

# Grower *Health & Safety* Training Program

*Materials provided by:*  
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*Sponsored by:*



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# **Potato Grower Safety Workshops (Agricultural Operations)**

## **Workshop A: Train the Trainer Safety Training for Management and Supervisors**

### 1. Introduction

- a. What is a safety program and why it is important
- b. The importance of creating a “safety culture” within the business.

### 2. Accident Prevention program-the foundation of the safety program.

- a. Participants will be in a ‘learner role’ for all of the required elements of an Accident Prevention Program. For the agricultural workshops the following topics are included:

- i. Safety and health policy
- ii. Initial safety orientation
- iii. Reporting injuries and illnesses
- iv. Reporting unsafe practices and working conditions
- v. What to do in case of an emergency (*Written Emergency Action Plan*)
- vi. Personal protective equipment (*Respiratory Protection Program*)
- vii. Hazardous chemical safety (*Written Hazard Communication Program*)
- viii. On the job training about specific assigned tasks and equipment.  
Example: Tractor safety training
- ix. Walk-around safety inspection
- x. Foreman crew safety meetings
- xi. Safety bulleting board
- xii. First aid
- xiii. Heat Related Illness (*Written Heat Related Illness program*)

- b. Participant development of an Accident Prevention Program for their own operation.
  - i. Participants will be “walked through” development of a model APP for their own operation.
  
- c. Participants will also be involved in a “train the trainer” session for topics in the following three areas:
  - i. Basic Employee Orientation
    - 1. Basic (non-handler) Pesticide Safety Orientation
      - a. Worker Right-To-Know
      - b. Chemical Hazard Communication
  
  - ii. Monthly Walk-Around Inspection with an emphasis on active aspects of potato business for each month
  
  - iii. Foreman-Crew Safety Meetings
    - 1. Designing and implementing a Safety Meeting
    - 2. Several topics will be available for participations to choose from for “training” later in the day:
      - a. Machine guarding-belts, conveyors, chains, hydraulics and other equipment
  
      - b. Lockout/tagout program for potato sheds during piling and load-out
  
      - c. Tractor and moving equipment safety during field operations
  
      - d. Lifting safety
  
      - e. Ventilation and material handling hazards in the shed

## **Workshop B: Employees and Supervisors**

### Interactive Teaching and Learning

1. Participants from Workshop A will have the opportunity to practice/implement their training skills with group activities in the afternoon Workshop.
2. This workshop will be conducted with simultaneous interpretation and involve managers, supervisors, and employees. So often not all of three categories of personnel are aware of what the other is learning (or not learning) about a given topic; this format for the workshop is designed to not only overcome that situation but also to enhance on-going implementation of worker health and safety practices at the farm and in the plant/shed.
3. Employees will be trained in the following topics:
  - a. Basic Safety Orientation
  - b. Basic pesticide safety for non-handlers including Worker Right-to-Know (i.e. Chemical Hazard Communication)
  - c. Special equipment-specific topics to be selected by the trainers in the morning that are appropriate for the equipment used a) on the farm or b) in the shed/processing facility

## Safety and Health Regulatory Compliance for the Commercial Agricultural Employer

Presented by

Mike Gempler, Washington Growers League

For the

Washington State Potato Commission

### **Introduction:**

Good Morning. My name is Mike Gempler and I am the Executive Director of the Washington Growers League. The Growers League helps growers with labor and employment issues. That includes issues like wage and payroll, hiring and firing, employment rights, discrimination, immigration, housing, recruiting, and the issue we are here to talk about today, workplace safety and health. Most people think that safety and health is a very simple matter, but there is really a lot to it. Today I want to introduce you to the major areas of workplace safety and health so that you can be in compliance and run a good safety program at your workplace.

### **Section I: Creating a culture of safety**

- **Know the big picture**

It is important to know everything that you have to do to comply with all of the safety and health regulations. Why, because you will never be able to do it all. You will have to make a good faith effort to do the best you can. You need to create a system; a safety and health program for your business. In this program you will need to have an overall plan and structure for training and information, recordkeeping, equipment and worksite inspections, equipment purchases and reporting.

- **Systemic vs. technical violations**

Because you can't do a perfect job of complying with all of the thousands of specific requirements, you will need to create a system to comply to the best of your ability. Believe me, if a L&I inspector visits your business and finds that you have no plan for complying with the regulations, he or she will be a lot more upset than if they find you are out of compliance with a technical detail. The point is, don't become so overwhelmed by all of the requirements that you do nothing. Instead, start putting together a plan. The government agent will be impressed that you made an organized attempt to comply. If you have no plan to comply, the government agent will be very unimpressed and will be much more likely to cite you for technical violations. If the government agent sees that you have a written accident prevention plan, a notebook with the required written programs, minutes of safety meetings, records of walk-around inspections and written training programs and materials, he or she will usually decide that you are making a good faith effort to comply, and technical violations will be much more likely to be let go.

