

## **Station 1: Tractor**

(About 10-12 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
    - 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
- 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

## Rural Route Safety Day – Talking Points

### Planting Equipment: Tractor & Planter, Sprayer, Semitruck



- 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
- 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
- Watch for brake lights & turn signals
  - Can demonstrate flashers vs turn signals
- Field entrances – Farmers may turn at a place you don't expect (not a road/intersection)

## **Station 2: Sprayer/Fertilizer Equipment**

(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
- Wide width
  - Some equipment is wider than one lane, especially on narrow rural roads
    - Can have students measure width of the equipment
    - Traffic lanes are 9 ft on rural roads, 12 ft on highways
  - Equipment drivers 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
- Students can walk around the equipment to observe visibility
  - Check out the visibility – front, behind & mirrors
  - Which traffic cone(s) can you see?
- Following distance
  - If you can't see the driver's mirrors' they can't see you
  - Don't assume the driver knows you are behind them
    - Drivers also have to pay attention to oncoming traffic & sometimes what's on the shoulder (mailboxes, etc)
- 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

### **Station 3: – Semitruck**

(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
- Visibility
  - Have one student climb in the cab of the truck and use the mirrors to demonstrate blind spots
  - Have the other students stand in the blind spot & then move to where they are visible behind truck & on the sides
- Wide Turns
  - Due to length & width semi-trucks may make wide turns
  - Watch for turn signals
    - If a truck moves to the right, don't assume they are moving over to let you pass
    - Lefthand turns –truck may pull to the right
    - Righthand turns – truck may pull to the left
- Stopping distance
  - Be careful pulling out in front of semi-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
    - (can use cones to show distance)