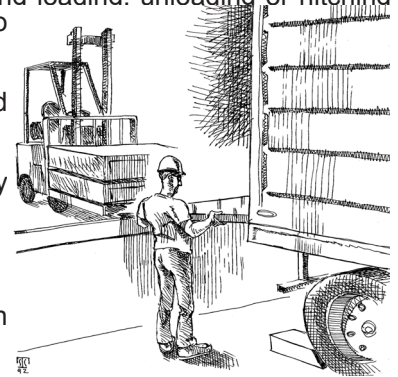# Safety Training for Agricultural Workers

Chocking and blocking

Wheel Chocking: Injuries can occur if truck or tractor wheels are not properly chocked when parked at loading docks or when hitching or unhitching implements. An unchocked vehicle can move away during loading, unloading or hitching operations, creating dangerous gaps. People, products, and even forklifts can fall into these gaps. Follow these loading-dock rules:

❖ Dock personnel should be responsible for chocking wheels, but truck drivers should make sure they have done so.
❖ The wheels on both sides must be chocked.
❖ Do not use pieces of lumber, cinder blocks, or rocks to chock. Always use a specially deigned truck-wheel chock.
❖ Chain chocks to the loading dock. This will prevent theft and slippage.
❖ Check chocks often to make sure they have not moved or slipped.

Chocking a wheel properly takes only a few minutes, but those few minutes could mean the difference between doing a job safely and leaving room for an accident to happen.

More on Chocking Safety: The purpose of chocks is to pin the vehicle's wheels and old them stationary. When unhooking farm equipment from a tractor, make sure the tires on the implement have been chocked to prevent the operator or bystanders from being injured if a roll back occurs. Chock the wheels on the rear-most axle. Tires on some equipment may need to be chocked in both the front and the rear. Operators can be caught between a tractor and the equipment or between equipment and the shop wall because proper chocking procedures were not followed. It is a simple concept, but many farm employees forget to use this procedure when working with or around equipment. In some cases, employees were killed or injured because they failed to follow this procedure.

Cargo Blocking: When loading or unloading bags or pallets from a semitrailer, it may be necessary to block freight inside the trailer to prevent cargo movement. Blocking reduces the chance of a load shift, which can cause a trailer to turn over and damage the cargo or injure employees. Cargo doesn't have to be round to move, so separately block all four sides of the cargo. Use sound blocking material. Make certain that nails or spikes are long enough and the lumber is thick enough to prevent the cargo from shifting. Other freight should never be used as a block.

Equipment Blocking: When working on equipment, don't rely on jacks or hoists to support the equipment. They are made to lift, not to support. The equipment should be blocked to support it while you are working on it. The purpose of both chocking and blocking is the same: securing to prevent movement.

Tips to Remember:
❖ Chock wheels at the rear axle.
❖ Block freight inside the trailer before loading or unloading.
❖ Do not unhook farm equipment that has not been chocked.
❖ Never put hands, fingers, or limbs between equipment and blocks.

❖ Double-up and alternate the positioning of blocks while building a platform.
❖ Use larger blocks on the bottom. Make the platform as wide as possible.

Trainer's Note: To demonstrate chocking-and-blocking principles, conduct the training session in the farm shop or in the field. Give employees an opportunity to show how they would chock or block equipment if they were using it in the field or repairing it in the shop.

Review These Points:
❖ Rear axles must be chocked.
❖ Do not try to unhook unchocked equipment.
❖ Freight should be blocked when loading or unloading a trailer.
❖ Other freight should not be used as a block. Use proper materials for blocking.
❖ Keep hands and fingers from in between equipment and blocks.

Cock & Block Quiz (True or False)
1. There is no need to chock farm equipment before it is unhooked from the tractor.
   ❑ True   ❑ False
2. The purpose of the chock is to pin the wheels and hold them stationary.
   ❑ True   ❑ False
3. It is a good safety measure to block cargo inside trailers when loading or unloading.
   ❑ True   ❑ False
4. When chocking a loaded hay wagon, chock the rear axle.
   ❑ True   ❑ False
5. Cargo should be blocked separately.
   ❑ True   ❑ False

True or False Answer Key
1. F   2. T   3. T   4. T   5 T.