

2017 Wisconsin Farm Related Fatalities

A COLLABORATION OF UW DIVISION OF EXTENSION AND THE NATIONAL FARM MEDICINE CENTER

INTRODUCTION

Annual summaries of farm fatalities help identify the hazards and risks associated with production agriculture. This report includes fatalities resulting from encountering agriculture-related hazards. Fatalities resulting from naturally occurring health events or underlying conditions (e.g. heart attack, stroke), recreational activities, or home-related activities are not included in this summary. Due to time and resource limitations, this report had been discontinued from 2007-16.

Year	2004	2005	2006	2017
Fatalities	26	30	25	41

NOTE: From 2017-present, farm fatality reports differ from BLS data summaries due to the inclusion of children, non-farm motorists, bystanders, and public roadway incidents in these more recent reports.

TYPES OF FATALITIES

Forty-one fatalities were recorded in 2017. The table below categorizes fatalities using the **Farm and Agricultural Injury Classification (FAIC)**¹. FAIC codes allow us to identify occupational cases and unique exposures, such as non-working children and bystanders in work environments.

FAIC Injury Classification	Number
Farm Production Work	27
Agricultural Support (e.g. ag mechanic)	1
Farm Hazard: Non-workers	4
Roadway Collision	9

EVENTS THAT LED TO FARM FATALITIES

Even with safe equipment, various practices and improper use can lead to injury. Transportation, such as operating a tractor in a field or on the roadway, led to 24 fatalities. This includes civilians injured in collisions with ag-related vehicles. Seven of these fatalities occurred off the roadway, such as in fields or driveways. Machinery hazards can also lead to injury. Machine entanglements on moving parts, such as with PTOs, caused 4 fatalities. Blunt trauma, such as falling equipment or trees, caused 8 fatalities. An additional 3 fatalities were caused by falls.

Injury Event	Number
Transportation	24
Blunt trauma	8
Machine entanglements	4
Falls	3
Other	2

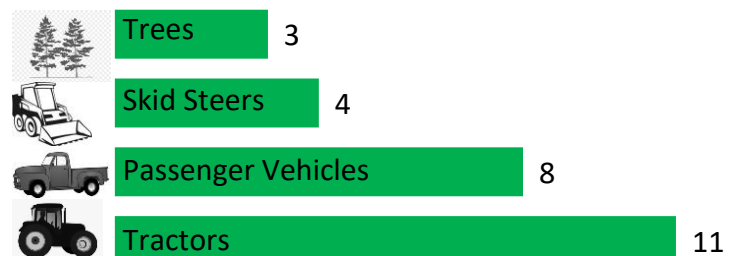
It is important to note how these events caused fatalities. Of blunt trauma cases, 3 (38%) involved trees/logs and 2 (25%) involved being run over by tractors. Of transportation cases, 9 (37.5%) involved tractors and 9 (37.5%) involved passenger vehicles, while 2 (8.3%) involved ATVs.

PUBLIC ROADWAY INCIDENTS

Incidents on WI public roadways involving agricultural equipment led to 12 fatalities in 2017, 29% of all farm fatalities. This includes three victims who were farmers operating tractors, and nine other people in passenger vehicles that collided with agricultural equipment or with a farm animal (e.g. cattle or horses).

