

Station 1: See What a Farmer Sees

(About 8-10 minutes per station)

- Introduce yourself
 - Connection to agriculture/farming
 - Feel free to share any personal experience with an accident or a close call/near accident while driving farm equipment
- Why is farm equipment on the road?
 - Farmers are doing their jobs
 - Need to move equipment from one field to another
 - More equipment on the roads during planting & harvest season
 - Remember farmers are real people with families – imagine if your dad, mom, sister or brother were in the tractor
 - Please be patient
 - If you must slow down to 20 mph behind a tractor for two miles, you will only lose six minutes (compared to driving at 55 mph)
 - About the same as waiting for 2 stoplights
 - Better to arrive safely than not to arrive at all because of an accident
 - Farmers keep safety in mind, when possible we
 - Avoid peak traffic, choosing lower traffic routes
 - Avoid reduced visibility times - dust/dawn and after dark
- Students can climb up in the tractor to see what a farmer sees
 - Check out the visibility – front, behind & mirrors
 - Which traffic cone(s) can you see?
 - Where are your blind spots?
- Following distance
 - If you can't see the driver's mirrors' they can't see you
 - Never assume the farmer knows you are behind them
 - Farmers also have to pay attention to oncoming traffic & sometimes what's on the shoulder (mailboxes, etc)
 - Farm equipment can be loud

Station 2: – Behind the tractor/wagon

(About 8-10 minutes per station)

Rural Route Safety Day – Talking Points

Harvest Equipment: Tractor & Grain Cart

- Introduce yourself
 - Connection to agriculture
 - Feel free to share any personal experience with an accident or a close call/near accident while driving farm equipment
- SMV Signs/Safety Markings (point these out on the equipment)
 - SMV signs mean vehicle travels less than 25 mph
 - Farm equipment also has reflective markings, lights
 - As soon as you see it, slow down
- Closing Speed
 - Average driver reaction time is 2.3 seconds (from seeing something to braking)
 - In 5 seconds, a car traveling 55 mph travels 134 yards (more than a football field)
 - A tractor driving 20 mph travels about 50 yards in 5 seconds
- Distracted driving can be deadly, especially when it comes to farm equipment
 - Farm equipment is bigger & heavier than your vehicle
 - Reaction time/braking time doesn't give you any time to be distracted
- Watch for brake lights & turn signals
 - Field entrances – Farmers may turn at a place you don't expect (not a road/intersection)
- Wide width
 - Some farm equipment is wider than one lane, especially on narrow rural roads
 - Can have students measure width of the tractor/grain cart
 - Traffic lanes are 9 ft on rural roads, 12 ft on highways
 - Farmers will move over to allow you to pass when it is safe to do so, but they have to watch out for
 - Soft shoulders/deep ditches
 - Mailboxes, trees, etc along the road

Station 3: – In front of the tractor/wagon

(About 8-10 minutes per station)

- Introduce yourself
 - Connection to agriculture
 - Feel free to share any personal experience with an accident or a close call/near accident while driving farm equipment
- Pass with caution
 - Farm equipment is taller & wider than passenger vehicles
 - Make sure you have a clear view/no oncoming traffic & can pass safely
 - Only pass in a passing zone
 - No passing zones mean no passing - even if it's a slow-moving vehicle
- Wide Turns
 - Due to length & width farm equipment makes wide turns
 - Watch for turn signals
 - If a farmer moves to the right, don't assume they are moving over to let you pass
 - Lefthand turns – farmer may pull to the right
 - Righthand turns – farmer may pull to the left
- Stopping distance
 - Be careful pulling out in front of farm equipment – especially loaded grain trucks
 - Heavy equipment takes longer to stop
 - At 55 mph, it takes a loaded semi-truck (80,000 lbs) about 110 yards to stop (more than a football field)
 - At 65 mph, it takes a loaded semi about 175 yards to stop