



Sign a Kid and Parent Farm Safety Contract this Canadian Ag Safety Week

Word Count: 562

Byline: Canadian Agricultural Safety Association

A contract is an essential business tool. Rental contracts, supply management agreements and production contracts are some types of formal agreements that a farmer might sign in the daily running of the farm. Even when employing a farm worker, an agreement is set up. Rate of pay, benefits, hours of work and expectations are all detailed in writing to protect both the employer and the employee. It's always a good idea for two parties to get an agreement in writing, and that holds true with parents and kids too.

Farm kids are lucky to grow up on a farm. They learn the value of hard work and gain respect and love for the land. Of course, along with all of the positives of growing up on the farm, farm kids are also exposed to hazards and risks that can put their safety and health in jeopardy. So, instead of yelling or lecturing farm kids about safety, why not work together to write down the safety rules for your farm?

A farm safety contract has all sorts of benefits. Not only does it instill the importance of safety, but it gives the child a sense of control over rules that affect them directly. Kids, just like adults, need reasons for rules. A lecture or a "because I said so" might make sense to a parent, but might not make much sense to a kid. Taking the time to explain why some areas on the farm are off limits or why there are rules around livestock can help children understand the importance of safety rules.

Sometimes it's not easy to start talking about sticky subjects, however, using a contract can open up problem-solving communication. Listening is just as important as talking when negotiating a contract. Parents may even learn something from their child just by taking the time to discuss and negotiate farm safety rules!

A contract is also very meaningful to the parties that sign it. Even to a young person, a contract is important and serious. Signing a contract with your child shows that you have respect for them and the safety rules on your farm.

Lastly, a contract teaches kids the importance of commitments and obligations. A signature on a contract means they are committed to following the rules. It is a reminder of a promise. This reminder can help them make better choices to protect their safety.

For Canadian Agricultural Safety Week, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association has developed a Kid and Parent Farm Safety Contract that can be found at agsafetyweek.ca. This contract is customizable to your farming operation. It's intended to be a way to open up the conversation about hazards and risks on your farm. You can print it out, talk about the safety rules important for your farm with your child, and sign the contract together.





Conversations are as important as tips, rules or contracts. A farm safety contract is a conversation starter, and a way for kids to bring up things they may be worried about. It also demonstrates that parents are open to talking to their kids about safety. Encouraging your child to feel ok about coming to you is always a good thing.

For more information about Keeping Kids Safe and Canadian Agricultural Safety Week, visit agsafetyweek.ca. To access the Kid and Parent Farm Safety Contract, please visit agsafetyweek.ca and click on Resources.

About Canadian Agricultural Safety Week:

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW) is a public awareness campaign focusing on the importance of farm safety. CASW takes place every year during the third week of March. In 2016, CASW takes place March 13 to 19. CASW 2016 is presented by Farm Credit Canada. For more information visit agsafetyweek.ca.

