## Farmers urged to be safety-minded during harvest

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Agriculture remains one of the more dangerous occupations in North America. But exercising caution, getting rest and being safety-minded can go a long way toward making it safer for everyone involved, the Nebraska Corn Board said in noting that Sept. 16-22 is National Farm Safety and Health Week.

"As the long hours of harvest begin, we need to be safety minded to prevent an injury or fatality that could have been prevented by taking appropriate precautions," said Tim Scheer, chairman of the Nebraska Corn Board and farmer from St. Paul. "Precautions such as staying focused and resting regularly can keep things safe around the farm for everyone, including family members helping to bring the crop in."

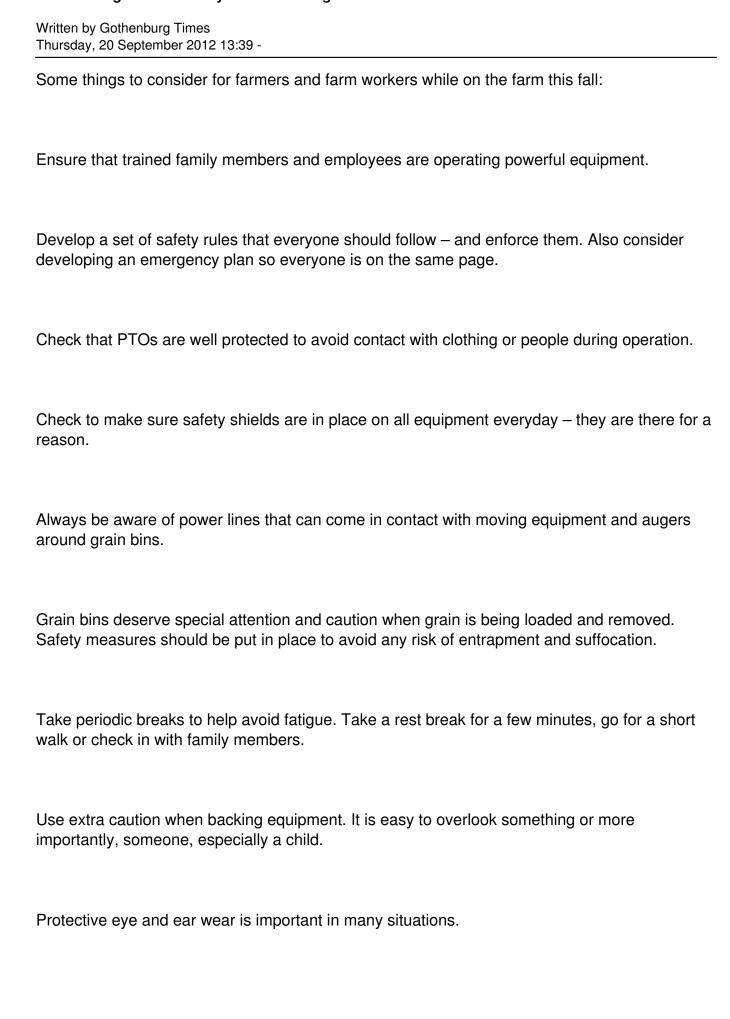
This year's focus for Farm Safety Week is the farm family with the theme of Agriculture Safety & Health...A Family Affair. The National Education Center for Agricultural Safety, which promotes National Farm Safety and Health Week, said there were 596 deaths and 70,000 disabling injuries attributed to agriculture in 2010.

"Grain production and handling continues to be one of the most dangerous aspects of crop production," Scheer said. "There are more than 1 billion bushels of on-farm storage capacity across Nebraska and grain bins and associated equipment are common on farms and deserve extra attention."

Scheer also cautioned motorists driving on rural roads during harvest. Such roads see additional traffic during harvest, which increases the chances for accidents to occur between slower moving farm equipment and vehicles moving at highway speeds. In addition, rural intersections will have heavier-than-normal travel and the dry conditions increase dust which limit visibility, as can sun glare in the morning and evening. Standing crops in the field may also block a clear view of oncoming traffic.

The Nebraska Corn Board encourages farmers, their families and employees to pay special attention to the safety features of their equipment, and encourages everyone to keep an eye toward safety on the highways and byways this harvest and year round.

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Remind family members and workers that safe practices come before expedience.

"Additionally, with the extreme drought the risk of fire has been greatly elevated," Scheer said. "So please be extra careful, conduct routine maintenance, don't allow leaves and stover to build up and have a fire extinguisher inside the cab."