

Approved

Date 2-28-85

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND SMALL BUSINESS

The meeting was called to order by Lloyd D. Polson at
Chairperson

9:00 a.m./~~pm~~ on February 11, 1985 in room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representatives Bryant, Goossen, Hamm and Teagarden who were excused.

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department
Mary Jane Holt, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Ernie Carney, President, Society for Safer Agriculture
Dick Jepson, Project Director, Agriculture and Safety Health Center at K.S.U.
Delbert Ekart, Director of Safety, Kansas Farm Bureau

The Chairman reported to the Committee on the meetings held at Junction City and Great Bend by the Joint Agriculture Policy Committee.

Ernie Carney told the Committee the Agriculture Safety and Health Center has no funds allocated to it at the present time and the Society is trying to raise money from private sources. The center cannot continue an organized program without some help through legislative funding.

Dick Jepson stated the purpose of the ASH Center is to identify, evaluate and suggest solutions to agriculture safety and health problems through public education, research and formal education programs. A federal grant was received to develop the program and the Center was established in 1979. It was federally funded for five years. He stated a budget of \$150,000 to \$160,000 is needed. There are no state funds appropriated for agriculture safety education and a proposal for funding has not gone through university channels or the Board of Regents, (Attachment A.)

In answer to the Committee he stated they are operating now on carry-over funds.

Delbert Ekart, Director of Safety, Kansas Farm Bureau, addressed the Committee. He commented they do have a program on farm safety and work with groups other than Farm Bureau groups also. In response to questions from the Committee he stated they spend approximately \$200,000 a year on safety programs, and are funded by membership fees including insurance premiums. The only program they charge for is a defensive driving course. They charge \$1.00 for a workbook. They have assisted the Center at K.S.U. with an accident survey and have a set of visual aids the Center produced. In response to the Chairman, said the program will die if legislature does not fund it.

The Committee adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

The next meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 12, 1985, in Room 423-S.

GUEST REGISTER

DATE Feb 11, 1985

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND SMALL BUSINESS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
ERNE CARNEY	—	6035 N.W. NORTH HILLS DR TOPEKA, KS
DICK SEPSEN	KS4 EXT Service	Box 230 Sester Hall KS4 Manhattan
Lois D COOK	KEMTRA	200 Walnut Wamego 66547
MARSHA HUTCHISON	KS GRAIN & FEED DEALERS ASSN	HUTCHINSON, KS 67504
DELBERT EHART	KANSAS FARM BUREAU	MANHATTAN, KS
Mary Harper	adam	Healy
Norman Harper	adam	Healy
Ken E Johnson	h' LPGA	Topeka
Bill R. Fuller	Kansas Farm Bureau	Manhattan
John K. Blythe	" " "	"
John Roenbush	_____	Leawards

Chairman Poulson, committee members and visitors, thank you very much for the opportunity to present to you information about agricultural safety education needs.

Background

Because agriculture is a hazardous industry as evidenced by our records and those of the National Safety Council we applied for and received a federal grant to develop an Agricultural Safety and Health (ASH) Center at Kansas State University. The Center was established in 1979.

The purpose of the ASH Center are to identify, evaluate and suggest solutions to agricultural safety and health problems through public education, research and formal education programs.

The purposes are accomplished by assisting with agricultural safety program planning, obtaining accident statistics, conducting safety and health training and developing resources to support this training.

The ASH Center is administratively located in the office of the Dean of Agriculture. At this level the Center Director can supervise programs in Extension, teaching and research.

Results

To describe what the Center has done I have divided this short report of activities into Extension, teaching and research activities.

Center personnel devoted their major effort towards public information and education to reduce accidents in production agriculture. This was an area of our greatest expertise and an area that had the highest fatal accident rate. The programs have been developed and presented to farm youth, women and men, Emergency Medical Technicians, and local safety leaders.

Safety programs have been planned for and a few presented to small, ag-related industries in Kansas to assist them to develop a safety program for their operation. These programs are designed to show management the cost saving value of a safety program and to teach supervisors to communicate safety information with the workers under them.

We have done some preliminary work identifying handicapped farmers and their needs to safely continue farming. Much of the work we have done has been in cooperation with Rehabilitation Services of the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. We believe we were a valuable resource in identifying handicapped ag workers and assisting in their occupational rehabilitation.

