



## Field to Field – Yield to Trains

**Byline: Canadian Agricultural Safety Association**

**Word Count: 607**

The railways that crisscross Canada are vital links from farm to table. According to CN, over 20 million tonnes of Canadian grain is moved annually with this export capacity growing yearly. Rail is essential to getting your grain to where it needs to go.

As crucial as rail is to your operation, so is being safe where field and farm yard access roads cross train tracks. These farm crossings are largely passive. That means there are no warning lights, bells, gates or signs that indicate the crossing. Farm machinery operators need to remain alert and use caution around these crossings – it could save your machinery and more importantly – you!

The following tips and reminders are great to have on hand and are easy to remember and share with everybody that uses farm crossings.

### Stop Safely at all Farm Crossings

Following a school bus, it becomes apparent that safety is of the top of mind. Children, of course, are our most precious resource and their safety is important to everyone. But did you ever wonder why school buses stop at rail crossings? It's because sometimes trains can be hard to see or even hear. By taking the time to stop, look and listen, bus drivers are safe guarding their cargo – our kids. Farm machinery operators are important too! Take the time to stop at farm crossings, just like a bus. Remember:

- Because of their size, trains appear to be much further away and travelling much slower than their actual speed.
- Stop no closer than 5 metres from the nearest rail. Allow extra distance for front-mounted buckets and chemical tanks on farm tractors.
- While stopped, look carefully in each direction for approaching trains, move your head and eyes to see around obstructions such as mirrors, windshield pillars and implements.

### Is it Safe to Go?

After stopping, take into account the conditions that could impact your machinery. Don't rush to get across, take stock of your situation first. Remember:

- Before resuming, make sure there is enough room on the other side of the train track or tracks to fully clear without stopping.
- Make sure that any towed equipment does not become unhitched while crossing.
- Watch wagons and other equipment during the crossing so that no loaded materials become dislodged and fall onto the train tracks.

### Special Circumstances





Larger fields and bigger yields equals larger machinery. Many rural roads and farm crossings were not built to accommodate these large machines. Some farm machinery is uniquely designed for fieldwork and does not transport well across farm crossings, so remember:

- Do not attempt a crossing with low-slung equipment that can become lodged on “humped” crossings.
- Before moving new farm machinery over farm crossings for the first time, make sure that heavier and wider equipment can be safely moved over the crossing.
- Do not attempt to cross with equipment other than what the crossing was designed to accommodate. Contact the railway for assistance with nonstandard equipment.

If for any reason, you get stuck on the track, get out of the equipment immediately. Check the signposts or signal housing for emergency notification information and call 911. If you frequently use a farm crossing, have the location information and railway contact/emergency numbers on hand.

And remember, field to field – yield to trains.

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 2017, CASW takes place March 12 to 18. CASW 2017 is presented by Farm Credit Canada. For more information visit [agsafetyweek.ca](http://agsafetyweek.ca).

