



Safety Alert

Agriculture

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Portable Field Bin Lifting Mechanism Kick-Back

Summary of incident

During the process of manually raising or lowering portable field bins on farms, workers have received serious injury when struck on the head by the lever.

Background

Portable Field Bins that incorporate lever handles for the purpose of raising and lowering the bin have been linked to serious injuries and fatalities.

The raising and lowering mechanism is designed to utilise operator strength and may have an adjustable tensioned spring to provide additional assistance.

During the bin raising stage, as the lever is turned, it will reach a point where the weight of the bin (and spring force – if fitted) will maintain the bin in the lifted position. This requires the operator to position themselves out of the way of the detachable lever should it release or kick back.



The operator must install the locking pin into the bin axle for transportation. This required action may place the operator directly in line with the tensioned detachable lever, should the operator lose control of the detachable lever and/or the bin moves.

Operators have been struck during the raising and lowering of the bin causing serious head injuries as the handle may become dislodged or spring back rapidly with high force without warning.

Probable causes

- Using a field bin which has a spring assisted mechanism, to lower or raise the bin.
- Whilst using the lever to raise the field bin for transportation, the workers were positioned directly in line with the tensioned detachable lever
- Ensure the lever handle is firmly secured and/or controlled to prevent movement.

Action required

- Only raise or lower the field bin when empty.
- Ensure lever is firmly secured and /or controlled to the bin lifting mechanism or removed prior to installing the locking pin.
- Never hold the lever down by standing on it.
- Follow manufacturer's recommendations regarding safe use when provided. Ensure safe lifting/lowering procedures, in consultation with workers are developed and implemented. Also for when wheel(s) need maintenance or removal and fitting.
- Seek alternative methods of raising the bins, such as the use of winches or hydraulic lifts.
- Obtain a suitable modification kit and have fitted by a competent person.



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