

Every year thousands of farm workers are injured and too many die in avoidable farming accidents.

The risk of falling from a height or being struck by a falling object account for nearly 30% of all agricultural fatalities.

The safety hierarchy should be followed when working at height:

AVOID – PLAN – PREVENT – TRAIN

Avoid working at height if possible.

Where working at height is required, plan the task properly, using safe equipment. Consider the use of a specialist contractor.

Remember preventing falls is better than mitigating against a fall.

Collective measures such as edge protection/netting are preferable to personal measures such as harnesses.

Provide training for any employee required to work at height.



Using Ladders Correctly

- Only use ladders for their manufactured use.
- Never alter a ladder.
- Never stand ladders on moveable objects e.g. pallets, bricks or machinery.
- Do not place a ladder on traffic routes or in front of doors.
- Watch out for overhead power lines.
- Ensure the ladder is placed on firm, even ground.
- Ensure the ladder is tied or footed to prevent slipping.
- Avoid working on ladders in windy weather.
- Follow the 1 in 4 rule (e.g. 1 unit out for every 4 units up).
- Only carry light tools and or materials - use a tool belt.
- Do not overreach.
- Ensure all four feet of a stepladder are in contact with the ground.
- Always maintain 3 points of contact to ensure stability.

WORKING AT HEIGHT

Before starting the job, stop and think...

Can working at height be avoided?

Will it require staying up a ladder for over 30 minutes?

Are you familiar with the safe operation of the equipment?

Choose the correct ladder for the job.

TOP TIPS:

✓ **Avoid roof work or work at height maintaining buildings.**

Do as much as you can from the ground e.g. use extending equipment to clear gutters.

✓ **Avoid doing the work yourself.**

Use a professional contractor with the equipment and experience.

✓ **DO NOT be tempted to use the wrong equipment.**

Being lifted on the forks or bucket of a telehandler is ILLEGAL!

✓ **Be safe!**

Always maintain 3 points of contact with the ladder.

Do not overload or over-reach

Ensure all equipment is checked regularly.

If using a ladder follow the 1 in 4 rule (i.e. 1 unit out for every unit up).

Make sure you are aware of your surroundings e.g. overhead powerlines, uneven floors, soft ground.



CHECKLIST

✓ **STILES**

Make sure stiles are not bent or damaged.

✓ **FEET**

Ensure ladder feet are not missing, worn or damaged.

✓ **RUNGS**

Are they bent, missing or loose?

✓ **LOCKING MECHANISM**

Are they bent? Are the fixings worn or damaged?

✓ **PLATFORM**

Is the platform split or buckled in any way?

✓ **STEPS OR TREADS**

Are they contaminated, are the fixings tight?

DO NOT use the ladder if you spot any defects.

Remember...

Discuss risks regularly with the whole team, and train everyone on safe working practices and emergency procedures.

Make sure everyone carries a mobile phone with them. Have relevant emergency information and contacts programmed in.