



# Safety Training for Agricultural Workers

## TIPS FOR SUPERVISORS TO DO EFFECTIVE TAILGATE TRAINING

During the summer months, employers must provide employees with training on a variety of hazards they will encounter as they work in the fields. One of the most common and effective ways to accomplish this is with informal "tailgate" training programs. "Tailgate" training gets its name from making an informal presentation from the back of a pickup's tailgate. This Safety Sheet will help supervisors plan and deliver safety and health training to employees who work in agricultural settings.

### TRAINING TIPS:

- Employees must receive training about the hazards of a job before starting work. This means you must set aside enough time to cover all of the necessary information for the training before employees are allowed to begin work.
- If you are presenting a "refresher" training program, then keep it short: If the topic takes 45 minutes, then break it down to three 15-minute programs to be presented before the work shift or during rest breaks.
- Don't reinvent the wheel: There are numerous resources for your tailgate training programs. If you don't know where to begin, ask your manager or the company owner for assistance. It is usually better to use information from a reliable resource, such as Cal/OSHA Consultation Services, than to try to make up your own training material.
- Get worker participation: Workers retain more information if you encourage them to ask questions and have some discussion. Some ways to encourage involvement:
  1. Ask questions instead of simply giving them all the information.
  2. Ask about personal experience to establish relevance to the workers.
  3. Limit the amount of time any one person can talk.
  4. Never make fun of anyone or put anyone down, especially for asking questions.
  5. Don't fake the answer to a question. If you don't know the answer, don't guess, but promise to get back to them.
  6. Stick to the topic. If the crew's questions and comments move too far from the topic, tell them that the topic will be covered during another training or privately.
- Make the material easy to follow: Avoid technical terms, and present the material in everyday terms.
- Evaluate your training: Ask the employees for feedback. Did they understand the material? Was it helpful and relevant?
- Document, document, document: Make sure you have the following documented after the training program and maintain documentation for at least one year:
  1. Each employee's name or other identifier
  2. Training date
  3. Topics covered (List training materials used, include copies)
  4. Training providers

(Adapted from Heat Hazards in Agriculture: A Guide for Employers to Carry out Tailgate Training for Workers, Labor Occupational Health Program, University of California, Berkeley. [http://www.dir.ca.gov/chswc/reports/CHSWC\\_HeatAgriculturEnglish.pdf](http://www.dir.ca.gov/chswc/reports/CHSWC_HeatAgriculturEnglish.pdf))