



What is a plan and why should you have one?

A proactive safety plan is essential when working with fodder. By assessing potential hazards ahead of time you can ensure everyone stays safe on farm.

A plan should cover all aspects of hay handling. From the cutting and baling, right up to the stacking and storage of it.

By staying prepared, you can create a safer working environment for everyone involved.

What key areas should be included?

Begin building your plan by assessing every area of your operations. Particularly high risk areas where machinery is typically involved. We'll be covering the following areas in our safety brief:

- Machinery and equipment maintenance
- Transportation of hay
- Loading, unloading and stacking
- Policies, procedures and guidelines
- Emergency management plan
- Storage of hay

How should it look?

A safety plan should be concise and straightforward enough for everyone on your farm to understand.

It could include pre-start checklists, where to access policies and procedures and who to contact in an emergency.

The document needs to be easily accessible for workers. A digital PDF would be the perfect idea for areas with limited or poor connectivity. Workers' and contractors' can save the document to their phones for reference.

How does it become a lived document?

Now that you have a safety plan, use it. Don't throw it to the side thinking it's done and dusted. Safety isn't an add-on, it's part of everyday life and will need to be put into practice.

And while whipping up a safety plan is proactive it doesn't mean everyone is going to follow it. Especially if you don't walk the talk yourself. Communicate with your family, workers, visitors and children on the importance of following the safety plan. Refer to any feedback given and review the plan regularly to keep it updated.

Plan to...

Regularly Maintain Machinery and Equipment

Working with machinery during hay season involves well-known risks. Regular maintenance, repairs, and up-to-date certifications are essential for a safe working environment.

- ❑ Identify what machinery should take priority when scheduling maintenance to reduce downtime.
- ❑ Create checklists for each piece of machinery and equipment.
- ❑ Schedule maintenance in advance. Take note of your manufacturer's recommendations.
- ❑ Ensure your team is aware of requirements when it comes to your machinery. Schedule any additional training accordingly.



Safely Transport your Load

Use the correct machinery to move and transport hay. Ensure trucks and trailers are maintained and in good condition for the job ahead.

- ❑ Create a traffic management plan - mark down speed limits, traffic flow and any powerlines or hazards.
- ❑ Have your load lashed/strapped appropriately. Each stack will need securing.
- ❑ Pre-organise a 'Spotter' to assist the operator. Ensure they're aware of the requirements and stay in vision of the operator.
- ❑ Restrict loading zone access to essential workers.
- ❑ Identify an exclusion zone where loading, unloading and stacking.

Safely Load, Unload and Stack

Falling or collapsing hay bales can cause significant crush injuries or death. Large square or round bales can weigh more than 650 kilograms. To minimise risk:

- ❑ Ensure hay is only stacked to a safe height. The ratio should be 1.5 times the minimum dimension of the ground level stack - if the haystack is 10m wide by 20m long, hay should only be stacked to 15m.
- ❑ Know proper hay stacking techniques to prevent leaning.
- ❑ Determine what equipment will be used (such as telehandlers).
- ❑ Create stacks on clear flat surfaces, not on slopes or uneven ground.



Keep People Safe

Keeping workers and contractors safe is crucial. Having clear guidelines, updated policies and procedures can help mitigate risks.

- Review and update your policies and procedures. Send updates to workers.
- Ensure all workers and contractors complete a recent induction before working on farm.
- Provide ongoing training and ensure the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Implement fatigue management strategies and promote safe manual handling practices to avoid injury.



Be Prepared in an Emergency

In an emergency, having a plan in place can be the difference between life and death. Make sure everyone is well-prepared and know what to do.

- Regularly check fire extinguishers and have them easily accessible. Keep one in the tractor cab.
- Keep fully stocked first aid kits on hand. Communicate where they're located and review expiration dates.
- Ensure workers have first aid training.
- Make sure all workers and contractors are familiar with your emergency plan and know their roles in an emergency.



Store your Product Safely

Complacency is the biggest risk when it comes to hay. From spontaneous combustion fires to falling bales, hay has a unique ability to cause harm if stacked and stored incorrectly.

- Bale at the correct moisture density. Test regularly for rising temperatures to minimise the risk of fire.
- Ensure proper ventilation in storage areas to prevent heat buildup.
- Clear rubbish and flammable materials to prevent pest infestations, combustion and bushfire risks.
- Educate children on the dangers of hay and restrict them from playing in or around haystacks.



PLAN TO BE SAFE AROUND HAY

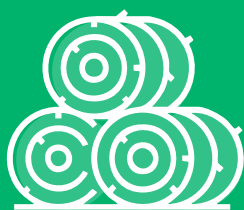


Machinery and Equipment

- ✓ **Maintain equipment:** Ensure all machinery is well-maintained and maintenance records are kept up to date.
- ✓ **Conduct regular inspections:** Perform regular checks to identify potential issues.
- ✓ **Use the right equipment:** Always use the appropriate equipment for each task.
- ✓ **Provide adequate training:** Provide proper training as machinery can vary between farms.
- ✓ **Traffic management:** Update your traffic management plan and keep children away from high-risk areas.

Manage People

- ✓ **Update policies:** Regularly review and update your policies and procedures.
- ✓ **Set expectations:** Clearly communicate guidelines and expectations to all workers.
- ✓ **Inductions:** Ensure all workers and contractors have completed a recent induction.
- ✓ **Training & PPE:** Provide ongoing training and ensure the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- ✓ **Fatigue & manual handling:** Implement fatigue management strategies and promote safe manual handling practices to avoid injury.



Safe Stacking and Storage

- ✓ **Stack securely:** Ensure bales are stacked securely, and avoid stacking too high—be aware of load limits.
- ✓ **Moisture control:** Regularly monitor moisture levels to reduce the risk of combustion.
- ✓ **Fire safety:** Take steps to minimize fire hazards.
- ✓ **Ventilation:** Ensure proper ventilation in storage areas to prevent heat buildup.

Fire Control and Emergency Preparedness

- ✓ **Fire extinguishers:** Ensure fire extinguishers are easily accessible and regularly checked.
- ✓ **First aid kits:** Keep fully stocked first aid kits on hand.
- ✓ **Emergency plan:** Make sure all workers and contractors are familiar with your emergency plan and know their roles in an emergency.

