

Grain Bin Safety for Fall
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The harvest season has begun in southern Ohio. While it is a very busy season for farmers, taking additional time to follow safety practices is an important step to ensuring a safe and successful harvest season. Stress levels during harvest are always high and the hours are long. This year there are added pressures because of the commodity prices and tariffs. Remember, you are the most important part of your farming operation and take precautions to take care of yourself so you can have a safe harvest this year.

One of the easiest safety procedures is to maintain a clean environment around grain bins. While this may be a challenge depending on the design of the grain bin facility, removing excess corn cobs and wings from concrete can help prevent slick surfaces after rains. Maintaining a clean environment around grain dryers and grain bins also reduces the chance of fires.

Maintaining grain quality in storage is another way to prevent grain fires. According to Nationwide Insurance, “storage and handling of poor quality grain increases the potential for fire and thus personal injury due to exposure to smoke and heat.” Hot spots in grain are particularly dangerous for fires. Grain fire prevention can be achieved through the use of proper aeration and cooling of grain.

In 2017, there were 23 cases of grain entrapment and 12 fatalities in the United States. Between 2007 and 2016, there were 10 fatalities attributed to grain handling and storage in Ohio. These fatalities were caused by suffocation, entanglement, or being struck or falling from something, according to Rory Lewandowski an Ohio State University Extension Educator.

Safety features on the inside of grain bins can help prevent these types of on-farm fatalities. Having exit ladders and permanent safety ropes inside grain bins are key safety precautions. Always shut off the power to grain moving equipment before entering a bin. Make sure other individuals working with you are aware you are entering the grain bin and that they are able to assist you in the case of an accident. Having small groups of people working together when handling grain has been shown to improve the safety at harvest, according to South Dakota State University.

Safety should be a priority this season for everyone. Remember to keep a clean environment to prevent slick surfaces, enact safety precautions to prevent fires, and work in groups when entering a grain bin to have a successful and accident-free harvest season. For more information about grain bin safety, contact the Highland County Extension Office at 937-393-1918.

Upcoming Events:

Beef Quality Assurance Training:

- Thursday, October 25, 2018, 6:30 P.M., Producer Stockyards, Hillsboro, Ohio

Call your local Ohio State University Extension Office to register for the BQA training. The Highland County Extension Office can be reached at 937-393-1918.