

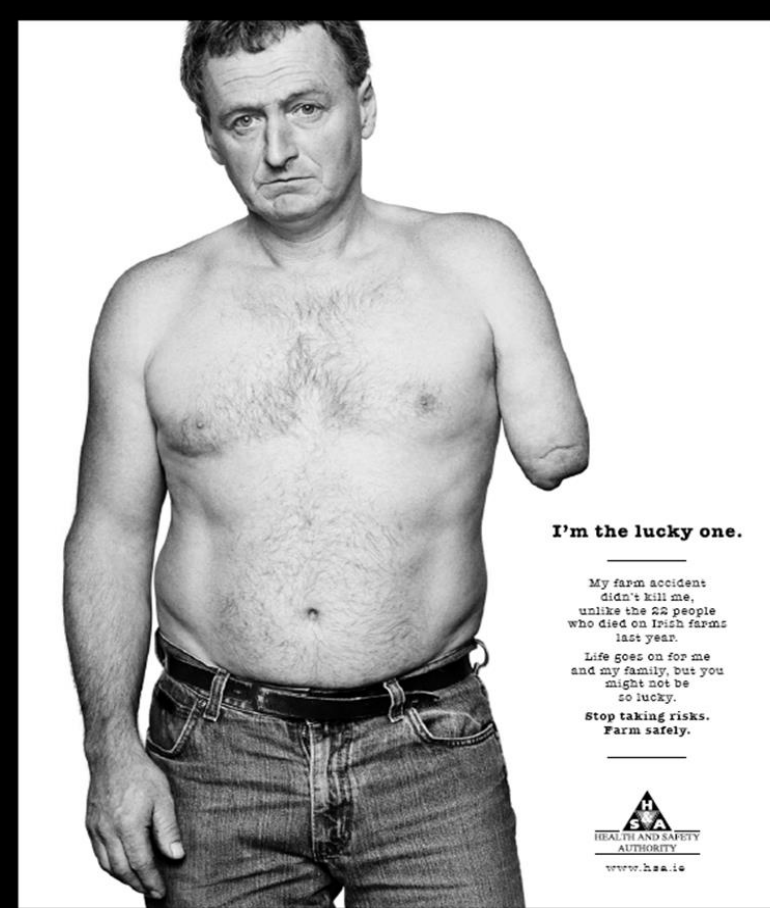
# Preventing Injury and Ill Health in Agriculture

**Francis Bligh**

**Teagasc**

**Health and Safety**

# Consequences of Injury and Ill Health




**I'm the lucky one.**

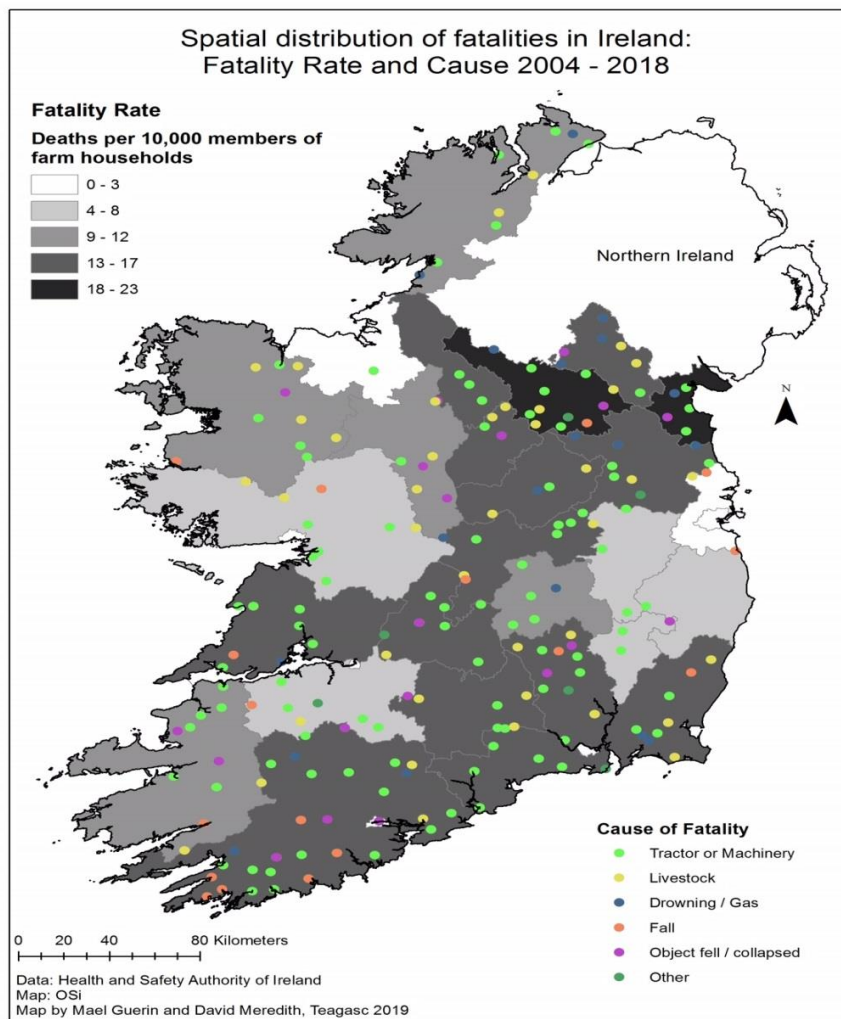
My farm accident didn't kill me, unlike the 22 people who died on Irish farms last year.

