

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 from 1 January to 31 December 2021.

Deaths

During the period 1 January to 31 December 2021, a total of 46 on-farm deaths were reported. In the corresponding period for 2020, there were 58 cases. A comparison of this data for the 2020 and 2021 periods through to December 31 by state is provided in Figure 1.

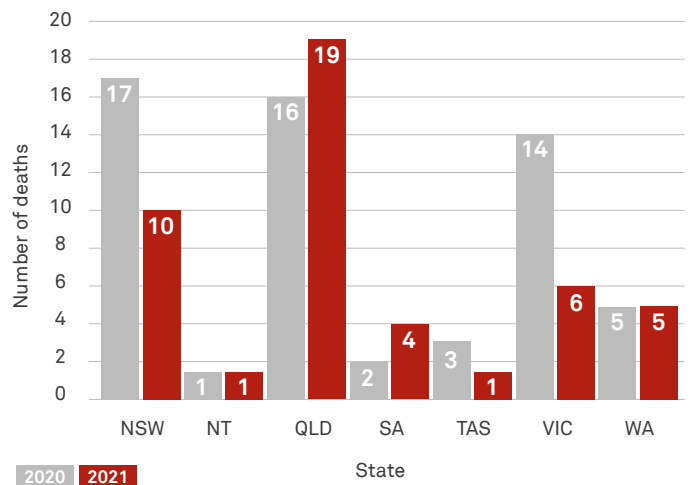
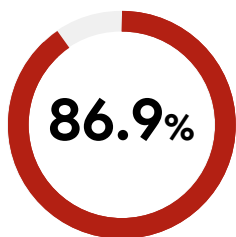
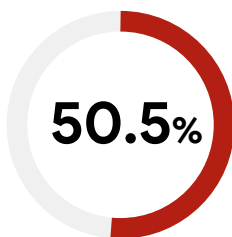


Figure 1 On-farm deaths reported in Australian media by state, 1 January – 31 December 2020 and 1 January – 31 December 2021.

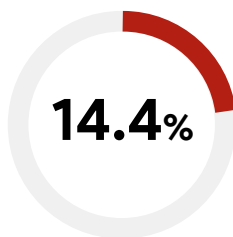
Since 2001, 1,632 people have lost their life on a farm due to non-intentional injury in Australia.



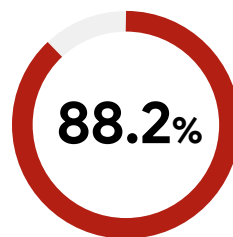
Of these, **1,418** cases (86.9%) have been finalised and “closed” by the coroner.



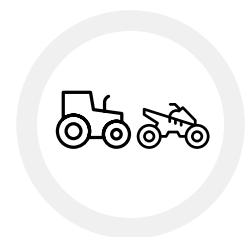
Persons in the 50+ years category (n=**824**) accounted for 50.5% of all reported incidents.



Children under 15 years were present in **235** cases (14.4%).



Males were involved in **1,440** cases (88.2%).



Tractors (n=**261**) and quads (n=**204**) are the leading agents causing fatal injury since 2001.



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For the 2021 period, tractors (n=10) and quads (n=9) were reported most frequently (Table 1). Of the total number of cases (n=46), males were involved in 40 (87%) and women were involved in six (13%). A summary of the data according to age and gender is presented in Table 2.

Table 1 Agents of injury causing on-farm deaths by age group, 1 January – 31 December 2020 and 1 January – 31 December 2021.

Category	Agent	2020			2021		
		<15 yrs	>15 yrs	Total	<15 yrs	>15 yrs	Total
Animal	Cattle		1	1		1	1
	Horse				1		1
	Snake		1	1			
	Animal NEC*				1		1
Farm structure	Dam		1	1	2		2
	Powerline		1	1	1		1
	Silo		2	2			
	Water source NEC*	1		1			
Farm vehicle	Aircraft		2	2		2	2
	Car	1		1	1		1
	Motorbike	1		1	2		2
	Quad	2	12	14	1	8	9
	Side by side	1	6	7	3	4	7
	Truck		1	1			
	Utility	1	3	4		2	2
Materials	Hay bale				1		1
	Rope		1	1			
Mobile farm machinery	Forklift				1		1
	Harvesting machine		1	1			
	Hay baler				1		1
	Telehandler				1		1
	Tractor		9	9	10		10
	Mobile farm machinery NEC*		2	2	1		1
Other	Firearm		1	1			
	Other NEC*	1	1	2	1		1
Powered equipment	Power saw		1	1			
Working environment	Fire/smoke/flame		1	1			
	Log				1		1
	Trees being felled		3	3			
Total		8	50	58	6	40	46

*NEC: Not elsewhere classified

Table 2 Number of fatalities by age group and gender, 1 January – 31 December 2021.

Age group	n	%
0-14 years	6	13.0
15-29 years	7	15.2
30-44 years	6	13.0
45-59 years	10	21.7
60-74 years	12	26.1
75+ years	5	10.9

Gender	n	%
Male	40	87.0
Female	6	13.0

The fatal cases for this reporting period could potentially increase. Monthly queries by AgHealth Australia are run in the National Coronial Information System to identify any additional incidents that have not been captured by the media; this historically occurs in about 5-10% of cases. As new cases are identified, they will be included and reported in subsequent six-monthly reports. Over time, the information is then validated against data from the National Coronial Information System as cases are closed by the coroner.

AgriFutures Australia publication no.: 22-013
 AgriFutures Australia project no.: PRJ-013128

Injuries

An additional 128 non-fatal on-farm injury events were reported in Australian media for the current reporting period. Twenty-three (18%) of the injury events involved children aged under 15 years. Quads (n=52) were the leading cause of injury. These incidents were followed by tractors (n=14) and horses (n=9). These three agents (n=75) accounted for almost 60% of all incidents reported. As indicated in Figure 2, more than half (67.2%) of the incidents occurred in Queensland.

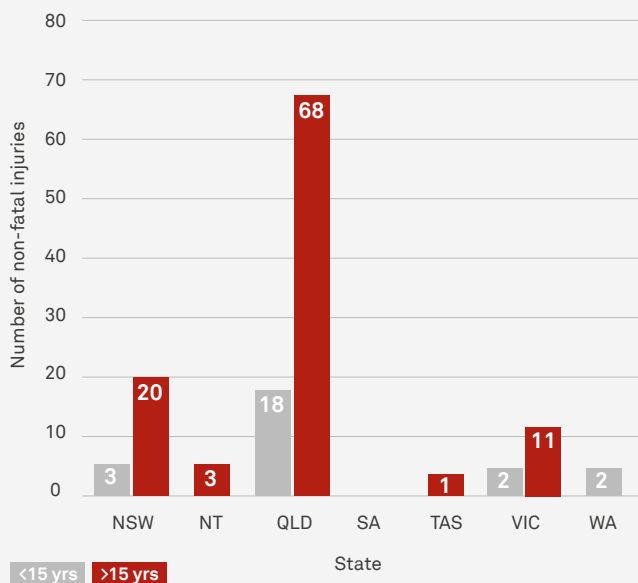


Figure 2 On-farm non-fatal injury events reported in Australian media by state, 1 January – 31 December 2021.

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