

- ❖ Ensure use of appropriate personal protective equipment especially when spraying pesticides
- ❖ Always read and follow mixing and safety instructions supplied on pesticides and other chemicals labels - Seek immediate treatment in cases of poisoning
- ❖ Ensure moving machinery parts are adequately guarded - always stop machinery before cleaning or servicing
- ❖ Use safety procedures for working with chainsaws and other equipment
- ❖ Adequate washing and sanitary facilities
- ❖ Avoid working in the midday sun; resume work when it is cooler
- ❖ Stay hydrated
- ❖ Learn first aid and ensure first aid boxes are available



**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

WORKING IN THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY



*FACTS ON THE HEALTH
AND SAFETY RISKS*

1. INTRODUCTION

- The agriculture industry is a diverse industry which involves various tasks ranging from planting, cultivating, harvesting and storing agricultural products to farm machine operation and weed and pest control

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY HAZARDS

❖ Physical Hazards

- Heat stress and heat exhaustion is common especially during the hot season
- Exposure to noise from tractors, farm machinery-loud noise can cause hearing loss which is permanent and has no cure
- Sun exposure can lead to sunburn and skin cancer
- Inorganic dusts exposure can lead to respiratory irritation

❖ Biological hazards

- Bronchitis, asthma and eye irritation due to organic respirable dusts
- Animal bites e.g. snakes, bees, leeches
- Exposure to bird or rodent droppings-histoplasmosis, psittacosis

❖ Chemical Hazards

- Pesticide exposure can lead to:
 - Acute poisoning - dizziness, salivation, loss of consciousness
 - Chronic poisoning - nervous system, liver and kidney disorders
 - Skin problems
 - Eye irritation
 - Respiratory irritation e.g. difficulty in breathing

➤ Allergic reaction to plants

❖ Ergonomic Hazards

- Exposure to vibration when driving tractors or using hand powered tools or other equipments e.g. chainsaws
- Upper limb disorders, neck-shoulder disorders and back problems from bad working postures, repetitive movements, carrying heavy loads and forceful exertion
- Musculoskeletal injuries e.g. hitting hidden rock with a shovel

❖ Psychosocial Hazards

- Long hours
- Fast paced work especially during planting and harvesting
- Working alone

➤ Stress ❖ Safety Hazards

➤ Risk of injury due to:

- Slips and trips especially during rainy season or when climbing up or down tractors
- Crush injuries or amputation of limbs from entanglement in moving machine parts
- Fall from height e.g. when harvesting fruits
- Slips and trips
- Electrical shocks
- Cuts and lacerations
- Burns from heated surfaces or materials e.g. exhaust pipes

➤ Traffic accidents when driving slow vehicles on public roads

3. PREVENTION AND CONTROL

❖ Acquire sufficient skills and training to carry out tasks

❖ Ergonomics

- ✓ Proper manual handling and correct lifting techniques
- ✓ Avoid awkward postures and repetitive manual tasks
- ✓ Take frequent breaks