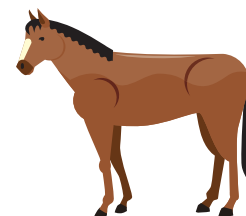




# Riding horses on farms



Accidents involving horses are often serious. Spinal injuries and serious head injuries can result from falls from horses and they can kick with such force that they can easily break bones and sometimes kill. You need a combination of common sense and caution when dealing with horses.

## KEY POINTS

- > Only trained and experienced people should ride horses for farm work.
- > Match riders to horses within their handling abilities.
- > Always wear a helmet when riding a horse.
- > Always supervise children on/and around horses.

*To assess the major risks and how to control them, see page 2.*

**Accepted Good Practice:** Always work with calm, deliberate movements around horses. Nervous handlers make horses nervous, creating unsafe situations. When handling your horse, use physical contact and your voice, so it always knows where you are. Always understand the significance of the horse's movements and its position in relation to you and its surroundings. Always supervise children on and around horses and make use of Personal Protective Equipment and ensure that it is well maintained and fit-for-purpose.

This information sheet outlines the main risks of riding and working with horses and provides recommendations on how to eliminate, isolate and minimise them. WorkSafe New Zealand accepts these recommendations as current industry good practice. They will help you comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA).

See the full guide at [www.saferfarms.org.nz/guides](http://www.saferfarms.org.nz/guides)

## HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The primary duties of a PCBU include:

- > providing and maintaining a safe work environment, safe plant and structures and safe systems of work
- > providing any information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect everyone from the health and safety risks at work.

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Workers must:

- > take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that their actions or inactions do not harm the health and safety of others
- > co-operate with any reasonable health and safety policy or procedure of the PCBU notified to them and comply with any reasonable instruction given by the PBCU (eg using personal protective equipment).

TABLE OF RISKS	
Risk	Good Practice
<b>RIDING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Always wear a helmet, so far as is reasonably practicable, when riding a horse. This will reduce the risk of head injury if you fall or a horse kicks you, because it protects your brain. Properly fit the helmet so it sits one inch above your eyebrows.</li> <li>&gt; Do not ride horses that regularly buck or behave unpredictably.</li> <li>&gt; Match riders to horses within their handling abilities.</li> <li>&gt; Only one person should ride a horse at a time.</li> <li>&gt; Never ride a horse while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Reassess tasks and find alternatives if the worker is stressed or fatigued.</li> <li>&gt; If riders need help with mounting, if possible, use a mounting block.</li> </ul>
<b>WORKING WITH/ TRAINING HORSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Never lunge a horse with a rider on its back.</li> <li>&gt; If the horse has a history of biting, tie it with a very short lead rope to the halter to restrict movement. It won't be able to bite.</li> <li>&gt; Only tolerate a bucking or bolting horse during breaking-in and the early stages of training.</li> <li>&gt; When handling your horse, use physical contact and your voice, so it always knows where you are. Always understand the significance of the horse's movements and its position in relation to you and its surroundings.</li> <li>&gt; Always use a lead line so you have a 'safety zone' and so you don't catch you hand in the halter. Hold the lead line with your right hand, eight to 10 inches.</li> </ul>
<b>TRANSPORTING HORSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; When loading and unloading horses for transport, use anti-slip loading ramps with shallow inclines. Do not stand directly under the ramp when lowering or raising it.</li> <li>&gt; Only horses used to traffic should be allowed on the road, especially if being ridden by an inexperienced rider.</li> </ul>
<b>RIDING ALONE AND IN ISOLATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Tell someone where you are working and when you plan to return.</li> <li>&gt; Carry a mobile phone, radio or emergency locator device.</li> <li>&gt; Have regular check-in times. This helps make sure there is a quick response if you do not return.</li> </ul>
<b>ZOOZOSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Manage zoonoses through vaccination and parasite control programmes, and by thoroughly washing and drying hands.</li> </ul>

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