
AGRICULTURAL SAFETY TOPICS

HARVESTING EQUIPMENT WITH CUTTERBARS

Objective:

To be able to safely work with and unplug cutterbar-equipped farm machinery.

Background:

Cutterbar-equipped harvesting equipment includes sickle cutterbars, rotary disk cutterbars and field combines. The operator should be familiar with the mechanisms and the safety precautions to follow when using harvesting equipment.

When working with a cutterbar:

- Keep hands and feet away from the cutterbar when the machine is running. Shut off the power before unplugging, servicing, or transporting the machine.
- Stand clear of mowers with rotating disks that can throw objects causing serious injury. Do not operate when bystanders are nearby.
- Use the mower safety curtain or cover when operating the cutterbar. Safety curtains prevent objects from being thrown by the rotating disks.
- Tractors with cabs offer additional protection from thrown objects.
- Keep knives and hardware in good condition, thus preventing knives from being thrown from the machine. Consult operator's manual for directions.

To safely unplug the cutterbar or remove trash, follow these steps:

- Stop and disengage the power take off (PTO).
- Raise the cutterbar and back up.
- Shut off the engine and with the parking brake engaged shift the transmission into park or neutral.
- Pull the plugged crop in the knives away from the cutterbar.
- Check the cutterbar for broken or damaged components.

AGRICULTURAL SAFETY TOPICS – HARVESTING EQUIPMENT WITH CUTTERBARS

- Return safety curtain or cover to their proper operating position.
- Start the engine and engage the PTO at low speed then increase it to rated speed.

Cutterbar knives and rotating disks can severely injure people or animals. Crop residue, rocks, or other debris that are thrown by rotating disks and knives, can cause serious injury to the operator or bystanders. Follow all safety precautions.

Review the Following Points:

- Always disengage the PTO before attempting to service any cutterbar.
- Use and maintain all machine shields and covers.
- When pulling crops out of cutterbars, pull away from the cutterbar knives.

Based upon: Ohio State University Extension. *Cutterbar*. Retrieved from website <http://ohioline.osu.edu/atts/modules.html>

© Workplace Safety & Prevention Services 2014. Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS) grants permission to approved end users to reproduce this document in whole or in part, provided its intended use is for non-commercial, educational purposes and that full acknowledgement is given to the WSPS. Approved end users are firms registered with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. WSPS reserves the right to extend this permission to other stakeholders and interested parties by express written permission upon application. WSPS extends no warranty to materials amended or altered by the end user. Under no circumstances is this document, or any portion thereof, to be duplicated for purposes of sale or for external reproduction or distribution.

(Sample WSPS acknowledgement, “Reproduced or adapted from name of solution with permission of Workplace Safety & Prevention Services, Mississauga, Ontario.”)

The information contained in this reference material is distributed as a guide only. It is generally current to the best of our knowledge as at the revision date, having been compiled from sources believed to be reliable and to represent the best current opinion on the subject. No warranty, guarantee, or representation is made by WSPS as to the absolute correctness or sufficiency of any representation contained in this reference material. WSPS assumes no responsibility in connection therewith; nor can it be assumed that all acceptable safety measures are contained in this reference material, or that other or additional measures may not be required in particular or exceptional conditions or circumstances.

Revised: November 2014