Life goes on for me and my family, but you might not be so lucky.

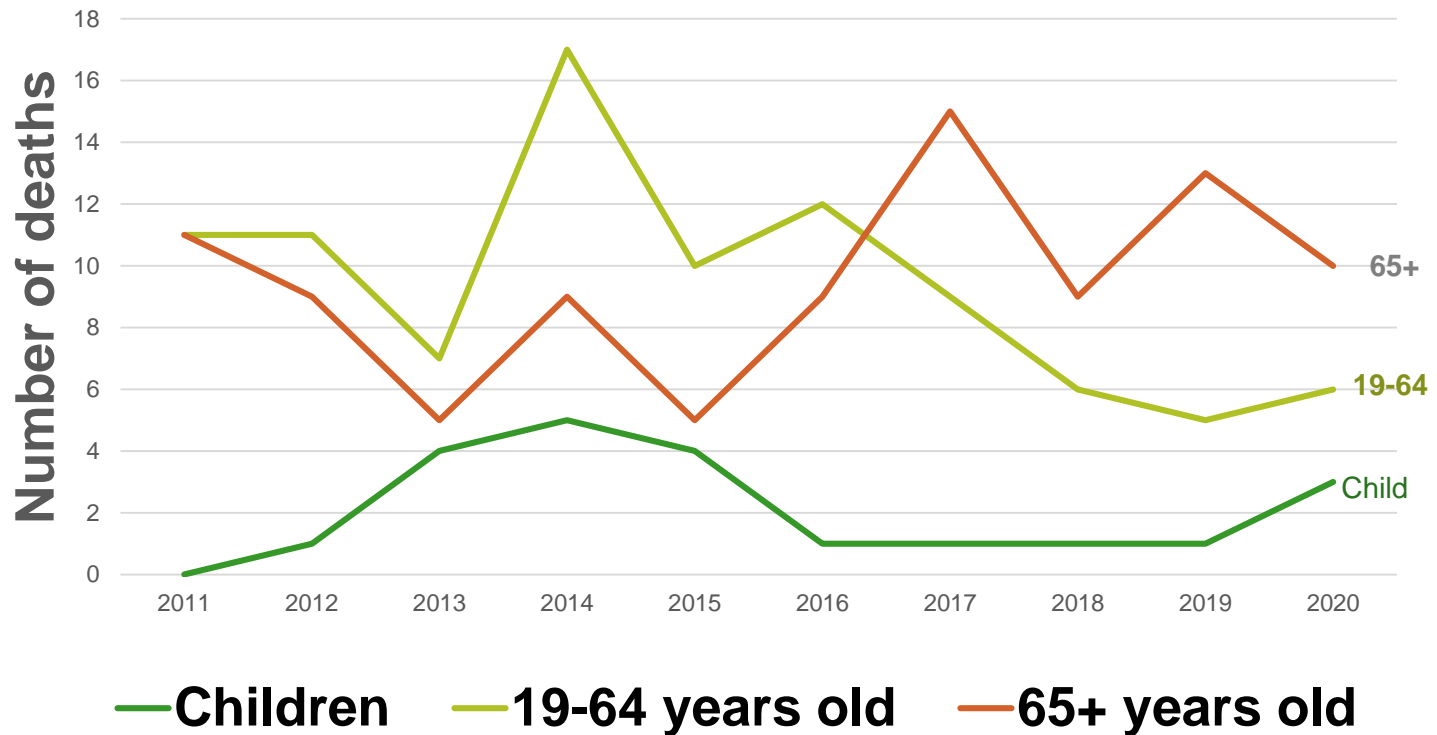
**Stop taking risks.  
Farm safely.**

  
HEALTH AND SAFETY  
AUTHORITY  
[www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

