

Improving safety of young and inexperienced farm workers

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John Temperley

Lyn Fragar AO

Tony Lower



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



Australian Centre for Agricultural Health & Safety

- › The Entry Level Farm Safety Program was funded by WorkCover NSW as part of the Drought Recovery Package
- › The program was designed to facilitate the movement of inexperienced workers into the NSW agriculture industry



1. Identify the health, safety, workers compensation and injury management of experienced and inexperienced NSW farm workers.
2. Refine Entry Level Farm Safety Program materials
3. Arrange and conduct pilots of the Entry Level Farm Safety Program materials across three agricultural regions in NSW
4. Incorporate feedback from pilots into a final version of the Entry Level Farm Safety Program



The Young and Inexperienced Workforce

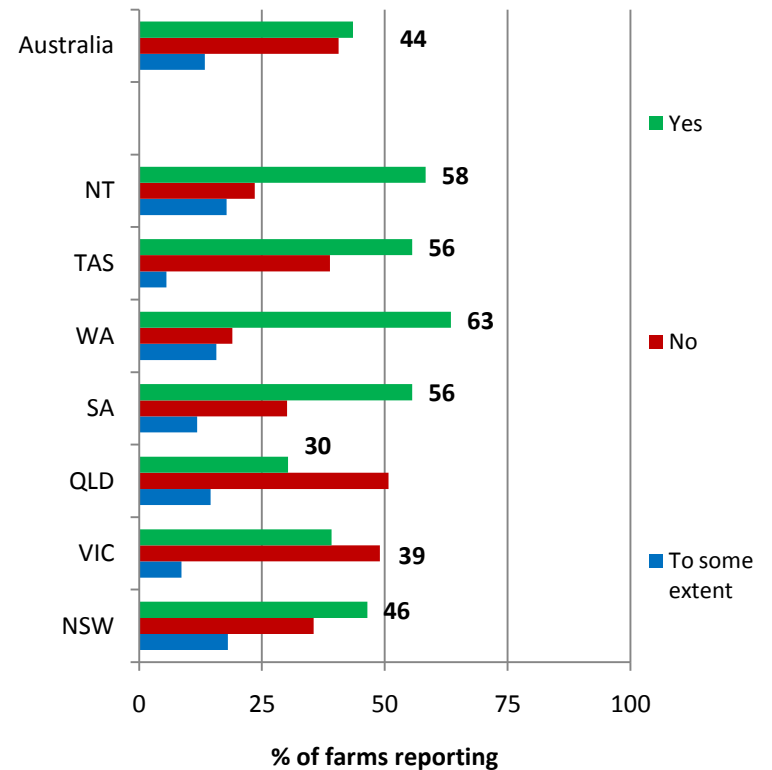
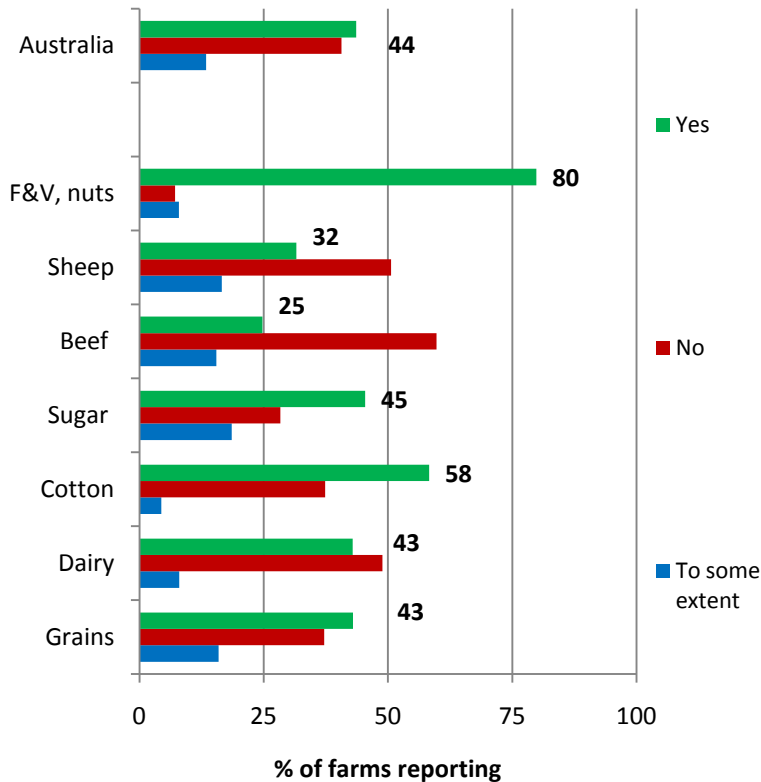
- › The 2006 ABS Census recorded that 14.3 % (n=36,303) people aged 15-29 were employed in agriculture
- › Itinerant “back-packer” workforce (Guest worker visa s457 – 000’s?)
- › Children and family workers on farms (numbers?)



1. Between 2001-2004, 15% of **on-farm deaths** were to young people aged 15-29. Major causal factors were farm vehicles (motorbikes, quad bikes and utes)
2. Over period 1999-2005, 27% of the 99 **fatal workers compensation** claims in agriculture were aged <30 years
3. Non-fatal accidental **hospitalisations in NSW** (2000-2007), 24.4% (n=2721) were aged 15-29 years. Leading causes were motorbikes / quad bikes (39%) & horses (10%)
4. During the same period, 34% of **non-fatal workers compensation** claims were < 30 years



Farm workers receive a safety induction for work on the farm (% of farms with workers):



SOURCE: Lower T, Fragar L et al. Health and Safety Baseline Survey of Australian Farm Enterprises. RIRDC (in preparation)

- › Extensive literature review
- › Framework and principles for “best practice” safety induction developed - based on construction industry (Safe Work Australia)
- › Reviewed farm safety induction resources developed under the national Farm Injury Prevention Project
- › Piloted revised materials with producers, labour hire agencies & employees



- › Why safety is important & who is responsible for safety?

- › What does the employer do about safety?

- › What is expected of workers (e.g.)
 - Be ready and fit for work
 - Clothing
 - Safety equipment provision & use
 - Watch out for children & visitors
 - What to do in an emergency



1. Farm Safety Induction - Employer Guideline
2. Farm Safety Induction - Worker Discussion Guide
3. Farm Safety Induction - Cattle Handling Discussion Guide
4. Rural Worker Safety Induction - Indigenous Worker Discussion Guide
5. Farm Safety Induction - Horticulture Discussion Guide
6. Farm Safety Induction - Sheep and Wool Discussion Guide
7. Farm Safety Induction - Grains Discussion Guide
8. Farm Safety Induction - Dairy Discussion Guide
9. Farm Safety Induction - Farm Contractors Discussion Guide

10. Pre-Start Farm Safety Induction for Entry Level Workers - Facilitators Guide



- › All resources are freely available on the Ag Health web site:
www.aghealth.org.au (under Farmer Resources)

- › Distribution networks
 - Labour hire agencies
 - Harvest Guide
 - Back-packer hostels (strategic locations)

- › Planned into the future - cotton, sugar



- › Reduction in young and inexperienced worker:
 - Fatalities
 - Serious injury
 - Compensable injury

- › Effective farm safety induction remains a huge gap in developing and ensuring safe systems of work in a farm environment

