FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Agricultural Safety Awareness Program Week, March 4-10

In recognition of the National Agricultural Safety Awareness Program (ASAP) Week, March 4-10, Oregon Farm Bureau’s (OFB) Health & Safety Committee urges farmers and ranchers to make safety a priority.

“Farming and ranching jobs are the eighth most dangerous occupation category across the country, with 23 deaths for every 100,000 workers, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,” said Cory Stengel, chair of the OFB Health & Safety Committee.

“Simple steps towards making a safer work environment can dramatically reduce the chance that you’ll become a statistic yourself,” said Stengel. “The OFB Health & Safety Committee wants to make farmers and ranchers aware of what they can do to keep their operations as safe as possible.”

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that in 2015, fatalities among American agricultural workers rose to 180, an increase of 22 percent from the 148 cases reported in 2014.

Farmworkers and laborers involved in crop, nursery, and greenhouse operations — all major commodities for Oregon — recorded 106 fatalities, an increase of 33 percent from 2014. This matched the highest total ever reported (in 2010) for that group.

On Oregon farms, falls and slips were the most common cause of accepted worker’s compensation claims for nonfatal injuries in 2016 – the most current year for available data – followed by injuries from being struck by or against an object, and overexertion, according to Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA).

Six workers died on Oregon farms in 2016, while there were five other workers whose nonfatal injuries required treatment for at least one night in a hospital.

During ASAP Week, OFB’s Facebook page -- https://www.facebook.com/ofbinfo/ -- will highlight safety topics with information geared toward farmers and ranchers.

Topics will be:

**Monday, March 5** - Hearing  
**Tuesday, March 6** - Respiratory  
**Wednesday, March 7** - Impaired Driving  
**Thursday, March 8** - Fire
Friday, March 9 - General Health

All year long, farmers and ranchers can access information from the OFB Health & Safety Committee’s webpage at http://oregonfb.org/programs/ag-health-safety/ (oregonfb.org, under the Programs menu). Resources include the “Sowing the Seeds to a Safe Agricultural Workplace,” 59-page guide that distills the rules Oregon OSHA has in place for agriculture; information about the Worker Protection Standard; and the popular OFB Rural Road Safety Brochure.

“The OFB Health & Safety Committee created these tools to help farmers and ranchers lay the foundation for an effective safety and health program, or fine-tune an existing program,” said Stengel.

“Managing safety on the farm or ranch with the same attention as you would any other aspect of the business is essential to the success of any agricultural operation,” said Stengel. “Our goal with the Agricultural Safety Awareness Program Week is to let farmers and ranchers know about the many resources available to help them make their workplace safer for employees, visitors, and family.”

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* Note to Editors: “Farm Bureau” is a registered trademark; please capitalize in all cases

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is a grassroots, nonpartisan, nonprofit, general farm organization representing the interests of farming and ranching families in the public and policymaking arenas. First established in Oregon in 1919, Farm Bureau is organized in all 36 counties and has nearly 7,000 farm and ranch family members.

Oregon Farm Bureau President Barry Bushue is a third-generation farmer raising pumpkins, u-pick produce, and flowering baskets at a nearly century-old farm near Boring. He is OFB’s 15th president.