



The U.S. Department of Labor identify certain agricultural tasks as particularly hazardous when performed, for hire, by youth under the age of 16. A training program was established that provided youth ages 14 and 15 to be certified to perform some of these tasks, when working for hire on a farm. Following are the 11 agricultural tasks identified as hazardous and a description of the training programs authorized by the U.S. Department of Labor. It should be noted that these limitations do NOT apply to youth working performing agricultural tasks on a farm/ranch owned or operated by their parents or legal guardian.

The Regulation

The Fair Labors Standards Act (U.S. Department of Labor) specifies 11 agricultural farm and ranch hazards as particularly hazardous when performed by youth under the age of 16. The 11 agricultural tasks are:

- 1) Operating a tractor of over 20 PTO horsepower, or connecting or disconnecting an implement or any of its parts to or from such a tractor.
- 2) Operating or assisting to operate (including starting, stopping, adjusting, feeding, or any other activity involving physical contact associated with the operation) any of the following machines:
 - i. Corn picker, cotton picker, grain combine, hay mower, forage harvester, hay baler, potato digger, or mobile pea viner;
 - ii. Feed grinder, crop dryer, forage blower, auger conveyor, or the unloading mechanism of a nongravity-type self-unloading wagon or trailer; or
 - iii. Power post-hole digger, power post driver, or nonwalking type rotary tiller.
- 3) Operating or assisting to operate (including starting, stopping, adjusting, feeding, or any other activity involving physical contact associated with the operation) any of the following machines:
 - i. Trencher or earthmoving equipment;
 - ii. Fort lift;
 - iii. Potato combine; or
 - iv. Power-driven circular, band, or chain saw.
- 4) Working on a farm in a yard, pen, or stall occupied by a:
 - i. Bull, boar, or stud horse maintained for breeding purposes; or
 - ii. Sow with suckling pigs, or cow with newborn calf (with umbilical cord present).
- 5) Felling, bucking, skidding, loading, or unloading timber with butt diameter of more than 6 inches.
- 6) Working from a ladder or scaffold (painting, repairing, or building structures, pruning trees, picking fruit, etc.) at a height of over 20 feet.
- 7) Driving a bus, truck, or automobile when transporting passengers, or riding on a tractor as a passenger or helper.
- 8) Working inside:
 - i. A fruit, forage, or grain storage designed to retain an oxygen deficient or toxic atmosphere;
 - ii. An upright silo within 2 weeks after silage has been added or when a top unloading device is in operating operation;
 - iii. A manure pit; or
 - iv. A horizontal silo while operating a tractor for packing purposes.

- 9) Handling or applying (including cleaning or decontaminating equipment, disposal or return of empty containers, or serving as a flagman for aircraft applying) agricultural chemicals classified under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 135 et seq.) as Category I of toxicity, identified by the word “poison” and the “skull and crossbones” on the label; or Category II of toxicity, identified by the word “warning” on the label;
- 10) Handling or using a blasting agent, including but not limited to, dynamite, black powder, sensitized ammonium nitrate, blasting caps, and primer cord; or
- 11) Transporting, transferring, or applying anhydrous ammonia.

Training Programs

The U.S. Department of Labor authorized the Cooperative Extension Service and High School Agricultural Science programs to provide training opportunities that would permit youth 14 and 15 years of age to perform certain hazardous tasks when working for hire on a farm. The Cooperative Extension and high school agricultural education versions of the training can provide youth the training needed so they can perform hazardous tasks listed in hazardous categories 1 and 2.

- 1) Operating a tractor of over 20 PTO horsepower, or connecting or disconnecting an implement or any of its parts to or from such a tractor.
- 2) Operating or assisting to operate (including starting, stopping, adjusting, feeding, or any other activity involving physical contact associated with the operation) any of the following machines:
 - i. Corn picker, cotton picker, grain combine, hay mower, forage harvester, hay baler, potato digger, or mobile pea viner;
 - ii. Feed grinder, crop dryer, forage blower, auger conveyor, or the unloading mechanism of a nongravity-type self-unloading wagon or trailer; or
 - iii. Power post-hole digger, power post driver, or nonwalking type rotary tiller.

For both training options, the youth must be 14 years of age when the certificate is issued, be familiar with hazards in agriculture, completed a training program (10 hours for Cooperative Extension programs and 15 hours for high school agricultural sciences programs), and passed a written examination and a practical hands-on tractor operation evaluation. For the Cooperative Extension program the youth must be a 4-H member.

A student-learners training option may be offered through the high school agricultural science program. Youth who complete this program may perform hazardous agricultural tasks identified in categories 1 through 6. The student must be enrolled in a vocational agricultural education program, and must be employed under a written agreement with an agricultural employer.

For more detailed information on training programs see “Hazardous Occupations Order for Agriculture” in the appendices section