



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Tractor safety starts with rollbar rebate

Safety to be featured at Wood County Farm Bureau picnic, July 19

Wood County farmer Clarence Boerboom has made his tractor as safe as possible, thanks to the Wisconsin Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS) Rebate Program run by the National Farm Medicine Center, Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation.

Boerboom's new rollbar is the latest of many safety enhancements he has made on the 1982 John Deere 2940, most of which pertain to lighting and highway visibility. Tractors are involved in most fatal farm accidents, such as the crash two years ago on nearby U.S. Route 10 which claimed the life of Kenneth Brandl.

Boerboom will display his tractor and explain the safety modifications at the second annual Wood County Farm Bureau Summer Picnic, noon, Sunday, July 19, at North Wood County Park. This year's picnic theme is "Farm Safety." In addition, a member of the National Farm Medicine Center staff will be available at the picnic to answer questions about the ROPS rebate program. Wisconsin tractor owners can apply for the program via the ROPS hotline, 1-877-767-7748 (1-877-ROPSR4U), or the website, www.ropsr4u.com.

A ROPS is an operator compartment structure (usually cab or rollbar) intended to protect farmers from injuries caused by rollovers. The ROPS system did not become standard on U.S. manufactured tractors until 1985. More than half the tractors in Wisconsin do not have this protection. A ROPS, when used with a seatbelt, is 99 percent effective in preventing injury or death in the event of an overturn.

Boerboom covered the \$1,142 cost of ROPS retrofitting with the program's standard rebate, plus a reimbursement from his insurance company, program partner McMillan Warner Mutual Insurance. The ROPS was installed by Tractor Central in Granton.

"I've lived this long," said the 73-year-old Navy veteran and Wood County Farm Bureau Board member. "I don't want it to end earlier than it has to."

More than 110 ROPS have been installed in Wisconsin during the first two years of the rebate program, made possible through philanthropic support from Auction of Champions.

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