Our research efforts have been limited to short term studies. Primarily we gather ag accident statistics from newspaper clips and the Department of Health and Environment. At five year intervals we conduct a

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Attachment A

farm accident survey to identify the types and numbers of ag accidents occurring in Kansas. We did one study of swine confinement housing to determine the amounts of four important gases in these houses.

Our teaching function began this semester. Our engineer, agricultural and business management graduates are being hired by employers who because of ethical, moral and legal reasons, more and more need individuals with knowledge about hazards and safety practices. Without a basic knowledge of safety these graduates have to learn the subject on the job - not a satisfactory method for satisfying company responsibilities.

When the ASH Center was established there were very few ag safety educational resources available at KSU. The federal grant provided sufficient funds to develop publications and slide sets to help us and other safety leaders to inform workers in production agriculture and the small ag related industries. Many of these have been sold to safety specialists in other states and Canada. The daily and weekly news media, the farm press and attorneys have used the ag-accident statistical data developed at the Center.

What I believe to be the most significant change since the ASH Center was established has been the sharp reduction in fatal farm accidents. The dashed line on Chart 1 identifies the number of fatal accidents each year since 1978. The solid line indicates the amount of funds received. Notice that the number of accidents dropped dramatically beginning in 1980 - a year after the Center began operations. They continued to drop for a couple of years. But when federal funds were cut back the numbers of accidents began to increase.

It is impossible to prove that our efforts were the result of this decline. But one cannot prove that the decline was not a result of our activities. The Kansas Farm Bureau has a farm safety program for its members. I think the addition of our efforts to that of the Farm Bureau achieved a synergistic effect whereby the total overall results were better than the total of each programs if done separately.

Need to Continue

Why do we need to maintain the activities of the KSU Agricultural Safety and Health Center?

Production agriculture is the number one industry in the state and has the highest fatal accident rate.

The costs of accidents are very high. These costs are even more devastating when an industry is in economic difficulty. We at the Center have estimated agricultural work injury accidents to cost over 15 million dollars a year. This figure is very conservative and includes days work lost, medical, property damage and hired labor costs. It does not include lost productivity, home and farm modifications, rehabilitation, relocation costs or legal fees. Non work injury farm accidents add another eight million dollars to the total cost.

Fatal farm accidents are also costly. The average age of those involved in fatal farm accidents over the past nine years was about 43.

Assuming these individuals would have had 19 productive remaining work years the ASH Center conservatively estimates the income loss of each fatality to be \$380,000. This does not include medical costs, property loss, legal fees, burial fees or relocation costs that might occur. Fatal farm accidents have averaged over 31 farm people killed per year over the past five years. The Center estimates the income cost of these accidents at \$11,780,000. The total monetary cost of farm injury and fatal accidents is in excess of 35 million dollars per year. And this does not include the omitted costs previously mentioned.

Social Security disability payments average over \$10,200 per year, for each person on disability. For the estimated 230 permanently injured farmers, this totals \$2,346,000 each year.

In short agricultural safety education is needed to reduce the loss of human life, human suffering and monetary costs of accidents.

Kansas is the second ranking state in the number of farm equipment manufacturers and ranks high in the number of grain dealers and handlers, agricultural product processors and agricultural service industries. These industries have accident rates above the national average, high employee turnover and insufficient funds to employ a full-time safety specialist

Workers compensation costs for the four industries identified above was \$7,000,000 in 1979. Social Security payments to those disabled in these industrial accidents are also very high.

Workers must be periodically reminded about the hazards they face if a program is to be effective.

Visits with management personnel at several representative small businesses indicate a strong desire for assistance to establish safety programs.

A population of handicapped, disabled or physically hindered farmers of undetermined size, exists in the state. This group and its problems need to be identified to provide proper assistance. The handicapped ag worker needs help to locate information and assistance devices to improve his working ability. Other segments of our society have this benefit, and farmers should be able to participate without changing their occupation.

There is a continuing need to conduct research and short term studies to identify potential hazards, types of accidents and their causes and the protective devices to prevent accidents. These data are used by many different people to inform people about the occurrence of different types of accidents.

