

Getting started – safety checklist

Every farm is different and, even though there are similarities in work practices and risks, every farm needs its own risk control solutions to achieve the best safety outcomes. Use these questions as a starting point to working out what you need to do to make your farm safer.

- Do you have an induction process for employees, contractors and visitors?
- Do you have a workplace health and safety policy and do you have procedures that are followed for all tasks?
- Do you have a consultation/communication system with employees?
- Is there an emergency response plan for the farm?
- Do you have a documented process for hazard, accident and incident reporting?
- Are there adequate amenities for people in the workplace?
- Do workers possess licences and/or certificates of competency for the plant they operate and tasks they undertake? (e.g. forklift licence, driver's licence, chemical user's certificate)
- Does all plant and equipment used in the workplace comply with regulations? (includes guarding, noise, design, maintenance and use)
- Do you have a process for managing work environment hazards including noise, dust, hot and cold conditions and sun exposure?
- Have you addressed child safety in the workplace?
- Are chemicals managed correctly – records, storage, personal protective equipment, usage, safety data sheets, signage?
- Have you displayed adequate signage in the workplace? (e.g. visitor directions, traffic movement, specific hazards, use of personal protective equipment, general warnings, confined spaces)
- Does personal protective equipment meet legal requirements – quality, comfort, storage, maintenance, usage?
- Do you have a policy/procedure which enables people working in remote and isolated locations to receive assistance in emergency situations?

You can use the information and templates on The People in Dairy to develop processes and/or documents that will help make your farm safer.

Visit www.thepeopleindairy.org.au/safetystarterkit

Suggested induction process

Be prepared and plan the first few days for new employees

The first few days on a new job can be daunting. Take the time to plan some induction activities for your new employee. Include:

- › introducing them to other staff and any important clients or suppliers
- › giving them the grand tour of your workplace, including safety and emergency procedures, to make sure they know where to find everything they'll need to do their job
- › any formal or informal training, such as operating machinery
- › giving them time to find their way around and settle in.

As an employer, you will need to allow adequate time for yourself or a supervisor/manager to ensure new employees receive appropriate induction training and support, including all aspects of a workplace health and safety induction on the farm.

Staff induction activities should be designed to provide employees with the information they need to do their job effectively, enjoyably and safely.

No employee can walk into a new job and be fully effective from the first day - effectiveness grows with understanding of the farm and the details of its operation. Employees perform better, and are more likely to stay in the job longer, when they are clear about what is expected of them from the beginning. It is important to ensure that every employee receives appropriate induction training.

Step 1: Arrange a time with your new employee for an induction to the basics before you put them to work

The use of an induction program checklist ensures that all necessary areas are covered. Use the checklist to have everything in place before you meet with your employee and to schedule the various components, including booking time with other staff involved (e.g. the bookkeeper regarding paperwork) and various subcontractors.

Step 2: Meet and show your new employee around the farm

Induction continues until the probationary period is finished. Ask the new employee to sign the checklist after the induction program, and preferably before they start work, you will then have an acknowledgement that the employee has been shown the basics of the position.

Throughout the induction period:

- › explain the farm policies and systems you use to manage farm safety and incidents that may occur on your farm such as accidents, injuries, emergencies or discrimination;
- › identify any training required;
- › allow your new staff member to ask questions, particularly if they don't fully understand something. Stress that no question is a dumb one. As an employer, you have a responsibility to be supportive
- › be supportive rather than just 'ticking the box' on induction

Advice and templates regarding standard operating procedures and policies are available to help you develop your farm procedures and policies and keep necessary records of any incidents.

Visit www.thepeopleindairy.org.au/farm-policies-systems/farm-standard-operating-procedures.htm

Please note: The Farm Safety Starter Kit complements the Employment Starter Kit initiative (ESKI) which contains more information regarding induction.

Visit www.thepeopleindairy.org.au/eski for more information.

Induction checklist

Employee's name:

Area	Action to be taken	Date	Initial
Introduction to the farm business	History of the business		
	Goals of the business		
	Culture and values (code of conduct)		
	The team (organisational chart)		
	The farm map		
	Other:		
Terms and conditions of employment	Position description		
	Probationary period		
	Hours of work		
	Leave		
	Pay amount, method, frequency		
	House set up – power and phone		
	Training needs, plan		
Other:			
Paperwork	Contract or Letter of engagement - signed and copy for both parties		
	Tax declaration		
	Superannuation		
	Employee details form		
	Proof of qualifications, work permit (if not Australian), driver's licence, other licences such as chemical users certificate, first aid, forklift licence		
	Bank account details		
	Reimbursements		
	Other:		

Induction checklist

Employee's name:

Area	Action to be taken	Date	Initial
Rosters, applying for leave	When rosters are available		
	Time recording		
	Reporting absences		
	How to apply for time off		
	Other:		
Company policies	Work clothing		
	Personal health and hygiene		
	Drug and alcohol policy		
	Anti-discrimination and harassment policy		
	Sexual harassment policy		
	Return to work policy		
	Disciplinary and grievance procedures, conflict management		
	Policy for when visitors/contractors are on the farm		
	Privacy		
	Personal visits, telephone calls etc.		
	Other:		
Work Health and Safety procedures	Personal protective equipment issued		
	Manual handling		
	Electrical safety		
	Chemical safety		
	Workshop safety		
	Cattle handling		
	Working on your own communications		
	Hazard, injury and accident procedures and reporting		
	Other:		