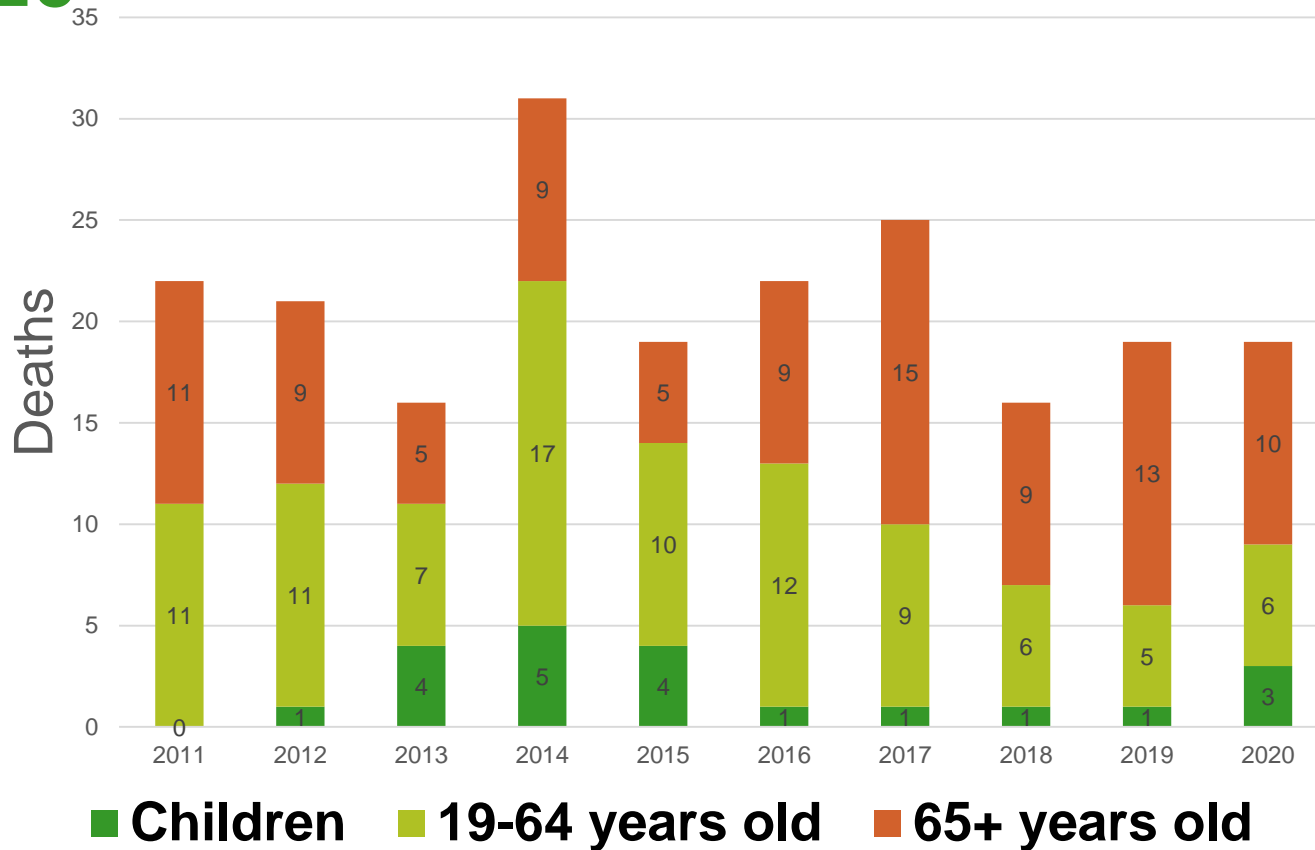
# Farm Deaths- Spatial Analysis: 2004-2018)



