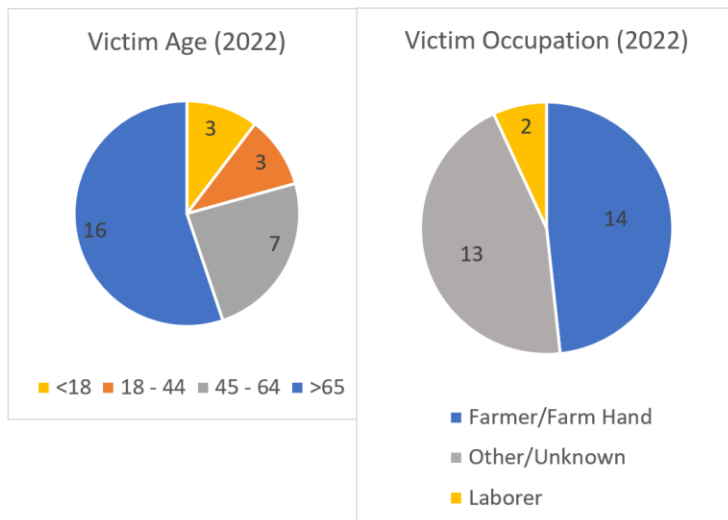


OTHER CASES

In addition to blunt trauma, falls remain a concern. In 2022, there were 5 fatal injuries related to falls. Two falls happened due to snow when the person slipped and fell. Farmers, farm workers, and everyone involved in rural activities must be extremely careful in snowy conditions and wear appropriate clothing to work. In another 2 cases, victims fell from machinery.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Twenty-seven of the victims (93%) were male and 2 were female. Persons aged 65 and over constituted the largest number of victims with 16 individuals (55%) while 4 were under 18 (14%) and 4 were between 18 and 44 (14%). Of the victims with known occupations, 14 were primarily farmers. Outside of farming occupations, victims included two general laborers plus a mix of other ag service professions.



Note: The authors of this factsheet documented several suicide events involving those reported as farmers. These events are not included in the data described here. If you have concerns for yourself or others including thoughts of suicide, call 800-273-8255, and consider locating a "QPR" suicide prevention training course in your community.

AREAS OF INTEREST – FARMER SUICIDE

This fatality data analysis project was not intended to study suicide incidents among farmers or workers or others in production agriculture. However, recent studies^{2,3} remind us that the rate of suicide among farmers is higher than for most other occupations. Recent research suggests important risk factors. These include access to firearms on farms, the financial and workload burdens of the occupation, physical health-related stress, and the continued stigma that can cause people not to seek mental health care and support. Several Wisconsin efforts have focused in recent years on farmer mental health and suicide prevention. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) operates the Farm Center, which provides a range of support services. These include farmer wellness counseling

services and a 24/7 Farmer Wellness Helpline 800-942-2474. Several programs are available for rural and agricultural service providers focused on mental health and suicide prevention. These include Mental Health First Aid and QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer). If you encounter a person and are concerned about suicide risk, appropriate help and support are available through the 988-Lifeline. Suicide is preventable, and learning more about this important issue could save a life.

IMPACT OF FARM FATALITIES

Nationally, workers in agriculture and closely related industries are up to 7 times more likely to die on the job than workers in other industries.⁴ Farming remains among the most dangerous jobs in the U.S., with an annual fatality rate of 20.9/100,000 full-time working individuals compared to an all-industry rate of 3.3/100,000.⁵ A 2024 study examined the economic impact of U.S. farm injuries and deaths for farm operators, agricultural workers, and society. This study estimated total costs at \$11.3 billion in 2024 dollars, representing an annual cost burden of 10%-15% of net farm income.

ABOUT OUR DATA

Data sources included Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Bureau of Health Information death certificate registry; clippings from Wisconsin daily and weekly newspapers collected and collated via AgInjuryNews.org.

REFERENCES

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