

## Impact of farm tractor safety training on 4-H youth

### AT A GLANCE

Due to the high number of farm-related accidents involving tractors, the UI Extension educator implemented tractor driving safety training for our youth each year at the county fair.

### The Situation

According to the National Safety Council, farm-related accidents claimed as many as 1,300 lives/year, as well as 20,000 injuries. Overturned machines accounted for approximately half of tractor-inflicted fatalities. According to safety experts, the vast majority of these accidents were preventable.

In 1985, I conducted a need-based assessment survey. Based on results, it was clear that we needed to take serious action regarding tractor safety training.

### Our Response

The educator conducted applied tractor driving training sessions, using University of Idaho-specific curricula, Utah State's 10 Commandments of Tractor Safety, as well as Teen Safety Solutions applied training information. The 4-Hers were given pre-tests, as well as applied post-interview tests. Pre-tests were multiple choice, and covered general tractor safety information. The post-test covered tractor inspection safety procedures, and applied driving through a series of pre-arranged patterns. During the applied component, a qualified adult driver was present with all youth, administering safety and driving-related instructions.

### Program Outcomes

For the past 30 years, a total of 593 4-Hers from Elmore County and the Mountain Home Air Force Base have participated in these applied training sessions. Initial average pre-test scores were 32. Average



Tractor driving class is one of the most popular events at the Elmore County Fair. Photo by Kim Kovace.

post-interview test scores were approximately 88, which translate to a B-plus. Ninety-five percent of youth, post-interview, noted that training sessions were "fun," "exciting," and they "learned a lot." Feedback from parents, leaders and other volunteers was also overwhelmingly positive. Many noted that the majority of 4-H participants developed better safety-aware attitudes as a result of training, in addition to stronger work habits around the home, farm and farm machinery.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Mir-M. Seyedbagheri**, Extension Educator  
University of Idaho Extension, Elmore County  
535 E. Jackson  
Mountain Home, ID 83647  
Phone: 208.587.2136 Ext. 509  
Fax: 208.587.2137  
E-mail: [mirs@uidaho.edu](mailto:mirs@uidaho.edu) or [elmore@uidaho.edu](mailto:elmore@uidaho.edu)

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