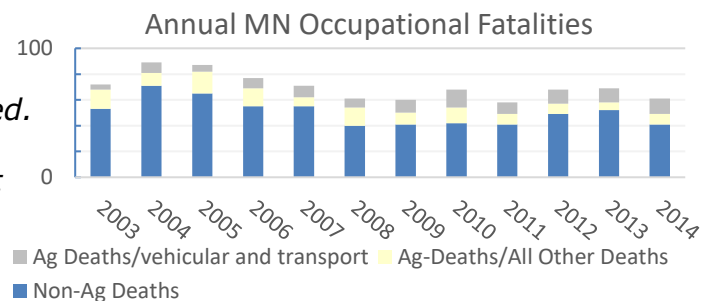


Roll Over Protection Structures (ROPS) – Preventing Ag Fatalities

Minnesota (MN) ranked 5th in the nation for all agricultural product sold, with just over \$21 billion in sales for the year 2012. Over 87% of MN's 75,000 farms are individually or family owned. Unfortunately, agriculture is one of the most hazardous industries. While making up only about 1-2% of MN's employed population, agriculture accounted for 32% of worker fatalities in MN in 2014.



The Challenge

Reduce the number of MN's fatalities that occur within the farm industry annually in MN. Between the years 2003 and 2014, 29% of all occupational fatalities in MN were in agriculture. Of the 20 fatalities in 2014, 8 involved contact with objects and equipment and 10 were classified as a transportation incident.

The Response

The MN Department of Health Center for Occupational Safety and Health, the MN Department of Labor and Industry, and the MN Department of Agriculture convened a workgroup in the spring of 2015 to address farm safety. The workgroup researched a number of programs and initiatives addressing fatalities in the agricultural sector and identified the ROPS Retrofit Program (<https://www.nycamhoutreach.com/ropsr4u/>) hosted by the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) as a potential solution. The workgroup invited Dr. Julie Sorenson with NYCAMH and Dr. Barbara Marlenga with the Marshfield Ag Center program in Wisconsin to come to MN and present on the program. The three departments invited interested legislators, agribusinesses, ag farm and safety programs, the University of MN, and other interested parties to the presentation. The presentations were well received and discussions continued on how to implement the program in MN. A four-part series of articles in the Minneapolis StarTribune ("Tragic Harvest") in October 2015 created greater public awareness of farm hazards.



The Impact

In response to the information presented at the meeting hosted by the three MN agencies, two bills were drafted and signed into law during the 2016 legislative session. The first created an online clearinghouse of ag health and safety materials, as well as a working group to continue to address ag health and safety issues. The second allocated \$250,000 for the implementation and creation of a MN ROPS pilot program. Private corporations also pledged contributions (\$27,000 to date) to the program. The program will provide a 70% rebate to farmers for the installation of a ROPS on any tractor built before 1987, reducing out of pocket costs to no more than \$500.00 per tractor.

For more information: <https://www.nycamhoutreach.com/ropsr4u/>.