

EMPLOYING AGRICULTURE CONTRACTORS



STOP AND THINK

SAFE

SLURRY ANIMALS FALLS EQUIPMENT

No one wants an accident on their farm

The Spring and Summer in particular can be very busy periods in agriculture. With jobs such as slurry operations, silage cutting & baling taking place during this time, incidents are more likely to occur.

Time constraints, financial problems and inclement weather (among other things) can put pressure on farmers which may lead to them taking short cuts.

Spring and Summer is also a time when Agricultural Contractors are particularly busy, under similar pressures and are more likely to be employed.



Before you employ an Agriculture Contractor ask yourself the following questions...

Question

If you employ Agricultural Contractors on your farm, who is responsible for the safety of everyone involved in the work they are doing including the employees of the Contractor?

Answer

YOU the farmer as well as the contractor have a joint responsibility to ensure the work is carried out safely so that no one is injured or killed.

Question

What steps can you take to ensure the Agriculture Contractor will carry out work safely?

Answer

You should:-

- Talk to the Contractor before employing them, explain the jobs that need to be completed and satisfy yourself that they are competent to carry them out.
- Ask friends and neighbours who have employed the Contractor before as this can be a useful way to assess their suitability.
- Most Agricultural Contractors use social media to promote their work so check out their posts as it can tell you a lot about their attitude to health and safety.
- Ask about the Contractors accident history.

To help you decide if your Agriculture Contractor has the right attitude to safety, here are some questions you should think about: -

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
Does the Contractor have Public Liability & Employer's Liability Insurance?		
Will they plan the work in advance?		
Do they have enough resources i.e. people & machinery to carry out the work safely?		
Do they employ workers who have the training to do the job safely? Consider operating vehicles such as telescopic handlers and other jobs where specific training is required.		
Do they employ young workers? Is their youth and inexperience considered when allocating jobs? Have they received adequate training and are they supervised to ensure they follow safe working practices?		
Do they allow sufficient breaks so workers don't suffer from driver fatigue?		
Is mobile phone use forbidden when operating machinery?		
Are drivers/employees reminded that it is against the law for children under 13 to be carried on agricultural vehicles and machinery during agricultural operations?		
Do they keep vehicles and machinery in a safe, road worthy condition with good all round visibility and adequate lighting?		
Are PTO guards maintained and properly adjusted to ensure the full shaft is covered? Are employees encouraged to report defects with PTOs?		
Do they communicate with you on expected arrival times/how long they expect to be working on your farm/working arrangements etc?		
Have they considered emergency procedures including first-aid?		
Do they check for location of overhead power lines before work commences?		

This list is not exhaustive there may be many more questions a farmer needs to put to an Agricultural Contractor before work commences.

Remember - Agricultural Contractors AND farmers have a joint responsibility during Agriculture Operations to keep everyone safe and healthy.

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