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Farm Safety is of 'Critical Importance' says LMC

The Livestock and Meat Commission for Northern Ireland (LMC), a member of the Farm Safety Partnership, is reminding farmers and farm workers of the importance of exercising extreme caution when carrying out on-farm tasks this Farm Safety Week.

Farmers and farm workers can find themselves under pressure with a workload that rarely ceases. In the case of beef and sheep, farms are often relatively small scale in Northern Ireland which means many and varied tasks are undertaken by the farmer on his/ her own and in many cases to fit in around other off-farm employment.

Despite these pressures, LMC Chief Executive, Ian Stevenson says that shortcuts should not be taken when it comes to farm safety.

“No matter how time poor the farmer may be, the risks still need to be fully weighed up before working with slurry, animals, equipment or potential falls when working at heights,” Ian said.

“During the summer months and particularly in good weather, many children enjoy helping out on the farm but with lots of heavy and dangerous equipment on the move, it’s always a significant risk at this time of year.

“I would urge all farmers and farm workers to consider the risks before beginning any task and to keep safety at the forefront of their minds.”

Elsewhere, Colin Smith, Industry Development Manager, said: “Farm Safety Week has one clear message this year: ‘Your Health. Your Safety. Your Choice.’ LMC, as an affiliate member of the Farm Safety Partnership, fully back this campaign and recognise the critical importance of improving the safety of the farm business.

“Earlier this year LMC launched the new Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (NIBL FQAS) Standard and Rules and this has been updated to bring renewed focus on key aspects of farm safety ranging from maintenance of slurry stores to condition of handling facilities.

“The Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) has announced its latest annual fatal injuries in agriculture which saw another seven fatalities in 2017/18. Farming continues

to have the highest rate of fatal injury of all the main industry sectors and estimates also suggest that around 100 non-fatal injuries, requiring some form of medical treatment, occur each month. This year has already tragically seen another two further farm deaths with a number of other agriculture linked deaths also occurring in recent months.

“Everyone working in the agriculture industry has a responsibility to ensure farms are as safe as possible and whilst awareness of the hazards is one thing, it is individuals who must act to make the difference.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

HESNI’s statistics: <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/news/farm-safety-week-2018-your-health-your-safety-your-choice>