WHS DOCUMENTS & TEMPLATES

DOC-FRM-SECT · Farm WHS Pack

Product Overview

For: Farms and agricultural businesses: owners, managers, family members who run the farm, WHS advisers, health and safety representatives

Version 1.0 · 15 November 2026

SAMPLE

WHS documents built for farms: a risk register filled in with common farm hazards and typical controls, a farm workplace inspection checklist, and five practical procedures for the work that hurts farm workers and families most.

The Excel risk register starts with 30 hazards common on Australian farms, from quad bikes, tractors, PTO shafts and augers to silos, livestock, chemicals, power lines, dams, heat and working alone, each with the controls farms typically have. You keep the controls you have, add your own, and rate each risk for your farm on the 5x5 matrix.

The five procedures cover quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles (vehicle choice, competent riders, helmets, no passengers on single-seat quads, no children on adult quads); livestock handling and yards; silos, grain handling and augers (engulfment, confined space entry, auger guarding and isolation, working at heights); farm chemicals and spraying, with an application record; and working alone and remote work, with farm safety rules for children and visitors. The farm workplace inspection checklist covers sheds, the workshop, yards, the chemical store, fuel, silos, vehicles, water, power lines and emergencies.

The pack covers the health and safety of the people who work on the farm, and of others there such as visitors and children, under the WHS laws. A short guide explains how the duties apply to family farms, visitors and children, contractors, seasonal workers and labour hire.

Written once for Australia, to the model WHS laws, in plain terms that also work in Victoria. The guide's state and territory notes show where the law differs, including the regulator to contact. Made by Orana Skills Centre.

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How to Use This Pack

How to set up, adapt and keep the documents for farms and agriculture

1 What this pack is for

This pack gives a farm the core WHS documents for the work that most often hurts farm workers and families: a risk register, a farm workplace inspection checklist and five procedures. They are written for farms, but they are a starting point: each one needs adapting to your property, machinery, stock, crops and the people who work with you.

The documents support controls; they are not the controls. The right vehicle, the guard on the auger, the locked chemical store, the check-in and the fenced play area are. Use the documents to decide what controls you need, to check they are in place, and to train people in them.

2 How to use it

Step	What to do
1	Read How WHS Applies on Farms, so everyone knows who the duties cover: family members, visitors and children, contractors, seasonal workers and labour hire.
2	Work through the risk register with the people who work on the farm, family members and contractors included. Delete rows that do not apply and add your own.
3	For each hazard, keep the typical controls you have, delete those you do not, and rate the risk from the controls actually in place.
4	Add further controls for any High or Extreme risk, with an owner and a date.
5	Adapt the five procedures: vehicles, yards, silos, chemicals, check-in times and contacts. Fill in every placeholder and local arrangement.
6	Approve the procedures, train everyone in them, and put the key steps where people need them: in the shed, the chemical store and the vehicles.
7	Inspect the farm with the checklist on the schedule you set, and before each busy season, and track the actions.
8	Review the register and procedures after incidents and near misses, when machinery or the work changes, and at least each year.

Make it work, not just exist

- Rate each scenario, not the category: 'quad bike on the steep hill paddock with a spray tank' is a different risk from 'quad bikes'.
- Walk the farm with a map and mark the power lines, dams, silos, chemical store and areas with no mobile coverage. Use it at every induction.
- Ask who does each job alone, and when. The answers show where the check-in system matters most.

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Farm Workplace Inspection Checklist

A regular check that the farm's sheds, yards, stores, silos, vehicles and water are safe and the controls are working

Property or area		**Inspected by**	
Date and time		**HSR or worker present**	
Areas inspected		**Previous inspection (date)**	

How to use it

- Inspect on the schedule you set, and after a change, an incident or a complaint. Take a health and safety representative or a worker with you.
- Look at each item working, not at its paperwork. Mark it Pass, Not met or N/A, and write what you saw.
- For every Not met, write the action, an owner and a date. Items marked ★ protect against serious harm: a Not met on one of them is fixed or made safe before work goes on.
- Delete the items that do not apply to this workplace, and add your own in the spaces at the end of each section.
- Tell the people who work in the area what you found and what will change.

Stop

If you find something that could seriously hurt someone now, stop the work or keep people away, make it safe, and tell the manager straight away. Do not wait for the end of the inspection.

1 Sheds and general areas

Item	Pass	Not met	N/A	What you saw; action, owner and date
★ Exits and walkways clear; floors free of spills, loose feed and trip hazards	☐	☐	☐	
Stacked items (bags, hay, materials) stable and not stacked too high	☐	☐	☐	
Ladders in good repair and stored safely	☐	☐	☐	
Lighting working, including at night	☐	☐	☐	
Old buildings with possible asbestos labelled and left undisturbed	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	

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Quad Bikes and Side-by-Side Vehicles Procedure

Choosing the right vehicle, competent riders, helmets, no passengers on single-seat quads and no children on adult quads

Farm or site		**Procedure owner**	
Approved by and date		**Next review**	

1 Purpose and scope

Quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles are among the most useful machines on a farm, and among the most dangerous: they can roll over on slopes, banks, gullies and turns, or when loaded or towing, and crush or throw the person riding. This procedure sets out how the farm chooses the right vehicle for each job, who may ride or drive, and the rules every rider follows.

It applies to everyone who rides or drives a quad bike or side-by-side vehicle on the farm: workers, family members, contractors and visitors. It covers the farm's own vehicles and any brought on to the farm. Riding on public roads also has road rules, which this procedure does not set out.

