

“Fatality Reports” Tell Sad Stories Of Farm Deaths

Statistics about farm accidents fail to tell the terrible stories of actual events behind the numbers. Following is a detailed listing of 23 fatal accidents that took place from January 1, 1993 to December 1, 1993 in the Canadian province of Ontario. A similar story could probably be written about any other state or province in North America or any other region in the world where farmers use mechanized machinery.

Age 4 - The victim was riding on back of a tractor operated by a 9-year-old sibling and was crushed as a result of falling off the back end and becoming lodged between a rear tire and a weight box.

Age 5 - The victim's grandparent was preparing to sow grain with a seed drill plus land packer. The child's parent was checking spouts to make sure they weren't plugged from sitting all winter. When the tractor started up, the victim ran to jump onto the drill. The grandparent started driving ahead, unaware of the youngster's actions. As the tractor moved out, the victim - in between the drill and the packer - tripped over the packer's tongue. The parent reached out but was unable to grab hold of the victim. The child was run over by the packer, which weighed approximately 1 ton.

Age 14 - The victim and a friend were breaking up chunks of corn inside a drying bin. The structure was approximately 3/4 full. At the same time, the victim's parent was augering corn from the bin into wagons. The victim fell and became trapped by the flowing corn. The friend exited the bin and summoned the victim's parent. Meanwhile, the victim had slipped below the surface of the corn. Two holes were cut in the bin to allow the corn to escape rapidly. The victim was then removed from the bin.

Age 5 - The victim's parent had been operating a power post pounder unit on a trailer. The unit had to be disconnected from the tractor hydraulic system following rupture of a high pressure oil line. Apparently, the bed was left balanced rather than being locked in the forward position. The victim pulled a lever, which caused the bed to shift backward. The post pounder flipped over backward and instantly crushed the victim.

Age 4 - The victim's parent was unloading silage and did not realize that the victim and a sibling had entered the work area. It appears the child was caught in the chain at rear of forage wagon and was dragged into back of wagon.

Age 35 - The chute on a tractor-mounted snowblower became clogged. Victim attempted to clear the chute with a broom handle while the tractor's pto was running. Victim was drawn into snowblower auger.

Age 64 - Victim was cutting hay near edge of an embankment. The tractor went over the edge and rolled on top of victim, trapping the individual face down in approximately 1 ft. of water.

Age 49 - Victim was taking an orchard sprayer along down a road. Tractor illuminated with headlights plus a rear-mounted halogen working lamp. However, the sprayer wasn't fitted with either a lighting system or a slow-moving vehicle sign. As

a car approached from the rear, its driver assumed that the halogen working light was an oncoming vehicle. The driver moved the car toward the shoulder, because the light appeared to be crowding the center line. The car struck the back of sprayer, causing the tractor to roll over onto its roof. Victim was ejected from tractor.

Age 60 - Victim was pulling a cultivator with tractor. It appears the tractor rolled over as a result of driving too close to a ditch. Victim was pinned beneath cultivator in approximately 1 ft. of water.

Age 50 - A farm tractor was pulling a load of hay down a steep grade. After traveling approximately 85 yards down the slope, the driver prepared to turn right. Tractor veered sharply to the right and overturned, pinning victim.

Age 41 - Victim was riding on fender of a tractor driven by their spouse. An attached rotary mower was cutting grass. As tractor came close to a pine tree, branches knocked the victim off tractor and into the path of mower. Tractor could not be stopped in time, and the mower ran over victim.

Age 33 - Victim was operating a farm tractor and loaded manure spreader. A bent tongue indicated that spreader flipped tractor while equipment was travelling down a steep hill. Operator was pinned under tractor.

Age 51 - Victim was working in an excavated ditch, helping to install drainage tile around the outside of a building. A skidsteer was being used to carry stone to cover the tile. As operator passed the area near victim, the earth beneath loader gave way. Operator attempted to back up, but the machine slid sideways into the excavated area. Edge of skidsteer's bucket struck victim on the back of head.