Our university graduates need to be prepared on the subject of occupational safety because laws and regulations are adding more emphasis on safety and health; responsibility for safety is extending to the design engineer and supervisor; good safety and health records are being included in job ratings; and, accidents are too expensive in today's economic climate.

Other major industries have management and labor support for safety programs as well as considerable input from government in the form of money and enforcement measures. Unlike these industries there are few supervisors on Kansas farms or in our small ag related industries to provide safety training, develop training materials or to insist that workers follow known safety practices.

A high risk population in agriculture are the young people who work with hazardous farm equipment from their early teens. Are we wise in our thinking when we expose young men and women to these ag work hazards and not provide them with knowledge about hazards and training to avoid them? Workers must be over 18 to be allowed to work in other hazardous industries. Are we saying in effect that it is all right to expose young ag workers to serious injury or death but don't expose the urban youth to such hazards?

Farm wives have been extremely interested in ag safety programs. They are fully aware of the hardships the ag worker's family must go through if the breadwinner is seriously injured or killed. Not only is loss of income and a lowered standard of living a possibility but if the breadwinner is killed, the family may not have sufficient management skills and labor to continue farming. They are forced to leave the farm and relocate.

There are no state funds appropriated for ag safety education. And, until the recent organization of the Society for a Safer Agriculture there was not a foundation organized for the purpose of promoting agricultural safety education.

In agriculture there are check off programs to promote use of Kansas grown grain and livestock. I believe I read about tax check off program to protect the chick-a-dee. There are fees and taxes to support wild life conservation. There is even a national organization collecting funds to save the bald eagle.

These are good programs and I have no intention of degrading anyone's effort in these endeavors. But I wonder if we might not have our priorities a little mixed up when money is made available to protect birds but none to protect our workers in the agricultural industry?

Our entire population shares in the good things we have as a result of our agricultural industry. I think we all must share in the responsibilities for ensuring that these good things are not produced at the expense of some ag worker's disability or life. Agricultural safety needs help if the fatal accidents are to be reduced.

Chart 1 provides information on our total budget. The funding has allowed us to develop materials and expertise that were otherwise unavailable. The large fluctuations however made it difficult to develop consistent, effective education programs with the small ag related industries and with handicapped farmers. What is needed is a budget at the \$150,000 to \$160,000 level to provide continuity and to effectively conduct these programs. Note also that my presentation is to provide you with the basic information concerning the need for agricultural safety education. A proposal for this funding has not gone through University channels or the Board of Regents.

I think supporting agricultural safety education at a level twice this size makes good business sense. Private insurance companies and larger industries believe safety education pays because they have specific safety programs for their clientele.

Another analogy is to look at the money spent to attract industries. Our state and local communities work hard to bring in an industry for the payroll and tax benefits involved. Can't we do the same for agricultural safety to increase ag income? A ten percent reduction in the number of accidents would result in a minimum of \$3,500,000 saved. To paraphrase Ben Franklin - three and a half million dollars saved is three and a half million dollars earned, and the cost is minimal.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this information to you.

KANSAS
FUNDING LEVELS - 1978-1983 (FISCAL YEARS)
FATAL ACCIDENTS - 1979-1984 (CALENDAR YEARS)