# Trends in Farm Deaths 2011-20



# Deaths in Agr by Age Group 2011-2020

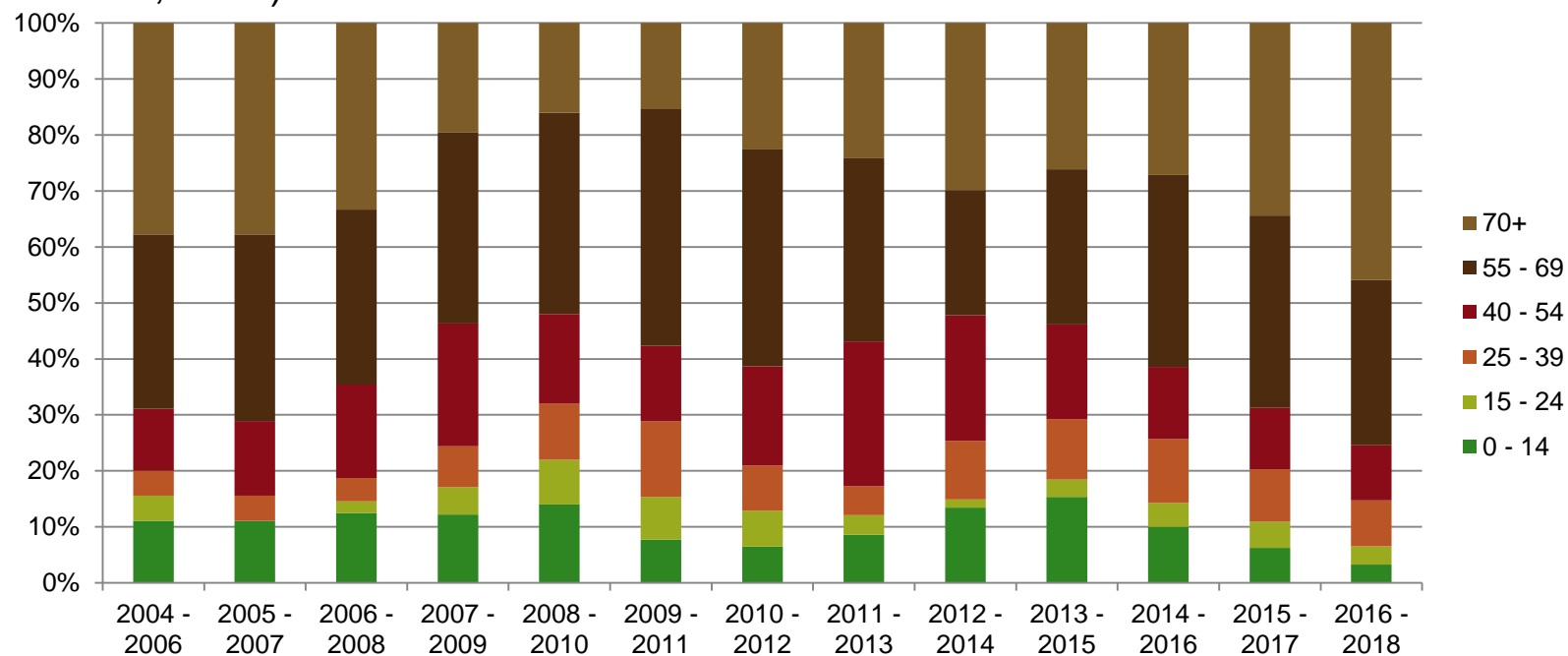


# Fatality Trends and Rates – 3-year Rolling Averages

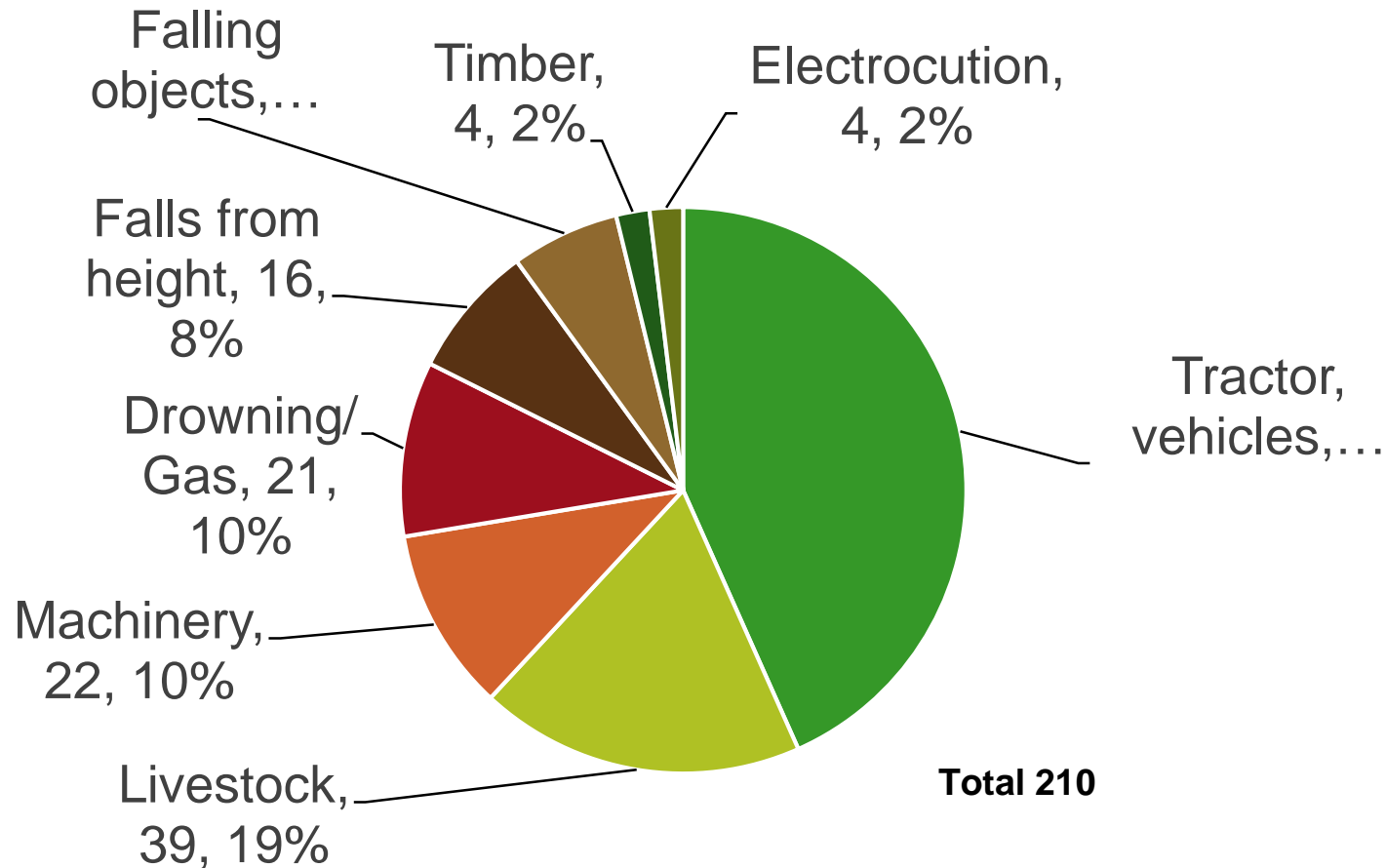
## Understanding fatality trends is challenging

Those killed through fatal injuries comprise a variety of victims ranging from the young to the elderly, i.e. not just farmers or workers.

This makes the calculation of standardised rates (and comparison with other industries) difficult, e.g. deaths per 100,000 workers. (See HSA, 2021)



# Main Causes of Farm Deaths (2011-2020)



# National Average Fatality Rates

- Nationally all workers approx, 1.5 deaths for every 100,000 workers
- Construction workers approx, 6 deaths for every 100,000 workers
- Agriculture work approx, 18 deaths for every 100,000 persons working!

**Agriculture has the Highest Rate of Fatal Injury of any major economic sector!**

**7 Times more likely to be Killed at Work in Farming**

- HSA Data.



# SHWW Legislation, 2005

- **Employer - predominant duty to manage**
- **Employee - must comply and co-operate**
- **Contractors and Farmer must co-operate**
- **Designers, manufacturers, suppliers.**
- **Requirement to prepare Risk Assessment.**
- **Regulations, Codes of Practice (COP) and Guidance for support.**

