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COMPLACENCY CAN LEAD TO ACCIDENTS

The mushroom workforce puts in long hours to meet the industry's demand across the country. As we accomplish this, it is critical to keep our employees' minds on-task to combat against injuries and accidents due to complacency.

Here are a few things that you can do now to keep your workforce from getting complacent and stay safe:

- 1. Make Safety a Habit.** Mushroom farming, from compost to packing, entails a variety of tasks. And with each job, it's important to instill safety habits with your team. The idea is that if employees are constantly thinking of safety, it becomes a habit and the workers will automatically default to working in a safe manner.
- 2. Empower Employees.** As a safety supervisor or manager, it's important to share your safety mission with your crew and empower and encourage them to observe and raise awareness in their coworkers when they see any impending risks. Show employees how they fit in the big picture so that they take ownership and commit their behavior to safety. Also, there is no one better to ask about safety concerns than your workers. As a team, workers and supervisors combined, you can improve the work safety environment.
- 3. Reiterate Safety Procedures.** At Laurel Valley Farms, Inc., we complete safety walks throughout the year and implement the employees' safety concerns as well maintaining OSHA's safety requirements. We also employ a safety consultant, who provides us with a fresh view of safety in our current working conditions that our members may overlook.

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 “We constantly reinforce to managers and workers to stick to safety basics. It's important, especially when it's busy around all the operations, to stress safety awareness and continue ongoing safety training. We use a program called S.T.O.P. for Safety.”

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Richard Rush, South Mill-Champs

The best way to keep your workforce safe is addressing the small things early to ensure that they don't become big disasters.

- Remind employees not to use any handheld devices while operating and navigating in the workplace
- Establish good housekeeping procedures (e.g. keeping walking surfaces and exits clear of any and all obstructions)
- Praise employees who offer safety solutions to possible hazards

.....
 “We make it a point to keep trainings going, like LockOut/TagOut procedures.”

Diego Torres, C.J. Mushroom Co.

Let's empower our employees to become teams by focusing on safety. This in turn provides financial savings. Focusing on safety practices year-round can help reduce worker injuries and illnesses, as well as associated costs like workers' compensation, insurance premiums, lost productivity and medical expenses. In addition, a secure workplace improves morale, productivity and most importantly keeps the personnel safe. Empower employees to focus on safety. And remember that safety is a team effort. Just knowing safety is not enough. You have to practice it and evolve with it every day. *mn*

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MEMBER



S-T-O-P



S = **STOP**

Stop before you act...

- Take the time to prepare before starting a task, like obeying a stop sign at a busy intersection.
- Make the investment in time for yourself.

T = **THINK**

Think about the task at hand and consider the following questions:

- Specifically, what will I be doing?
- Is it non-routine?
- Do I know how to do it properly?
- Do I have the right PPE?
- Do I have the right tools?
- What if it does not go quite as planned?

O = **OBSERVE**

Open your eyes...

- Look at your surroundings.
- Are there any trip hazards?
- What is above you that might fall?
- What is beneath you that you could drop something on?
- What effect will you have on those around you?
- Are the appropriate energy sources off and locked out?

P = **PLAN**

Plan ahead before you act...

- Take into account the **S, T,** and **O** of **S.T.O.P.**
- Put your plan together – how you can do it safely?
- Stick to your plan. Do not take shortcuts! It's not worth it!
- Communicate your plan to those around you who may be affected.
- If it's a non-routine task, take time to review your plan with someone.



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