- **Attitude counts**

The way you talk about safety to employees at the farm will determine how seriously they regard safety and how well they follow your safety rules. This is the culture that you create at your farm, and it will directly affect your business's safety record. Tell your employees at the beginning of employment that safety and following safety rules is important to you. Have safety posters and messages prominently displayed. Follow up on complaints about unsafe situations in the workplace; if you don't, you will lose credibility. Take employee suggestions about how to improve safety seriously. You want to have all employees, including other supervisors and managers on your side.

## **Section II: What is covered in the safety regulations?**

The state of Washington writes and enforces all of the safety regulations we must follow. The state has an agreement with the federal government to do almost all of this, so there are generally no separate federal government safety regulations that must be followed - it is all covered at the state level by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries.

### **What are the employer's responsibilities under the safety regulations?**

The employer must:

- Provide a safe and healthful working environment.
- Ensure that employees do not use defective or unsafe tools and equipment, including tools and equipment that may be furnished by the employee.
- Implement a written accident prevention program as required by these standards.
- Implement a hazard communication program.
- Establish a system for reporting and recording accidents on the OSHA 300 log.
- Provide safety education and training programs.
- Ensure the safety of employees who are exposed to confined spaces in the workplace.
- Control chemicals used in the workplace.
- Control chemical agents in a manner that they will not present a hazard to your workers.
- Protect workers from the hazard of contact with, or exposure to, chemical agents.

## **What are the employee's responsibilities?**

- Employees must cooperate with you and other employees in efforts to eliminate accidents.
- Employees must be informed of and observe all safe practices.
- Employees must notify you of unsafe conditions of equipment or workplaces.
- Employees must use all required safety devices and protective equipment.
- Employees must not willfully damage personal protective equipment.
- Each employee must promptly report any job-related injury or illness to his or her immediate supervisor, regardless of the degree of severity.
- Employees must not engage in any activity unrelated to work that may cause injury to other employees during the course of performing work assignments.
- Employees must attend any required training and/or orientation programs designed to increase their competency in occupational safety and health.
- Employees must not report to work under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances. Alcohol or controlled substances must not be brought to the worksite.

### **What topics are covered in the safety and health regulations?**

The safety regulations are huge. Included in the state safety regulations are specific regulations on noise limits; respiratory safety; chemical hazards; fork lifts; welding; electrical; machinery; sanitation; machinery and equipment guarding and safety; ladders; hand tools and sanitation. It is very difficult to know all of the regulations and very difficult to be in compliance with all of them. Managers and supervisors in charge of safety need to have a reference they can use to be familiar with the safety regulations. The Washington Growers League has books to help, and there are resources on the Internet. Inspectors can and will inspect for all of these regulations. Today we won't deal with all of these regulations, but just some of the fundamentals to help you run a safety program in the business where you work.

### **Section III: Communication and training**

Employers, supervisors and managers who represent employers, are required to clearly communicate a variety of safety information to employees. Points that must be communicated to employees include: a description of the employer's overall safety program, including who is in charge; basic safety rules for the business; who to contact and what to do in case of an emergency; who to contact and what to do in the event of an injury or accident; workplace hazards that the employee may encounter; the presence of hazardous chemicals and how to identify them and avoid them; how to safely perform the job to which they are assigned or operate the equipment they will be using; and the use and care of any personal protective equipment that they may be required to wear. We will review these in detail today and have you give a basic orientation to employees this afternoon. Your business will benefit greatly from clear communication of safety issues to your employees. Employees will avoid risky

behavior; tell supervisors about dangerous conditions on the farm, and most importantly, employees will have a clear understanding of the expectations that supervisors and management have for them. Overall, clear communication will result in less confusion and less risk that your business will face alleged safety violations.

#### **Section IV: Documentation and Recordkeeping**

Written safety plans and records of your safety activities are the foundation for compliance with the law. I cannot overstate the value of having complete written plans and records because this is the documentation that government inspectors look for to see if you are in compliance. You need to make a list of all required written plans and records and make sure that you have them at your business, and that they are organized and up-to-date. Good recordkeeping and documentation usually reflects good safety practices. Bad recordkeeping and documentation, or the lack of it is a red flag to inspectors. I can tell you this: if your written plans and records are not in order, it gives government inspectors a reason to dig deeper and look for other violations.

Employers are required to keep records of safety training, safety meetings, safety walk-around inspections, pesticides stored and pesticides used. The records should be kept in notebooks that are accessible to employees during business hours. In fact, some of these records must be accessible to employees at all times they are at the workplace, and it is required by law to inform employees about where these records and plans are.

## **Section V: Written plans**

Employers are required to have written plans on file for certain safety programs. These programs must be well thought out, and are not something that you can put together without some discussion about basic issues like “who, what, and where.” The owners, managers and supervisors should all be involved in developing these programs.

The most basic required written safety program is the “Accident Prevention Program.” This program details who is in charge of safety in your business, and lays out the entire safety program for your business. The first step you take in developing a safety program for your business should be to write your Accident Prevention Program. If you have a well thought out and complete Accident Prevention Program, and you can hand a copy to a government inspector when he or she arrives at your business, you stand a chance of having a successful result to your inspection. If you don’t, you will probably get a fine, and the inspector will start to look for other violations.