Age 53 - Victim had been blowing corn silage from a forage wagon into silo. Employer found victim lying on top of wagon tongue, underneath the pto shaft. The tractor was still running. Victim's shirt had been torn off and was wrapped around pto. It appeared victim had been on the ground under the U-joint of the pto.

Age 34 - It appeared that clothing of victim was caught by an auger as the victim leaned into silo containing a small amount of corn. Victim became entangled in auger.

Age 39 - Victim failed to negotiate a right turn after lifting a plow on a headland. The tractor slid on muddy surface, causing the left wheels to go over the edge of a drainage ditch. Victim was trapped beneath about 2 1/2 ft. of water.



Photo courtesy Wichita Eagle
Museum director Mary Warren says hairball measures 37 in. around.

IT'S A WORLD RECORD!

55-Lb. Hairball Found Inside Cow's Stomach

If you're looking for somewhere to take the family this summer, you might want to consider a trip to the Finney County Historical Society Museum in Garden City, Kan. That's where you'll see something few people have ever seen before - a 55-lb. ball of hair taken from the stomach of a cow.

Bigger than a basketball but with the density of a bowling ball, the gray, perfectly round hairball was discovered last summer in a cow slaughtered at a beef processing plant in Holcomb, Kan. The ball measures 37 in. around and feels like a piece of furry felt. When it first arrived at the museum, the ball was wet and smelled terrible. But now that it's dried out, it has almost no smell at all, says Mary Warren, museum director.

Warren says most people think only cats get hairballs but she says they aren't uncommon in cattle, although they don't usu-

ally get larger than baseballs. Since cattle can't cough up hairballs like cats do, however, the balls can continue to grow.

When the meat plant workers brought the hairball in, Warren couldn't believe it was all hair so she had it X-rayed. The typical reaction of most visitors who see it is "Oh that poor cow!"

Ripley's Believe It Or Not recently held a nationwide contest to find the world's largest hairball and the largest one they found was 33 in. dia. The Kansas hairball could have won the contest but Warren says the museum wanted to hang on to the ball because it fits in well with an exhibit they plan to open soon on the local beef industry.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Finney County Historical Society Museum, Garden City, Kan. 67846 (ph 316 272-3664).

Age 70 - Victim and a neighbor were cutting trees. As a tree was being felled, a dead limb broke loose and struck the victim on the head.

Age 67 - A tractor became stuck in the snow while the victim was cutting firewood. The victim attached a steel cable to a large tree, with the other end running under the tractor and fastened to the rear tire chains. An attempt was made to free the tractor, using the rear drive wheels as a winch. The front end reared up and the tractor flipped over backward, pinning the victim.

Age 66 - Victim was attempting to move a large round bale into a feed crib with a farm tractor. The bale was being pushed into position with the front end of the tractor. The left front tire went up onto the bale, causing the tractor to flip over. The left rear fender pinned the victim across the upper chest.

Age 65 - Victim was hooking up a cultivator for the first time in the spring. After attaching hydraulic hoses to the tractor, victim released the safety pins which held the cultivator wings upright. A hydraulic cylinder did not hold and one of the wings fell onto the victim. Death was caused by suffoca-

tion. Apparently hydraulic fluid had leaked over the winter and allowed air to enter the system, resulting in malfunction of the hydraulic cylinder.

Age 71 - Victim jump-started a tractor that had quit in a corn field. Because the tractor had been left in gear, it moved forward slowly once it started. The victim, who had been standing beside the tractor to start it, ran around the unit in an attempt to climb into the cab but fell in front of the left rear tire and was run over.

Age 71 - Victim was spraying fruit trees. It's believed that while reversing the tractor, the victim was knocked to the ground by a low branch. The tractor continued backwards, pinning the victim against a tree.

Age 75 - Victim was plowing near a ditch. The tractor rolled over the edge of the soft embankment and pinned the victim in the ditch.

(Accidents described were reported to the Ontario Farm Safety Association, Guelph, Ontario)