

**A** centuries-old industry in New Brunswick, potato growing has evolved to become a highly mechanized activity. Still, humans remain necessary to many operations. This means staff work side by side with machinery surrounded by all sorts of powered equipment and revolving parts – a dangerous environment for any untrained or complacent worker.

To help you and your co-workers remain safe on the job, WorkSafeNB and Potatoes NB highly recommend you follow these basic guidelines. Please note that items marked with an asterisk (\*) are legal requirements.

### Powered Equipment



- Only designated operators are responsible for the safe moving of the machinery and its crew

- All trucks and harvesters are equipped with backup alarms.\*
- Once stopped, the machinery is not moved until the operator, or a person designated by the operator, has ensured that no person is at risk.
- Operators or owners ensure that all machinery is equipped with the proper guarding and that safety devices are functioning.\*
- Operators park the harvester in a safe area, turn it off and engage safety devices, before any cleaning maintenance or repair is done.
- No one ever walks between the harvester and the loading truck while they are moving.

- Besides the operator, no one is allowed to ride on machinery while travelling on public roads.\*
- Wait until the equipment comes to a complete stop before embarking or disembarking, and always use three point contact.\*



- When travelling on public roads, the transfer position must be used.
- Be aware of pinch points, moving parts or conveyors and keep clear of them.

### Employee training

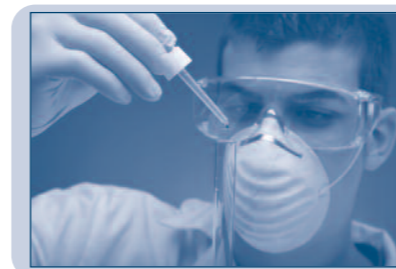
- Owners must ensure and document yearly training
- Family members working on the operation are trained – they can be hurt, just like any other worker.
- If you have questions or concerns, speak to your supervisor.

### Young workers

- Statistically young workers (17-25 years old) suffer three times more injuries than experienced workers. Particular attention must be given to their tasks, their understanding of the training and to their supervision.
- Owners must notify the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour – Employment Standards Branch, when workers under the age of 16 are hired.

### Chemicals

- A wide variety of chemicals are routinely used in potato growing including fertilizers, pesticides, disinfectants and anti-fungal agents. Know how to handle, use, and dispose of these substances safely.\*



*Wear the required personal protective equipment (masks, goggles, gloves) when working with chemicals.*

- Wear the required personal protective equipment when working with chemicals.\*
- Read product labels and label anything that is transferred to another container.\*
- Know the information on Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs, specific technical information concerning chemicals). The MSDSs must be readily available and up-to-date.\*
- Clean soiled equipment before it is sent out for repairs.

### First Aid

- A first aid kit is available for each crew and another one is kept in the central working area.\*
- At least one person trained and certified in first aid is present on-site, at all times.\*
- An emergency plan is available.\*
- A reliable communication system is in place and phone numbers (911) are known.\*

### Personal Protective Equipment

- Wear safety footwear (CSA approved) and proper clothing for the job being performed.\*
- Do not wear loose-fitting clothing and ensure long hair is tied back.\*



*Wear hearing protection whenever you need to raise your voice to be heard.*

- Use safety glasses when there is a risk of eye injury, and gloves when there is a risk of hand injury.\*
- Wear hearing protection whenever you need to raise your voice to be heard.\*

### Safe Practices

- Illegal drugs, alcohol and horseplay are strictly forbidden.
- Stay alert! Do not use electronic devices such as radios, CD or MP3 players while working.
- Eat well and make sure you are well rested.
- Toward the end of a long shift, exercise extra caution as fatigue contributes to accidents.
- Whenever possible, carry out operations during daylight hours. Darkness creates unusual and specific hazards that must be addressed.
- Protect your skin from the sun by using sunscreen, and wear cotton garments and hats, particularly on sunny days.
- If using a cell phone while driving pull over to the side of the road. When operating equipment, use cell phones only in case of extreme necessity.

### Ergonomics

- Do not lift immediately after a prolonged period of sitting, as your back is then more prone to injury. It is recommended that you walk for about five minutes before doing any lifting.
- Use proper lifting techniques:
  - Bend at the knees
  - Keep your feet apart at shoulder width
  - Carry the load close to your body
  - Avoid twisting when lifting
- Get help or use mechanical aids for heavy or cumbersome loads.\*
- Warm up before working and take a few minutes at break time for stretching.



- Shift your weight from one leg to the other when standing for prolonged periods.

### Traffic Control

- A designated area should be assigned to you to park your vehicle.
- At lunch or break times, operators stop harvesters as close to the designated parking area as possible, or safely bring the crew to that area.



- When unloading trucks do not begin the “backing-in” process until a designated person is in place to help direct the driver. All other employees must remain clear of the operation.
- Storage crews stay beyond the loading end of the bin pile.
- No visitors are allowed in the fields beyond the designated parking area.
- “Employees only” signs should be posted in storage areas and fields being worked.
- Children under 14 years old should not be allowed in the field or in trucks.
- Inform family members and friends of your workplace policy regarding visitors.

Note: This pamphlet is meant to be used as a guideline and is not exhaustive. The requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations will always prevail.