

# Pedestrian Safety on the Farm



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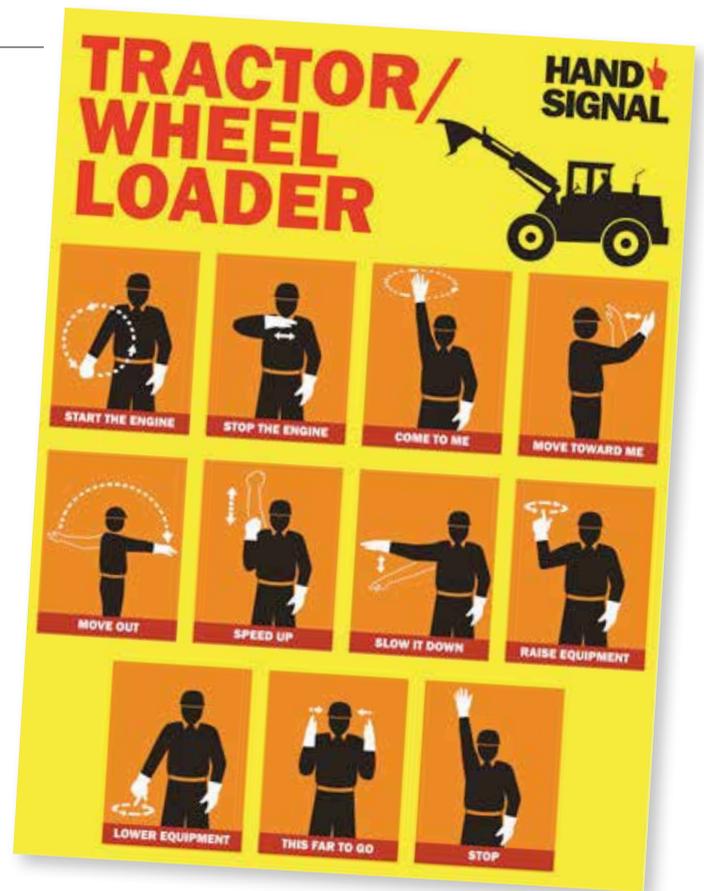
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Throughout the mushroom industry our daily tasks often expose us to various forms of heavy equipment. Loaders, forklifts, tractors and other heavy equipment can pose a risk to a pedestrian navigating the work area. Sometimes we become comfortable being around these pieces of equipment due to frequent exposure, but it's important to continually communicate with ground workers, pedestrians and operators on risks, communication to operators and common traffic patterns.

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, in 2016 there were 417 transportation farm-related fatalities. And in the construction industry, one of the most common causes of fatalities is "struck by" events, 75% of which are caused by equipment. We mention the construction industry because we share many of the same types of equipment and risks.

**There are key things that both operators and pedestrians should consider when working with and around heavy machinery.**

- Be aware of all the equipment's blind spots and pinch points.
- Be aware of the turn radius of equipment so you can understand how the equipment may move and the space required.
- All persons that will be entering where heavy equipment is operating must make sure that they can be seen by the operator. One way to do this is by wearing high-visible clothing. While this increases the chances of being seen, the best way to maintain your safety as a pedestrian is to be sure the operator knows that you are present.
- As a pedestrian you should always make eye contact before entering the work area. You should make sure the operator acknowledges your presence. A simple head nod or wave can suffice. Never assume the operator sees you.



- Alert the operator if you need to move through the work area. You want to be sure the operator knows where you are and where you are going. As a courtesy give the operator a wave when you are leaving their area, so they know they can continue to work without worrying where you are. This becomes even more important as weather gets cooler. If you are walking around a compost yard for example, the steam and fog can greatly reduce visibility.
- Ground workers should be oriented on the usual traffic patterns and be aware of the low visibility danger zones.
- Operators should understand where the center gravity of the equipment is when operating on uneven terrain, as it can create a potential roll-over hazard.
- Some work areas may require a spotter because of the working condition. If there is going to be any unusual activity, for example a tour, notify all machine operators beforehand. This will heighten the operator's awareness and prevent accidents or casualties.
- If space permits, create designated pedestrian areas that can be marked with things like paint, cones and barriers. Keeping pedestrian traffic in a designated area can help prevent accidents.

Implementing these safe practices gives accountability and proper knowledge to the pedestrian. It supplies them with the tools they need for ownership of their own safety. Take steps now to create an efficient and safe work environment. 🧠