

Farm Injuries rise by 35% -Teagasc National Farm Survey

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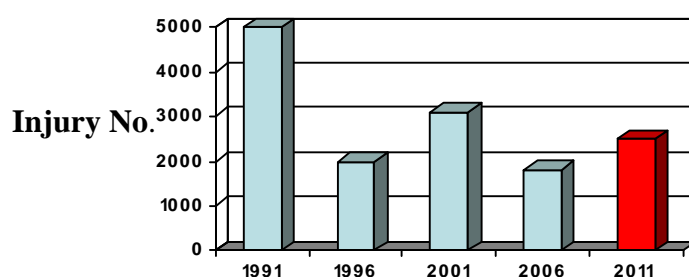
Teagasc has conducted a National Survey of Farm Injuries in 2011. This is the latest in a series of five surveys conducted at 5-yearly intervals since 1991. The aim of the survey is to estimate the level and causes of farm injuries, to assist with promotion of safety on farms.

Trends in Farm Injuries.

Injury Levels:

The 2011 survey indicates a farm injuries have increased by 35% with 2,459 per 100,000 farms reported for year 2010 compared to the previous survey estimate of 1,815 for year 2006.

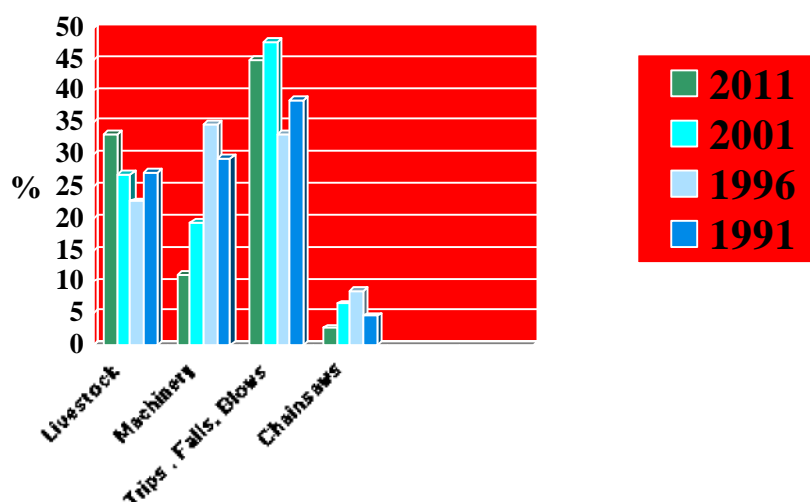
Figure 1: Trends in Farm Injuries – National Farm Surveys 1991- 2011.



Injury Categorisation.

Injuries from trips falls and blows are most frequent, accounting for 42% of injuries (Figure 2). Other major causes are livestock-related injuries (33%) and vehicle and machinery (11%) and chainsaws (3%) and other (8%). The trend over the various surveys indicates that machinery injuries have declined significantly which is great news, but the proportion associated with livestock has increased.

Figure 2: Trends in injury cause.



Person Injured.

It's mainly the farmer or farm operator who has an injury who account for 73.3% of injuries. Other categories of persons injured are farm workers (8.9%); spouses (who could be male or female), 8.6% and family members (7.5%) and others (1.7%). A key message from this finding is that farm family members suffer over 90% of injuries on farms.

Location of Injury.

The farmyard is where 71.5% of injuries take place. Other location are farm buildings (18.7%) and in fields (9.8%). It's around the farmyard that a lot of work activity takes place, like tackling-up machinery, dealing with livestock in confined locations along with having trips and falls or being struck by falling objects

Indicators of Injury Severity.

Ninety five percent of reported injuries required medical treatment. Of these 49% required hospital inpatient treatment and 36% required hospital A&E treatment. Over 89% of injuries caused 4 or more lost work days and 71% lost ten or more work days with 41% causing a more than 20 days lost and 15% causing more than 100 days. It is clear from the data that the majority of injuries reported are serious.

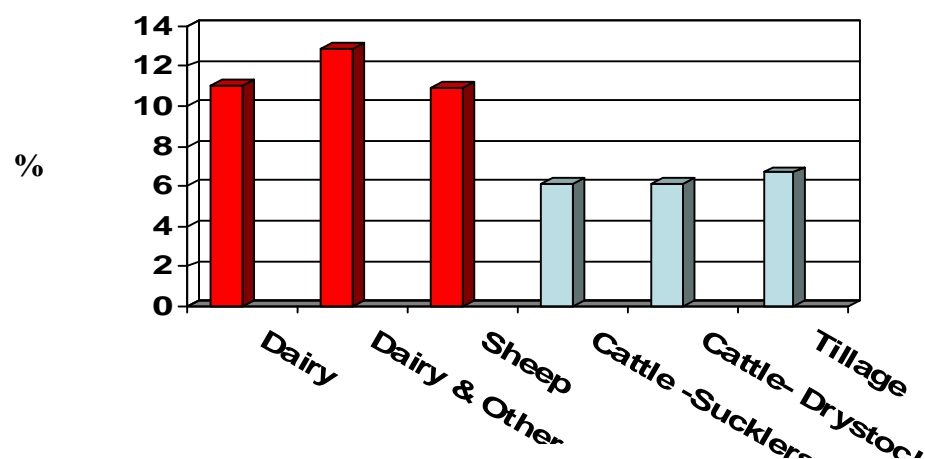
Injury level by Farm Enterprise

Farms with 'dairying' (11%), 'dairying and other livestock' (12.9%) and 'sheep' (10.9%) reported higher rates of injury over the 6 years than cattle - breeding (6.1%), cattle - non breeding (6.1%) and arable farms (6.7%).

Farms are categorised by the NFS as 'full-time' requiring 0.75 standard labour units or more to operate the farm while, 'part-time' farms require less than 0.75 standard labour units. 'Full or Part time is a measure of work load requirement and does not relate to whether the farmer works part or full time on the farm. Farms classified as 'full-time' had a higher level of injuries (12.6%) than 'part-time' farms (5.6%).

Regarding farm size, categories under 30 hectares had injury rates of about 6% while those over 30 hectares had rates in the 10-12% range.

Figure 3: Injury rate for various Enterprises.



Completion of the Risk Assessment Document and attendance at Training.

The 2011 survey indicated that 55.1% had completed the Farm Health and Safety Risk Assessment document and 21.9% had attended a short health and safety training course.

Conclusions:

The national survey indicates that injury levels on Irish farms have increased in year 2010 compared to 2006. The injury rate was highest for dairying and sheep farms. Farms classified as 'full-time' have over twice the rate of injuries as 'part-time' farms. These farms tend large in scale. Generally the Teagasc survey indicates that poor work organisation is associated with Injury. The national survey provides information on which to base future prevention programmes.

Note on Survey Methods.

The 2011 survey are conducted by the Teagasc National Farm Survey (NFS) department among 995 farmers who are representative of the national farming population by farm system and size for farms above 2 hectares. The NFS Survey does not include pig or poultry units. The NFS sample is representative of farms (99,448) over 2 hectares so national estimates of farm injuries is gained by applying CSO weightings to the sample data.

Accident reported for the previous year to the survey are used to make the national estimate of injuries on farms as this is most accurate estimate due to recall issues. Regarding injury cause data for the previous 5-years, including the year of survey, are included. The survey was conducted by means of face-to-face interview-on a confidential basis. The participation of farmers in the survey is acknowledged and appreciated.

Note that the NFS survey conducted in 2006 is omitted from Figure 2 as it included injury reports for one year rather than five years. However, the trend of relative increase in livestock injuries and reduced vehicle/ machinery injuries was found in this survey also.