Induction checklist

Employee's name:

Area	Action to be taken	Date	Initial
Emergency procedures	Who to contact in emergency		
	Trained first-aiders		
	First aid stations / kits		
	Fire safety equipment		
	Emergency assembly points		
	Evacuation procedure		
	Other:		
Operating machinery	Milking machinery		
	Quad bike, motor bike		
	Chainsaw		
	Tractors and attachments		
	Other:		
Farm tour and general information	Dairy		
	Toilets and facilities		
	General tour, identification of hazards		
	Telephone answering and messages		
	Computer systems		
	Where manuals are located		
	Other:		
Introductions	Staff (their roles, responsibilities)		
	Supervisors		
	Owners, management		
	Other people living on the farm		
	Contractors, suppliers, vet		
	Neighbours		
	Local organisations, clubs		
	Other:		

Induction checklist

Employee's name:

Area	Action to be taken	Date	Initial
Introduction to the specific job tasks	Arrangements for walk through each element of job		
	'Buddy'		

Other comments:

Induction conducted by (name):

Date of induction:

Employee's signature:

Records of injuries and incidents

Keep the records required by law, and build your safety culture by:

- › ensuring that all work-related injuries, accidents and incidents are recorded
- › reporting Notifiable Incidents to your state workplace safety authority immediately
- › investigating all injuries, accidents and incidents, and recording the findings and the follow-up
- › encouraging everyone to report any hazards they see.

You must retain details of all injury and incident records for at least 5 years.

You may think that the less you hear about incidents or near misses, the better. But reports of hazards or near misses should be welcomed and encouraged – they enable you to take corrective action where necessary and reduce the likelihood of future problems.

Work Related Injury

If a work-related injury (minor or major) does occur, the injured person must:

- › Report the injury or illness to their supervisor or employer as soon as possible;
- › Enter the details in the injury and incident register or have another person complete the register; and
- › Obtain a Workcover medical certificate from the treating doctor, where the injury requires such treatment, and give the certificate to the employer.

To set up a register of injuries, accidents and incidents you don't need an elaborate system – it could just be a folder in the workshop or lunchroom – as long as everyone knows where the records are and how and when to fill them in.

There are templates you can use in the Farm Safety Manual at www.thepeopleindairy.org.au.

Notifiable Incidents

Your state workplace safety authority must be notified immediately of incidents that result in death, serious injury or impose a serious risk to health.

The incident scene must be undisturbed, apart from providing assistance to injured persons or to prevent further risk to anyone's health and safety, until you are instructed by a workplace safety authority officer.

Tip



To notify the workplace safety authority in your state, phone:

Victoria	13 23 60
NSW	13 10 50
TAS	1300 366 322
QLD	1300 362 128
SA	1800 777 209
WA	1800 678 198

By law

Work Health and Safety Regulations require that a person conducting a business or undertaking must manage risks to health and safety relating to hazards in the workplace. They must:



- › identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to the risk
- › eliminate the risk so far as is reasonably practicable
- › if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk – minimise the risk so far as is reasonably practicable by implementing control measures in accordance with the hierarchy of control
- › maintain the implemented control measure so that it remains effective
- › review, and if necessary revise, risk control measures to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a work environment that is without risks to health and safety
- › consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers who are (or are likely to be) affected by the hazard.

By law, you are responsible for all the people who work or come onto your farm, including all permanent and casual staff, contractors and visitors.

Hierarchy of control

To decide the best or most practical way to reduce the risk of injury by an identified hazard, use the **'hierarchy of control'**, to rank the control measures from the highest level of protection to the lowest.

Firstly, try to eliminate the hazard, or if that is not possible, use a safer substitute. If this again is not practicable, consider isolation-engineering control. Next in the hierarchy is an administrative control such as a safe working procedure, often supported with training. Finally, last in the hierarchy is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

To step through the hierarchy of control:

- › **Eliminate the hazard**
(e.g. stop using a particular chemical)
- › **Substitute the hazard with a safer option**
(e.g. use a safer chemical)
- › **Use engineering and/or isolation**
(e.g. apply the chemical using a closed system where it is not handled)
- › **Set up administrative controls such as safe operation and training**
(e.g. have a procedure to be followed when handling the chemical)
- › **Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
(e.g. wear gloves and face shields).
Note: PPE only protects the person wearing it.

Many control measures involve a combination of these steps.

Roles and responsibilities

The person conducting a business or undertaking has a primary duty of care to, as far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health and safety of workers and others who may be affected by the work.

Workers also have responsibilities to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the safety of others, and to comply and cooperate with relevant instructions.

For workers: When you are at work, you have the responsibility to take reasonable care for your own health and safety and the safety of others who might be affected by your actions. As examples, you should not take short cuts when doing your job that might put yourself or someone else at risk, or play practical jokes that could hurt someone.

You must co-operate with your employer when they are taking action to improve health and safety or to meet their legal obligations. You must follow safety policies and procedures, attend Work Health and Safety training, follow the advice you've been given, and use safety equipment supplied by your employer. As an example, you must as far as you are reasonably able, wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as helmets, in accordance with the information, training and instruction you have received.

Everyone needs to be involved to build a great safety culture on the farm.