

January - December | 2020



# Non-intentional Farm Related Incidents in Australia

AgHealth Australia has been leading research into deaths and injuries on farm since 2004, providing the most comprehensive evidence on which to build prevention approaches to enhance the safety and wellbeing of people in Australian agriculture. Australian print and online media monitoring provides an avenue to highlight the prevalence of farm injury in a timely manner. This report focuses on injury events that occurred between January 1 to December 31, 2020.

## Deaths

During the period January 1 – December 31, 2020 a total of 58 on-farm deaths were reported. In the corresponding period for 2019, there were also 58 cases. A comparison of this data for the 2019 and 2020 periods through to December 31 by state, is provided in Figure 1.

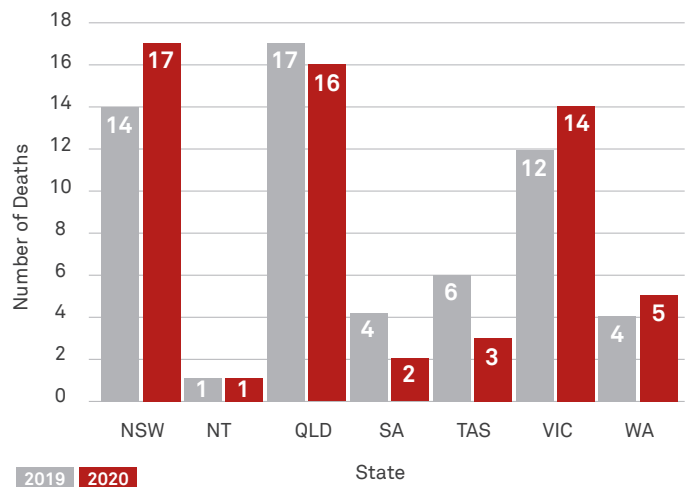
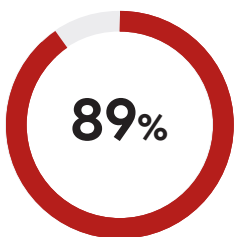
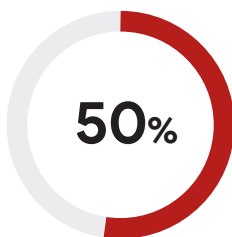


Figure 1 On-farm deaths reported in Australian media by state, Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2019 and Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020.

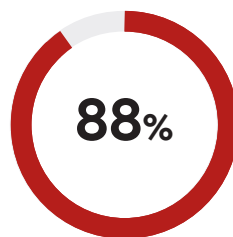
Since 2001, 1,548 people have lost their life on a farm due to non-intentional injury in Australia.



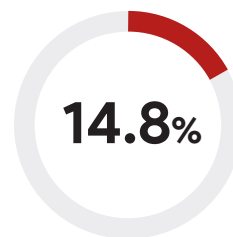
Of these, **1,379** cases (89%) have been finalised and “closed” by the coroner



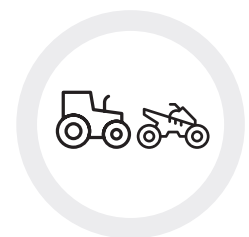
Persons in the 50+ years category (n=**771**) accounted for 50% of all reported incidents.



Males were involved in **1,363** cases (88%).



Children under 15 years accounted for **229** cases (14.8%).



Tractors (T=**242**) and quads (Q=**194**) are the leading agents causing fatal injury since 2001



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For the 2020 period, quads (n=14) and tractors (n=9), were reported most frequently (Table 1). Males were involved in 48 of these cases (82.8%), with data for age and gender presented in Table 2.

**Table 1** Agents of injury, by age group causing on-farm deaths, Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2019 and Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020.

Category	Agent	2019			2020		
		<15yrs	>15yrs	Total	<15yrs	>15yrs	Total
<b>Animal</b>	Cattle		1	1		1	1
	Deer		1	1			
	Dog		1	1			
	Snake					1	1
<b>Farm Structure</b>	Dam	2	1	3		1	1
	Creek/River						1
	Powerline					1	1
	Silo					2	2
	Water Source NEC*				1		1
<b>Farm Vehicle</b>	Aircraft		3	3		2	2
	Car	1	2	3	1		1
	Motorbike		3	3	1		1
	Quad	2	9	11	2	12	14
	Side By Side	4	1	5	1	6	7
	Trailer						
	Truck		1	1		1	1
	Utility		3	3	1	3	4
	Farm Vehicle NEC*		1	1			
<b>Materials</b>	Hay Bale		1	1			
	Rope					1	1
<b>Mobile Farm Machinery</b>	Earth Moving Equipment		1	1			
	Fertiliser Spreader	1		1			
	Field Bin		1	1			
	Grader		1	1			
	Harvesting Machine					1	1
	Seeder/Planter		1	1			
	Tractor		8	8		9	9
	Mobile Farm Machinery NEC*		2	2		2	2
<b>Other</b>	Firearm					1	1
	Other NEC*		1	1	1	1	1
<b>Powered Equipment</b>	Power Saw					1	1
<b>Working Environment</b>	Fire/smoke/flame					1	1
	Log		1	1			
	Trees being felled		4	4		3	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>58</b>

\*NEC: Not elsewhere classified

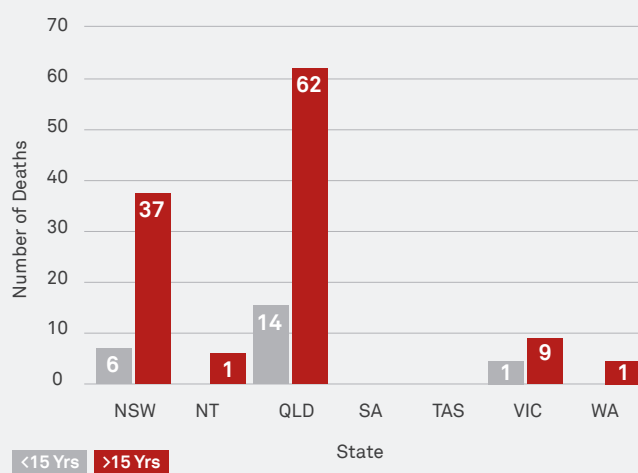
**Table 2** Number of fatalities by age group and gender  
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020.

Age Group	n	%
0-14 years	8	13.8
15-29 years	7	12.1
30-44 years	7	12.1
45-59 years	8	13.8
60-74 years	20	34.5
75+ years	8	13.8
Gender	n	%
Male	48	82.8
Female	10	17.2

The fatal cases for this reporting period could potentially increase. Subsequent queries are run in the National Coronial Information System (NCIS) by AgHealth Australia to identify any additional incidents which have not been captured by the media, historically this occurs in about 5 – 10% of cases.

## Injuries

An additional 131 non-fatal on-farm injury events were reported in the Australian media for the current reporting period. Twenty-one (16%) of the injury events, involved children aged under 15 years. Quads (n=47) and tractors (n=18) were the leading cause of injury. These incidents were closely followed by horses (n=14) and cattle (n=11). These four agents (n=90) accounted for almost 70% of all incidents reported in the media. As indicated in Figure 2, almost 60% of the incidents occurred in Queensland.



**Figure 2** On-farm non-fatal injury events reported in Australian media by state, Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020.

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