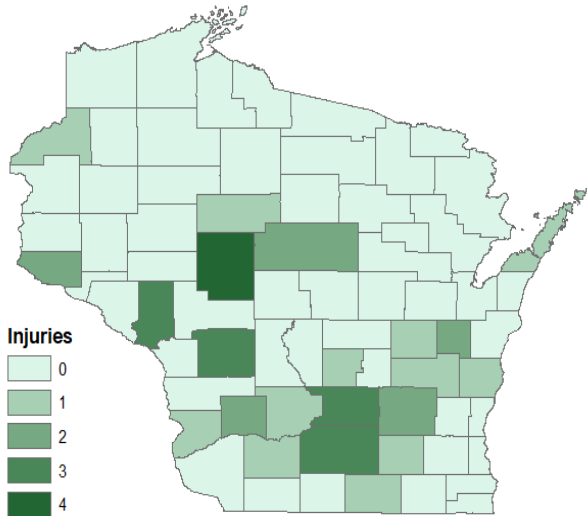
SOURCE OF INJURY

Farms have multiple hazards that can contribute to injury. Both farm and passenger vehicles can pose a threat to farmers or to non-farm vehicle operators and passengers. Tractors fatally injured 11 individuals, skid steers fatally injured 4 individuals. Collisions involving passenger vehicles fatally injured 8 individuals. Additionally, falling trees and logs, such as clearing trees from a farm fencerow with a tractor, fatally injured 3 victims. Other fatalities were caused by a variety of farm equipment, machinery, and environmental hazards.



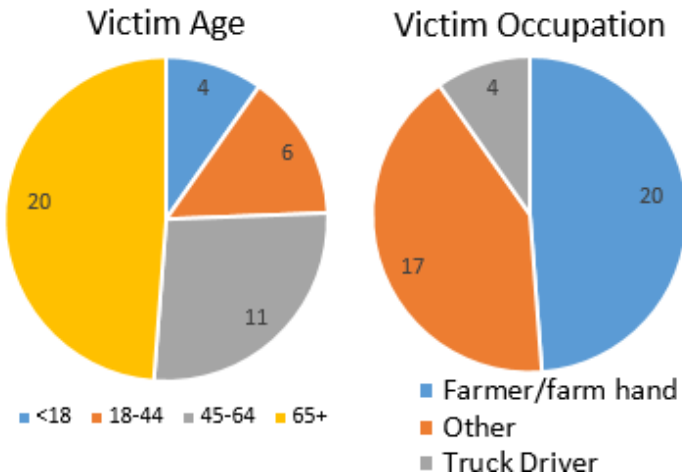
INJURY LOCATIONS

This map shows the counties with 2017 farm fatalities.



DEMOGRAPHICS

Thirty-five of the victims were male and six were female. Of fatalities, 11 victims were between the ages of 45-64, while those 65 and over included 20 victims. Four victims were children under the age of 18. Twenty of the victims were farmers by primary occupation. Outside farming occupations, victims included four truck drivers and a mix of various other professions.



OTHER CASES

We identified three additional cases, not verified as farm related, and not included in our total fatality counts. No individuals were identified by investigators as “farmers” by primary occupation and these incidents occurred at non-farm residences. One individual was dragged by a tractor, while another was run over by a tractor. Many non-farmers own tractors for non-agricultural purposes, and this number has been on the rise². It is imperative that all individuals use caution when operating farm machinery, particularly those unfamiliar with them.

IMPACT OF FARM FATALITIES

Nationally, workers in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (AgFF) are up to 8 times more likely to die on the job than workers in other industries³. Farming remains among the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. with an annual death rate of 26.0/100,000 persons compared to 3.3/100,000 persons overall³. When last examined by Leigh et al. in 2001, the cost of farm-related injuries nationally averaged an estimated \$4.57 billion/year. This represents a contribution of 30% more than the national average to occupational injury costs⁴.

Note: The authors of this factsheet documented several suicide events involving those reported as farmers. These events are *not* included in the data described here. This is not surprising given the relatively high rate of suicide deaths among farmers as has recently been described by CDC as well as media accounts. Authors are investigating the needs for further analysis of Wisconsin farm suicide events. Suicide is preventable -- If you have concerns for yourself or others including thoughts of suicide, call 1-800-273-8255. Or, consider locating a "QPR" suicide prevention training course in your community.

ABOUT OUR DATA

Data sources included Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Bureau of Health Information death certificate registry; clippings from Wisconsin daily and weekly newspapers collected and collated via AgInjuryNews.org. The AgInjuryNews.org system is the largest news article dataset of its kind is available through a web-based system providing an interactive display of publicly available news clippings data involving AgFF-related injuries. This public system allows registered users to search and filter incident data. Incidents are entered and indexed using various elements, including publication year and month, farm type, injury agent, U.S. state, incident year, month and time of day, victim age, gender, and others.

Previous Wisconsin Farm-Related Fatalities reports and other safety materials can be found on the UW Center for Agricultural Safety and Health website at fyi.extension.wisc.edu

REFERENCES

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