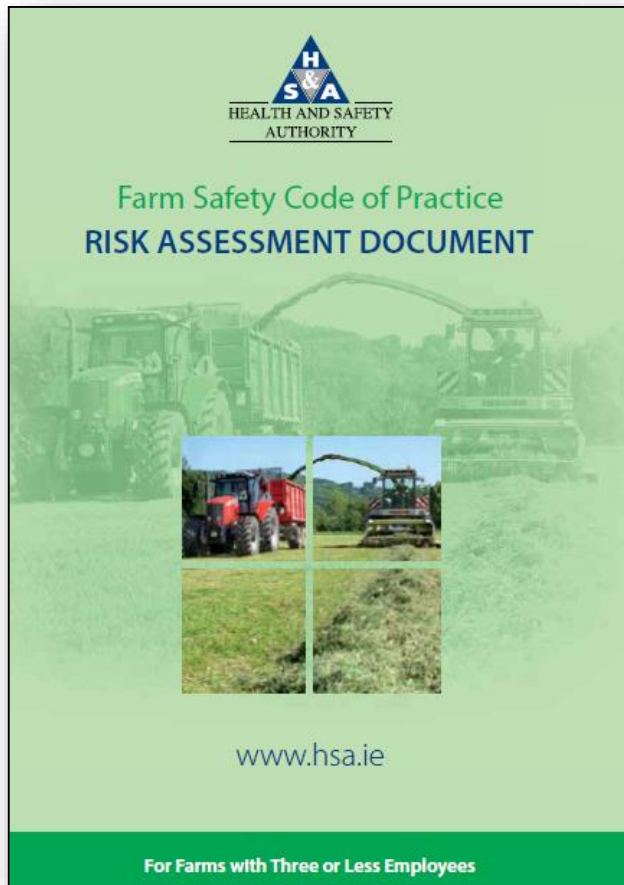
# Key legal Requirements

- *‘Do everything ‘so far as is reasonably practicable’ .*
- *Require a Risk Assessment ( 3 or less employees) or a Safety Statement.*
- *Employer has the primary duty*
  - *provide a safe place and system of work etc*

# What Action Needed ?



# Risk Assessment Document – use as Guide for Standards.



## Health of Farmers

Working on the farm can affect your health. In many cases the effects on health build up over time. Of particular significance in farming is the ill health caused by manual handling, dust or spores, infections and noise. Of farmers with occupational ill health 50% experience chronic back pain. Also one exposure to some dust and spores can cause severe health effects and sensitisation.

**FIGURE 8: OCCUPATIONAL ILL HEALTH AMONG FARMERS (1996 - 2006)**

• Poor health poor profit      • Annual health check

Health Issue	Percentage
Chronic back pain	50%
Lung problems	35%
Other	7.5%
Disease from Animals	7.5%

**Eliminate manual handling**

**Proper lifting techniques**

**Manual Handling**

About a third of all reported accidents are due to poor manual handling. Most manual handling accidents result in back injury. Lifting heavy loads results in arthritis of joints, particularly hip and knee joints. Damage is also caused to tendons, ligaments and muscles. Injuries can result from manual handling due to the work itself, the load, the work environment, or the individual's ability. Twisting your spine while lifting or carrying a load is particularly dangerous.

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# Team Approach

- Encourage farmers to think about Safety and Health during every task.

## Vehicle Knockdowns/ Faulty procedure



## Cow Attacks



# Calving Facilities





# Silage pit size.



# Machinery Safety – Not Just PTO'S



# What could happen next ?



# Fragile Roof



# Height for Hire



# Standard Mortality Ratio comparison for Farmers with 'White Collar'

(Dr Breda Smyth et al, M.D. 2012)

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Farmers (15 - 64 years)</b>
<b>Circulatory Disease</b>	<b>5 times higher</b>
<b>Cancer</b>	<b>3 times higher</b>
<b>Injuries (inc poisoning).</b>	<b>7 times higher</b>

# Stress

- Farming as a lifestyle is mainly positive for well-being.
- However, Rural Dwellers have twice the 'stress' as urban.
- Stress can arise due to person or occupational sources.
- A key issue is to recognise "Stress Symptoms" and take action.
- Consult your Medical Doctor (G.P.) and share your worries with those you trust.
- The main stressors arising from farming include: financial worries, poor or dangerous working conditions, poor health, farm management and paperwork.
- Consult your Ag advisor/consultant about farming problems, don't leave it on the long finger.



# Be SunSmart

## Best Practice UV Protection

## Follow the 5-S's approach



**Slip** on clothing: Cover skin as much as possible e.g. wear long sleeves, collared t-shirts, clothes made from close-woven material that does not allow sunlight through.



**Slop** on broad-spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30+ for adults and 50+ for children, with high UVA protection, and water resistant. Reapply regularly.



**Slap** on a hat with a wide brim: Protect your face, ears and neck.



**Seek** shade: Sit in cover of trees to avoid direct sunlight and use a sunshade on your buggy or pram. Keep babies and children out of direct sunlight.



**Slide** on sunglasses with UV protection: Guard your eyes from harm.

REDUCE YOUR RISK

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# Schemes – Health and Safety

- TAMS11
- Accelerated **Capital** Allowances for Farm **Safety** Equipment
- Consult your Agricultural advisor.

# How do you plan to manage Health and Safety ?

- Take on-going practical action.