

Rural Sun Safety

The sun plays an important role in farming. Imagine what would happen if the sun didn't shine during a crucial time period of crop production. Although the sun has a major impact on the productivity within the farming environment, it also holds dangers for people. A lot of farm work is done when people are exposed to the intense radiation of the sun's rays.

After repeated exposure, these dangers could include:

- Aging, drying, and wrinkling of the skin
- Skin and Lip Cancer
- Eye damage



Everyone is at risk due to sun exposure but some are more at risk than others. People with fair complexions, freckles, blonde or red hair, and blue or grey eyes are more at risk of experiencing damage due to sun exposure. Radiation from the sun is strongest between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. Sun damage doesn't take place with one exposure. It takes place over time, starts at a very young age, and is cumulative. For this reason, protection from the sun's rays needs to start at a young age.

Protection from the sun's harmful radiation rays is vital to prevent damage.

- Limit time in the sun, especially between 10 am and 4 pm. Sun damage can also take place on cloudy days.
- Wear hats with wide brims. Typical farmer's hats may not be the best option. The best hats cover most of the face, neck, and ear areas.
- Cover the body with lightweight clothing, the more coverage the better. Choose loose fitting clothing to allow air movement during hot weather. Darker clothing may offer more protection.
- Apply sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Put it on before you go outdoors and reapply as required. Make sure the lotion has not expired. It has a shelf life of not more than three years.
- Reflective rays from water can increase the sun's intensity. Reapply sunscreen often when around water.
- Wear sunglasses to filter out ultraviolet rays. Sunglasses are rated for percentage of ultraviolet rays blocked. Insist on glasses that block 99% or 100% of UV light.

Recognizing skin damage to get appropriate medical attention when needed.

- Asymmetrical moles, especially those with irregular colors, or larger than 1/4 inch.
- Elevated crusty sores that bleed and won't heal.
- Change in a mole such as itchiness or pain.
- Red, scaly, patches or lumps on the skin.
- Small, shiny, pearly bumps on the skin.



Research shows a link between sunburns in children and an increased risk of melanoma and skin cancer later in life. About 80% of skin cancer can be prevented by protecting skin from the sun's rays. Protect the next generation of farmers and ranchers by decreasing their exposure to the sun.

- Provide play areas in the shade.
- Insist on the use of sunscreen when outdoors.
- Purchase protective sunglasses that they will wear.
- Provide clothing and hats that cover the body.

Farm Safety



Just Kids