

AGRICULTURAL SAFETY TOPICS

PROPER USE OF LADDERS

Objective:

To be able to demonstrate the safe use ladders that are used primarily for construction and/or maintenance jobs.

Background:

Basic steps that should be taken before climbing a ladder

- Consider the type of work to be done before choosing a ladder.
- Be certain the ladder is able to carry the amount of weight that will be applied.
- Make sure the ladder is placed on a firm level surface.
- Check the condition of the ladder before use.

Inspection Checklist for Potential Hazards		
Metal Ladders	Wood Ladders	Fiberglass Ladders
sharp edges dents bent steps, rungs or rails no slip-resistant rubber or plastic feet	splits cracks chips loose rungs or steps	loose components missing components cracks chips

Step Ladders

Be certain the spreader is locked before climbing on the ladder. Never stand on the top or top step of a stepladder.

Extension and Straight Ladders

Raise the extension ladder to the desired height and lock both sides. Never stand on the top three rungs of a straight or extension ladder. Don't lean a ladder against a movable object. Always face the ladder and hold onto the side rails with both hands, when going up or down the ladder.

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Proper Ladder Placement

The ladder should be placed so that its base is one metre away from what the ladder leans against for every four metres in height to the point where the ladder rests. This is referred to as the four-to-one rule. For example, if a four metre ladder leans against a wall, its base should be placed one metre from the wall.

General Recommendations

- Never use a ladder in a strong wind.
- Never use a ladder in front of a door unless it is locked, blocked or guarded.
- Inspect ladders for potential dangers before using.
- Keep your body centered between the rails of the ladder.
- Never carry tools or materials in your hand when going up or down a ladder.
- Only one person should be on a ladder at a time.
- If one must work near power lines, always use a wooden or fiberglass ladder. NEVER work with a metal ladder around power lines.

Review The Following Points:

- Choose the right ladder for the intended job.
- Know the potential hazards when using a ladder.
- Know the proper placement of ladders.

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

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