DEVELOPING SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS FOR FARM WORK

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Abstract. *This review compares how international and national occupational safety sources translate agricultural hazards into instructions workers can follow. Six primary documents were examined for risk assessment, content, timing of instruction and verification of understanding. The International Labour Organization links instructions to risk assessment and worker comprehension. The United States specifies recurring instruction for covered equipment, British guidance sets out a machinery stopping sequence, and New South Wales provides a model for farm induction. These sources address different parts of the same process. The review combines them into a task-based method and illustrates its application to clearing a combine blockage. The proposed method is a synthesis of requirements and guidance. Its effect on injury rates has not been evaluated.*

Keywords*: agricultural safety, safe work procedure, farm induction, machinery isolation, worker training.*

Introduction. A farm induction tells a seasonal worker where to report a defect and which areas are restricted. A task instruction must go further. A worker clearing a combine blockage needs to know when to stop, which energy sources must be isolated, and what to do if a raised component cannot be secured.

These decisions depend on the task and machine. The review examines how selected jurisdictions and the ILO address instruction content, delivery and follow-up [1–6].

The distinction matters when a worker changes equipment or returns for harvest. The farm's reporting arrangements may be familiar, while the location of isolation points and the conditions for stopping work differ by machine. This review therefore treats site induction and task instruction as separate elements [3,4,6].

Materials and Methods. A targeted web search on 6 November 2026 used combinations of agricultural safety instruction, farm induction, machinery safe stop and agricultural equipment operating instructions.

Primary documents were selected from ILO NORMLEX, OSHA, HSE, Safe Work Australia and SafeWork NSW if they specified an instruction duty, an operational sequence or an induction practice.

Six documents were compared by jurisdiction, legal or advisory status, target worker, timing and actionable content. Findings were mapped to the stages of developing and using a task instruction.

The review compared document content and did not assess compliance or intervention effects.

For each document, the comparison identifies who receives instruction, when it is given and what action the worker must be able to carry out. These fields form the basis of Table 1.

Mandatory wording and advisory practice are recorded separately. The combine example applies the comparison to one task and separates source-based precautions from the proposed practical assessment.

Results

Table 1.

Approaches to preparing and delivering farm safety instructions.

Source and status	Documented provision or practice	Application in a farm instruction
ILO Convention No. 184, Art. 7 [1]	Link risk assessment to prevention and provide understandable instruction. Consider education and language.	Describe the hazard and protective action in language workers can use.
United States, OSHA 29 CFR 1928.57(a)(6) [2]	Instruct at initial assignment and at least annually thereafter for covered equipment.	Record the equipment, worker, date and required refresher.
Great Britain, HSE guidance [3,4]	Safe Stop covers the parking brake, neutral controls, shutdown and key removal or power lock-off.	Place the stopping sequence before service or blockage clearance.
Australia, Safe Work Australia and SafeWork NSW guidance [5,6]	Consult workers when developing procedures. NSW recommends induction before work for new and seasonal workers.	Give site induction and job-specific instruction. Record completion.

The sources differ in purpose. OSHA prescribes an interval for equipment within the scope of its rule. HSE describes actions at the machine. The NSW guideline addresses when workers and contractors should receive induction. These provisions can inform one farm process while retaining their distinct legal and advisory status.

Define the task and its limits first. List the hazard at each step, select a control and specify how the worker can verify it. Include a stop condition for any step that cannot be completed safely. Write the procedure against the manufacturer's manual and walk through it with workers before issuing it [1,3–6].

Scope. This example covers a trained operator dealing with a blocked combine under a model-specific procedure. The farm copy should identify the machine model, the relevant manual section, who is authorised to clear the blockage and whom to contact if the task must stop.

Before access. Apply the parking brake, put the controls in neutral, stop the engine or shut off power, and remove the key or lock off the power supply as applicable. Follow the manual to isolate the relevant drives and deal with stored energy.

Check that movement has stopped. If access requires a raised header, use the manufacturer-specified means of support before anyone enters the danger zone [2–4].

Stop condition. If the drive cannot be isolated, the component cannot be supported or the approved clearing method is unclear, stop and notify the supervisor. Before restart, restore guards and confirm that people are clear [2–4].

Table 2.

Example of a farm task instruction card for combine blockage clearance.

Field on the card	Entry to complete at the farm
Identification	Combine model and asset ID, manual section, revision date and

	supervisor contact.
Before access	Specify the isolation points and how the operator verifies that movement has stopped. Identify the approved support if a raised header is involved.
Stop and report	Do not proceed if isolation cannot be verified, the approved support is unavailable or the prescribed clearing method is unclear.
Return to service	Refit guards and confirm that people are clear before restart.

Verification. Ask the operator to identify the isolation point, show how the safe condition is checked, and explain when the task must be stopped. Record the procedure version, machine, date, trainer and observed result. A signature documents attendance. An observed demonstration records which steps the worker could perform.

The decision tree in Figure 1 is a proposed way to record a practical check after task instruction. The supervisor observes a demonstration under controlled conditions, using the machine-specific procedure and without exposing the worker to a live hazard. The check covers three actions: identifying the isolation points, explaining how to confirm a safe condition and stating when the task must stop.

Can the worker demonstrate every critical step?

↙ ↘

YES	NO
Record a satisfactory demonstration.	Record the missed step and withhold independent assignment to the task.
Identify the worker, assessor, machine and instruction version.	Repeat instruction and reassess before assigning independent work.

Figure 1. Decision tree for documenting a worker's practical demonstration. Proposed assessment method informed by [1,3–6].

A supervisor can test the stop rule by asking what the operator would do if the header support were missing. The expected response is to stop and report the condition. If the worker describes entering the danger zone, the assessor records the gap, demonstrates the required response and repeats the check. The record should distinguish the first result from the reassessment.

A change of machine, procedure or site is a reason to review which parts of the instruction need to be repeated. Where a refresher interval is prescribed, record it separately from reassessment after a change. OSHA's annual interval applies within the scope of its rule. The NSW guidance also addresses induction when workers move to a different site or role or return for a new season [2,6].

Example record. Enter the worker and assessor names, machine ID, procedure version, date, demonstrated steps, missed step if any, reassessment date and final outcome. This proposed record can be attached to the farm's training register.

Discussion. The comparison separates three activities that a farm can document independently. Induction covers site rules and reporting. Task instruction states the controls for a machine and operation. A practical check records whether a worker can apply the instruction.

This distinction matters when a worker changes machines or returns for a new season. A worker may know the site rules and still need to learn where to isolate a different combine [3–6].

For an Uzbek farm, a usable form could contain the task, machine model, required safeguards, stop conditions, supervisor contact and revision date. The language should match the workforce and photographs can identify controls that are difficult to describe.

The farm can review the instruction after a machine or process change, a near miss, or an unsuccessful demonstration. These are proposed implementation steps. The foreign examples should be interpreted within their own jurisdictions.

Conclusion. A task instruction is ready for field use when the worker can identify the hazard, carry out the required control and explain when to stop. The six-source comparison supports a sequence from task assessment to instruction, demonstration, documentation and review. The worked example is intended for adaptation to the specific machine and worksite.

References

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