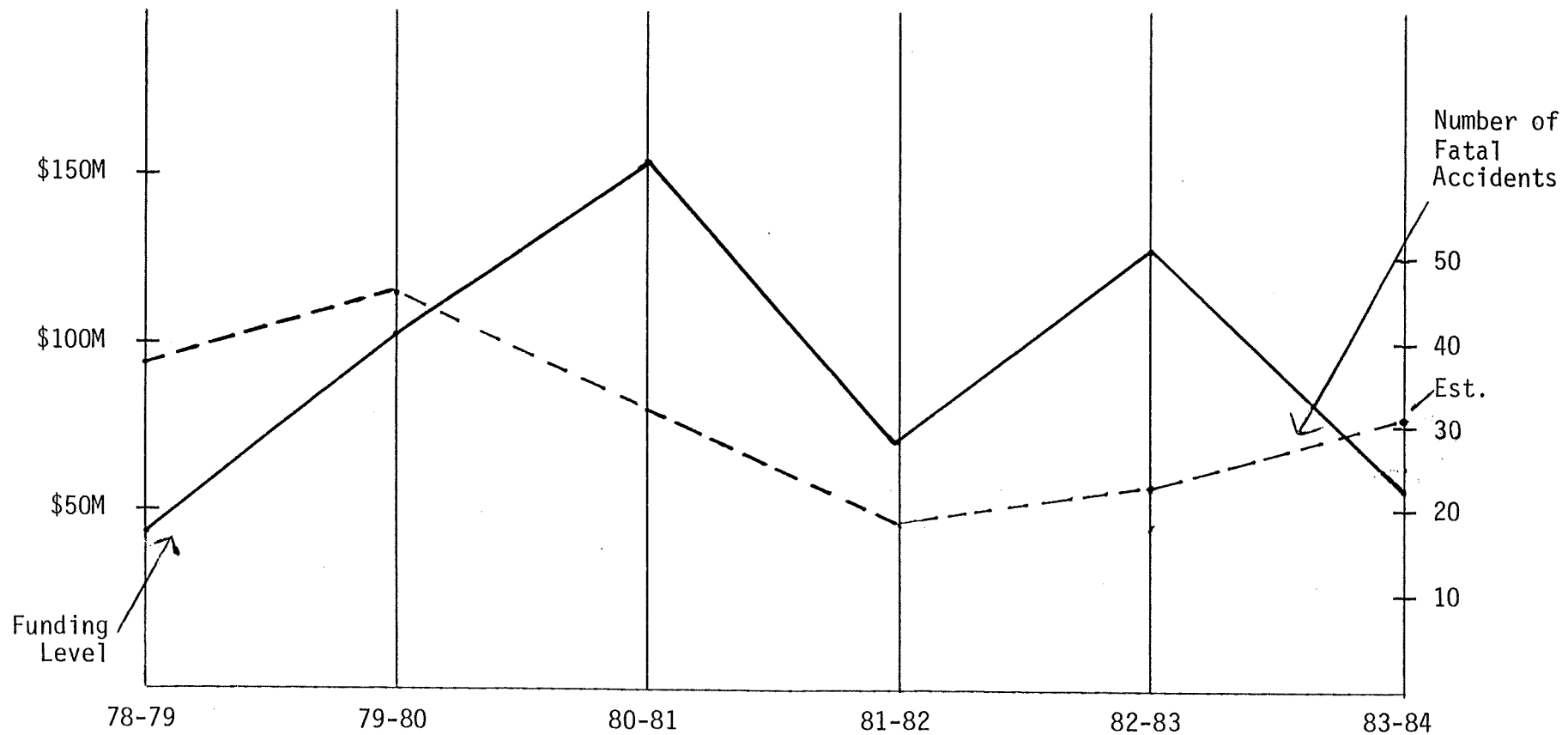


Chart 1

KSU Agricultural Safety and Health Center

A Concept for a Coordinated State Agricultural Safety Program

What is the KSU Agricultural Safety and Health Center?

The Center serves as a mechanism for coordinating and utilizing all the resources of the University to focus on agricultural safety and health issues that affect workers in production agriculture and in small ag-related industries.

What are the Purposes of the Center?

The purposes of the Center are to identify, evaluate and suggest solutions to Agricultural Safety and Health (ASH) problems through public education, research, and formal education programs. The purposes are accomplished by assisting with ASH program planning, obtaining accident statistics, conducting safety and health training, and developing resources to support this training.

What Activities are Conducted by the Center?

* Safety programs are conducted for farm youth, women and men, for Emergency Medical Technicians and for safety leaders. Subjects include safe operation of trucks, tractors and agricultural machinery, handling of chemicals and fertilizers, working in storage areas and extricating an accident victim.

* Safety programs are planned for small agricultural industry managers, supervisors and workers. Subjects include safety management and technical areas as needed.

* Educational materials and agricultural accident statistical data are made available to safety specialists, media, attorneys and others nationwide.

What is the Need for Agricultural Safety and Health Education?

* Production agriculture is the number one industry in Kansas and has one of the highest fatal accident rates in Kansas and in the nation.

* The KSU Agricultural Safety & Health (ASH) Center estimates one farm work-related accident to average \$2,035.

