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## AGRICULTURAL SAFETY TOPICS

### PREVENTING FALLS

#### Objective:

To be able to recognize hazards and be able to prevent falls.

#### Background:

##### Housekeeping

- Clean up spills immediately. Dry floors prevent slipping.
- Use absorbent material to reduce slipping.
- Keep floors clear of debris and objects that cause slips and trips.
- Repair worn or damaged flooring that poses tripping hazards.

##### Floor Openings

Floor openings should be guarded by a standard fixed railing on all exposed sides. Consider using a sturdy hinged floor opening cover with removable standard railings on all exposed sides in high traffic areas.

##### Ladders

- Use an **approved ladder** (usually consisting of two side rails joined by regularly spaced crosspieces called steps, rungs, or cleats, allowing for up and down movement).
- Never overextend the body.
- Place the bottom of the ladder 1/4 of its vertical height from the building.
- The top of the ladder should be 90 cm (36 inches) higher than the level at which the employee is working.
- Keep metal ladders away from electrical wires.

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### Scaffolding

Scaffolds are temporary, elevated platforms used for supporting workers and/or materials. It is recommended that scaffolds have guardrails and toe boards. Guardrails are a barrier secured to uprights and erected along the exposed sides and ends of platforms to prevent falls.

### Stairs

- Walk; don't run, when using stairways.
- Use hand rails. Open, exposed stairs should have a railing. It is recommended that handrails be provided on at least one side of closed stairways preferably on the right side descending.
- Uncluttered stairways with good tread are safest.

### General tips to prevent falls:

- You are more likely to slip when rushed, so do not run.
- Avoid rapid changes of direction.
- Keep floors in good repair.
- Wear shoes with pliable soles and low heels.
- Close open drawers, cabinets, doors or closets after use.

### Review The Following Points:

- Keeping the work area free of spills prevents slips and falls.
- All open spaces should have a fixed railing.
- Always use an approved ladder.
- Scaffolding must have guardrails, toe boards and rails.

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

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Revised: November 2014