2 Who does what

Who	What they do
Farm owner or manager	Chooses vehicles suited to the work and terrain, provides helmets and training, and enforces the rules
Riders and drivers	Ride only vehicles they are trained on, wear a helmet, follow the rules and report defects and near misses
Supervisors and parents	Keep children off adult-sized quad bikes and make sure visitors know the rules
Health and safety representative	Is consulted on vehicle choice and the rules, and raises concerns

3 Controls to have in place

Most effective first. Tick what is in place here, and for each No, record the action in the risk register.

Control	What it looks like in practice	In place here?
The right vehicle for the job	For each task, ask whether a quad bike is the right vehicle. Where the slope, load, towing or terrain is beyond it, use a side-by-side with a seatbelt and roll-over protection, a tractor, a ute or a motorbike, or do the task another way.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Crush protection where fitted	Where the business decides to fit a crush protection device (also called an operator protection device), it is fitted, used and maintained as its maker says and checked for damage.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Trained, competent riders	Nobody rides or drives unsupervised until they have been trained on that kind of vehicle and shown they can ride it safely on the farm's terrain.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Helmets every ride	A helmet suited to the vehicle is worn on every ride, however short. Helmets are provided and replaced when damaged.	☐ Yes ☐ No

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How WHS Applies on Farms

Family farms, visitors and children, contractors, seasonal workers and labour hire, under the model WHS duties

1 A farm is a workplace

A farm business is a business like any other under the WHS laws (in Victoria, the OHS laws). The farm is a workplace wherever farm work is done: the paddocks, yards, sheds, silos and roads, and the vehicles and machines. Many farms are also homes, so the people living there, children included, are often close to the work.

The business has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its workers, and that other people, such as visitors, neighbours and family members, are not put at risk by its work. The duty does not depend on the size of the farm, or on whether the people working are paid. A farmer who works alone still has duties to the other people the work could affect.

Who	Their duty, in brief
The farm business	Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers and of others affected by the work: safe machinery, systems of work, information, training, supervision, facilities and first aid. Consult workers.
Officers	If the farm is run through a company or another structure, the people who make decisions about the business as a whole must exercise due diligence to make sure it meets its duties.
Workers	Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others, follow reasonable instructions, and cooperate with the farm's policies and procedures.
Other people at the farm	Visitors and others take reasonable care for their own safety and others', and follow reasonable instructions.

2 Family farms

Family members who do work for the farm business, whether or not they are paid, are generally workers for the business under the model WHS laws, and the business has the same duties to them as to anyone else it engages. A partner, a son or daughter helping at harvest, or a parent who still works the stock is owed safe machinery, training and a safe way of doing the job.

In Victoria, the OHS laws frame the duties as an employer's duties to employees and to other people affected by the work. The effect for safety at work is similar, but how it applies to family members depends on the arrangement: check with WorkSafe Victoria if you are unsure.

- Treat family members as you would any other worker: induction, training on each machine, the right PPE and the same rules.
- Do not let familiarity replace the controls. People who have done a task for years are injured doing it too.
- Decide who in the family makes the safety decisions, and who keeps the records.

3 Visitors and children

Children live on, visit and play on farms, and they cannot judge farm hazards for themselves. The business's duty that others are not put at risk by its work covers children and visitors at the farm, and parents and hosts are responsible for supervising the children in their care.

- Separate the house and a safe, fenced play area from work areas, water, vehicles and machinery.
- Set farm safety rules for children and visitors, and tell every visitor and visiting family about them.

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END OF THE FREE SAMPLE

This sample shows a few pages, so you can judge the layout and the quality. WHS documents built for farms: a risk register filled in with common farm hazards and typical controls, a farm workplace inspection checklist, and five practical procedures for the work that hurts farm workers and families most.

What the full product contains

- **Farm WHS Risk Register (Excel): 30 common hazards with typical controls filled in, your own ratings on the 5x5 matrix, further controls, owners and dates**
  02_RISK_REGISTER/Farm WHS Risk Register.xlsx
- **Farm Workplace Inspection Checklist: 49 checks in 10 sections, critical items marked, other hazards, summary, actions and sign-off**
  03_INSPECTION/Farm Workplace Inspection Checklist.docx and .pdf
- **Quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles: vehicle choice, competent riders, helmets, passengers and children, slopes and loads, crush protection where fitted**
  04_PROCEDURES/Quad Bikes and Side-by-Side Vehicles Procedure.docx and .pdf
- **Livestock handling and yards: yard design and repair, escape routes, low-stress handling, dangerous animals, hygiene, with a yard check**
  04_PROCEDURES/Livestock Handling and Yards Procedure.docx and .pdf
- **Silos, grain handling and augers: engulfment, confined space entry, auger guarding and isolation, power lines, working at heights, with an entry check**
  04_PROCEDURES/Silos, Grain Handling and Augers Procedure.docx and .pdf
- **Farm chemicals and spraying: labels and safety data sheets, PPE, mixing, drift, storage, disposal, with an application record**
  04_PROCEDURES/Farm Chemicals and Spraying Procedure.docx and .pdf
- **Working alone and remote work: check-ins, communication, fatigue, heat, vehicles, emergencies, and rules for children and visitors**
  04_PROCEDURES/Working Alone and Remote Work on Farms Procedure.docx and .pdf
- **How WHS Applies on Farms: how the WHS duties apply on a farm: family farms, visitors and children, contractors, seasonal workers and labour hire**
  01_START_HERE/How WHS Applies on Farms.pdf
- **How to Use This Pack: setting up and adapting the pack, the law in brief, state and territory notes, records and every placeholder**
  01_START_HERE/How to Use This Pack.pdf
- **Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms and Version Information**
  01_START_HERE/ (PDF)

Formats

- Word (.docx), editable, with your logo and business name in the header
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