* Farm accident surveys indicate there are approximately 7,575 farm work related injury accidents each year in Kansas.

* These accidents are estimated to cost the victims \$15,415,000 which includes days work lost, medical, property damage and hired labor costs. Does not include lost productivity, home and farm modifications, rehabilitation, relocation costs and legal fees. Including non-work related accidents would add another \$8,000,000 to the cost.

* Fatal farm accidents have averaged over 31 farmers killed per year over the past five years.

* The KSU ASH Center estimates the income loss for each fatal farm work related accident to be \$380,000 in Kansas. The estimated total cost of fatal farm accidents is \$11,780,000 which does not include legal fees, medical costs, burial fees, and relocation costs that might occur.

* The total monetary cost of all farm injury and fatal accidents in Kansas is over 35 million dollars *per year*.

* Kansas is the second ranking state in the number of farm equipment manufacturers and ranks high in the number of grain dealers and handlers, agricultural product processors and agricultural service industries.

* These industries have accident rates above the national average, high employee turnover and insufficient funds to employ a full-time safety specialist.

* Social Security disability payments average over \$10,200, per year for each person on disability. For the estimated 230 permanently injured farmers, this totals \$2,346,000 each year.

* Total annual cost of production agricultural accidents is estimated to be \$29,541,000.

* Workers compensation costs for the four industries identified above was \$7,000,000 in 1979. Social Security payments to those disabled in these industrial accidents are also very high.

A population of handicapped, disabled or physically hindered farmer of undertermined size, exists in the state. This group and its problems need to be identified to provide proper assistance.

It is obvious from the above information that agricultural safety education is needed to reduce the loss of human life, human suffering and monetary costs of these accidents.

Visits with management personnel at several representative small businesses indicate a strong desire for assistance to establish safety programs.

Workers must be periodically reminded about the hazards they face if a program is to be effective.

The demand for production agriculture safety information indicates a strong need for these programs.

There is a continuing need to identify types of accidents and to analyze their causes to develop safety programs and devices to prevent the accidents.

The handicapped farmer needs help to locate information and assistance devices to improve his working ability.

What has been accomplished by the Center?

* The KSU ASH Center was established in 1979 as a result of an OSHA New Directions Grant.

* The KSU Agricultural Safety and Health (ASH) Center was established in 1978 as a result of an OSHA New Directions Grant.

* The Center has developed 25 agricultural safety publications, 12 agricultural safety and rescue procedure slide sets, presented over 300 radio and TV programs, written many press articles and conducted training for over 11,000 safety leaders and the general agricultural public in Kansas since its inception.

The Center has answered over 2,400 technical services requests for information and conducted several

programs to assist small ag-related industries in the state to develop new or improve old safety programs.

* The number of fatal agricultural accidents for the last nine years is listed below:

1976-45	1979-39	1982-19
1977-36	1980-46	1983-24
1978-45	1981-33	1984 (Est.) 30

* Note that the number of total agricultural accidents dropped significantly starting the second year after the Center began operation. We can't measure exactly how much the Center contributed to this decline but we know the rate was lower. Our work paid off. However, as funding decreased and fewer safety workers were involved the number of fatal accidents began to rise.

* The Agricultural Safety and Health Resource Center has over 100 films and slide sets and over 50 publications on agricultural safety and health available for distribution to interested persons.

* Center personnel have conducted many program planning meetings involving citizens from across the state. One major national symposium on safety "Methods of the Future" and one Governor's Conference on Agricultural Safety and Physical Rehabilitation have been conducted by the Center.

What are the Future Plans of the Center?

* We plan to continue our excellent production agricultural safety and health education program, expand and conduct similar programs for farm equipment manufacturers, ag product processors, grain handlers and ag service industries and to do special research and safety and health education programs for disabled farmers. We plan to establish safety courses for KSU students in Engineering, Agriculture and other appropriate curricula. We also plan to conduct research to identify hazards of new equipment and operations early in their development and to develop equipment and devices to assist handicapped farmers in their chosen occupation. We plan to work with other safety organizations to coordinate a state-wide agricultural safety program.



ASH CENTER

Professionals acting together
for safer and healthier working
conditions in agriculture and
related industries.

AGRICULTURAL SAFETY & HEALTH CENTER