

# How farmers can keep their kids safe while tending to the fields

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## EXTRACT

The following are some tips that farmers should be sure to make clear to their children who look to assume their role once they get older or who work on the farm during the summer.

## ARTICLE CONTENT

No matter what Canadians happen to be selling - whether its farm-fresh eggs, organic vegetables, raw milk or maple syrup straight from the tap - there's no shortage of farmers markets in Ontario and in the country at large. And while agricultural enthusiasts will likely look to provide fresh produce for their community for as long as possible, there will likely come a time in which they pass on their tractor keys and garden hoes to their children so that they can take over the farm's duties.

Before they do that, though, they should warn them that farming isn't without its safety risks. In fact, according to a recent Canadian Agricultural Injury Report, more than 66 percent of all injuries that occur on the farm are among youth. And in the instances in which there was a fatality, close to 50 percent were due to a machine rollover, such as a tractor.

With this in mind, the following are some tips that farmers should be sure to make clear to their children who look to assume their role once they get older or who work on the farm during the summer.

Perhaps the most important aspect of farming safety relates to seat belts. No matter what their age, they should be sure to wear a seat belt while riding in the tractor. But if kids are under the age of 12, it's best to have them perform some farming tasks that don't require a tractor.

Tractors aren't the only motorized devices used in fields. Rototillers and lawn mowers may be used to turn over the soil or beautify the area. These should also only be used by children when there is adult supervision, restricting their use to children at least 12 years of age.

### **Advise kids on how to handle chemicals carefully**

Though many farmers are trying to go entirely organic, that doesn't mean that they don't still use fertilizers, as there are a variety of natural ones available that are organic-certified. These can be extremely hazardous, though, when handled improperly. When kids are spreading fertilizer, ensure that they know the proper way in which to handle it and that they never touch their nose or mouth after spreading it. Ideally, gloves and protective masks should be used at all times.

While farming is a labor of love, it would be exceedingly difficult to do without manual and automatic tools. But even tools that seem harmless can cause injury after stepping on a garden rake, hoe or scythe. Safety experts encourage agriculturalists to keep their tools stored inside a shed or garage. A lock and key may be worthwhile to have as well, especially for farmers who have young, adventurous children.

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No matter how many safety protections farmers make, though, accidents are bound to happen. Farm family insurance provides the financial resources needed to address safety issues that may occur while tending to the fields or if customers are hurt by a random accident.

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