

# Living to Serve

## FFA members serve local farmers through Ag Safety Day

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GC FFA REPORTER

“Learning to do, doing to learn, earning to live, living to serve” is not just the FFA motto; it is also how FFA members across the country strive to live their lives. The fourth and final line, “living to serve,” was recently demonstrated by the Green County FFA chapter during their Ag Safety Day.

In May, Green County FFA coordinated with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Rais-

ing Hope Foundation to host “Dragons for Life”, a farmer appreciation and ag safety day. Ag students and FFA members set up and presented numerous common farming accident scenarios, explaining how to promote safety in each situation. Green County phlebotomy students provided health screenings, which included glucose checks, blood pressure checks, etc., to attendees. Two local EMS employees also presented “Stop the Bleed” to the farmers and ag student

volunteers. Lunch was provided for farmers by the Green County Cattlemen's Association. Green County FFA also provided Ag Safety Day t-shirts to attendees and volunteers.

Breely Ervin, Green County FFA President, commented on the event and gave an example of one of the many skills shown and taught throughout the day. “During the event, we got to serve local farmers by teaching them, along with our peers, about ag safety and how to use a tourniquet prop-



Danielle Milby and Eli Thompson demonstrating tractor safety to FFA members

erly,” said Ervin. Ervin served as a student volunteer throughout the day and also presented at the tractor PTO safety exhibit.

This day was planned with the central goal of promoting safety in our local agricultural community while letting each participant know how much we truly appreciate them. Green County FFA is proud to

serve our local farmers. FFA members gave presentations to farmers as they came by about various common farming accidents and how to prevent them. This exhibit was about tractor rollover safety.

Local EMS presented “Stop the Bleed”. Ag students and attending farmers got to take part in a simulation, testing their knowledge and skills,

after the presentation. Ag students and FFA members prepare before the event. Here, they are setting up a PTO safety exhibit and finalizing their presentation.

Phlebotomy students provided health screenings to the attendees. This included blood pressure checks, glucose checks, and various similar procedures.

## Follow farm safety guidelines

Agriculture is routinely ranked among the most dangerous professions around the world. Both the National Safety Council and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health say agriculture is one of the most hazardous industries in the United States. Farming operations continue to push forward with more mechanized and high-tech equipment that requires routine reviews of safety protocols.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics and NIOSH, the agricultural sector recorded a fatal injury rate of approximately 18.6 deaths per 100,000 workers in 2023. Transportation incidents, notably tractor rollovers, remain the leading cause of death. Furthermore, recent reports from the National Children’s Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety indicate that a child dies in an agriculture-related incident in the United States approximately every three days, which underscores the need to

prioritize farm safety across all age groups.

Ensuring safe working conditions is vital within the agricultural sector. These guidelines can set the course for safer farming work.

- Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS): The most effective lifesaver on a farm is ROPS. When combined with seatbelt use, ROPS is 99 percent effective in preventing death during a tractor overturn. ROPS are roll bars or roll cages fitted for wheel- and track-type tractors, says Penn State Extension. Modern guidelines indicate that all machinery should be fitted with updated guarding to prevent entanglement accidents, which are often caused by Power Take-Off shafts.

- Respiratory protection: Grain bins and silos can pose significant risks on a farm. This includes toxic air exposure as well as the risk for engulfment. High-profile incidents in 2023 illustrated the threat that oxygen-limiting silos can pose after deadly carbon dioxide

concentrations form. Risk of suffocation also is great in a grain bin if a person is engulfed by grain. Workers should never work in a bin alone and should utilize a lockout/tagout system to ensure that all augers are off before entry.

- Chemicals and biological hazards: High-potency pesticides and fertilizers create their own hazards on the farm. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is a must when working with chemicals. Most modern standards require proper ventilation, chemical-resistant gloves and dedicated eye protection to prevent acute poisoning and long-term health issues.

- Hearing protection: Exposure to the sounds of farm machinery and other equipment can result in tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and eventual hearing loss unless hearing protection is worn regularly.

- Fatigue and mental health: Mental and physical fatigue of farm workers can result in injury as well. A critical trend uncovered in recent agricultural safety research ultimately led researchers to conclude that “fatigue management” needs to be prioritized, according to the United States Department of Agriculture. Tired operators can be vulnerable to lapse-of-attention errors, so farmers are encouraged to implement scheduled breaks. The Rural Health Information Hub says that stress also is a big factor for farmers. Environmental factors such as drought, floods, wildfires, pests, and diseases, as well as long hours and financial concerns, can result in feelings of isolation and frustration. Stress is a known precursor to physical accidents on the farm. These are just some



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**Congratulations and good luck to the entire GCHS FFA**

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Steven Bowles, a FFA alumnus, salutes GCHS FFA for an outstanding year. Best to all as you prepare for successful careers

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