## **Section VI: Accident Prevention Program**

- **What is in an Accident Prevention Program?**

You must tailor your own Accident Prevention Program to your actual business operations and the potential hazards that may be encountered by your employees. The Accident Prevention program has these basic parts:

- 1. A description of the accident prevention program:**

## **2. Safety Orientation:**

Each employee must be given a safety orientation when first hired. The employee safety orientation must cover the following:

## **3. How and when to report injuries.**

- Where first aid facilities are located.
- Inform employees which supervisors have first-aid/CPR training.
- Inform employees where emergency phone numbers are posted.

### **How should an accident or injury be reported and managed?**

The first thing to do when an accident occurs is to make sure that the injured employee receives appropriate medical attention. The employer is responsible for providing first-aid if necessary and transporting the employee to a medical facility if needed (and if the injury does not require an ambulance.) After treatment has been secured, you may be required to report the accident to L&I.

Employers must orally report to the nearest L&I office within eight (8) hours any accident that causes a fatal or possibly fatal injury, any accident that requires hospitalization overnight, or any acute illness or injury from pesticides. If you don't learn of the accident at the time it occurs, you must report it within eight (8) hours of the time you learn about it. In the event of a serious accident where hospitalization or death occurs, equipment involved in the accident should not be moved until after L&I has completed an investigation, unless you have to move the equipment to remove the victim or prevent further injuries. If an employer had no more than 10 employees at any one time in the

previous year, it is only necessary to report fatalities, accidents requiring hospitalization and accidents with acute injury from pesticides.

All other injuries are considered minor injuries and reporting of these injuries is done automatically when an employee seeks treatment and fills out a *WISHA Report of Industrial Injury or Occupational Disease*. Remember to train all employees to immediately report all accidents, no matter how minor, to their supervisors. After an accident is treated and reported, there are several steps that should be taken by the employer. If possible, have the employee complete a Report of Accident form. Then it may be appropriate for the employer to investigate the accident by collecting statements examining equipment and reviewing documentation such as equipment maintenance logs.

**4. How to report unsafe conditions and practices.**

**5. What to do in an emergency including how to exit the workplace.**

- *Written Emergency Action Plan*

**6. Use and care of required personal protective equipment (PPE).**

- Some tasks require an employee to wear PPE to protect against injury.
- Tell employees that they will be instructed by a supervisor using the manufacturer's instructions that are attached to this program how to use and care for the PPE.
- *Written Respirator Protection Program*

## **7. Identification of hazardous chemicals used at this location.**

Employees must receive a separate orientation as part of the chemical hazard communication program on the hazards of these chemicals before they work with them or work in an area where they are used.

- *Written Chemical Hazard Communication Program*

## **8. On-the-job training about what you need to know to perform the job safely.**

- Tell employees that before they are first assigned a task, a supervisor will show them what to do, along with safety instructions and required PPE.
- Inform employees that the business has established safety rules and personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements based upon a hazard assessment for each task.
- Inform employee that they must not use equipment or attempt to do any of these tasks until they have received the required training and PPE.
- Example: Forklift Safety Training

## **9. Monthly walk-around Safety Inspection**

At least once a month, a walk-around safety inspection must be done for all active sites, the materials and equipment involved and operating procedures. A representative chosen by employees must be invited and allowed to accompany you.

- *Monthly safety inspection record form*

## **10. Safety Committee or Foreman-Crew Safety Meetings**

Employers are required to hold elections for a safety committee, or if they have 10 or fewer employees, to hold regular safety meetings between supervisors and crew members. These safety meetings must be held at least monthly or whenever there are significant changes in job assignments. These meetings must be tailored to the particular operation or activity occurring at the time. Employers must keep minutes of the meetings, which should document subjects discussed and attendance. The Accident Prevention Plan should detail the following:

- Where and when the employee safety meetings are typically held.
- All employees are required to attend.
- The location where copies of the minutes of each foreman-crew safety meeting are stored. The location must be one where the majority of employees report to work each day. You must retain minutes of foreman-crew safety meetings for one year and be able to show us copies if we ask to see them.

## **11. Safety bulletin board**

You must provide a bulletin board or posting area large enough to display the required safety and health poster, “Job Safety and Health Protection”, and other safety education material. The bulletin board must be readily visible in a place where employees gather during some part of the work day, for example, at the entrance to a parking area, or building. Posting must be in a language that the employees can understand.

If for any reason any employee is unable to read the notices posted on the bulletin board, you must ensure that the message of the required poster explaining employee rights is communicated to the employee in terms he or she understands.

## **12. First-Aid**

## **13. Outdoor Heat Exposure**

Your business needs to commit to safety. Create a system for compliance and do the best you can to follow your system. If you don't have a system or a plan for compliance with the safety regulations, it will be confusing and you will be at greater risk for getting fined by state agencies. But the real goal here is to have a system that is easy to follow and that helps keep everybody who works in your business safe and healthy.