Slips, Trips and Falls

at Agricultural Shows

Prepared for AgShows NSW Members with acknowledgement to SafeWork NSW resources and guidance.

Why It Matters

Slips, trips and falls are among the most common causes of injury at Agricultural Shows. While often perceived as minor incidents, they can result in serious consequences including:

- Sprains, strains and soft tissue injuries
- Fractures and spinal injuries
- Long-term impairment or disability
- Lost productivity and volunteer capacity
- Event disruption and increased operational costs
- Potential legal and insurance implications

Agricultural Shows are unique environments that combine livestock, machinery, temporary infrastructure, large crowds and changing weather conditions. As a result, effective planning and ongoing monitoring are essential to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls.

Key Message

Preventing slips, trips and falls at Agricultural Shows does not need to be complicated, but it does require planning, awareness and ongoing monitoring.

By identifying hazards early, adapting to changing weather and ground conditions, maintaining good housekeeping practices and implementing practical control measures, Show Societies can significantly reduce the risk of injury and create a safer environment for volunteers, workers, exhibitors, contractors and the public.

The SafeWork NSW Slips, Trips and Falls Self-Assessment Tool is a valuable resource for identifying areas for improvement and strengthening risk management practices.

For further information and guidance, visit the SafeWork NSW website.

Section 1 – Introduction

- Why slips, trips and falls matter at Agricultural Shows
- Statistics and consequences
- Acknowledgement of SafeWork NSW, Safe Work Australia and WorkSafe Victoria resources

Section 2 – Understanding the Risks

Slips Examples	**Trips** Examples	**Falls** Examples
• Mud • Manure • Wet grass • Wash bays • Food areas • Water runoff • Temporary flooring	• Uneven ground • Power leads • Hoses • Tent pegs • Temporary fencing • Vehicle loading areas • Poorly maintained footpaths	• Steps and stairs • Grandstands • Loading ramps • Temporary structures • Mounting blocks • Access ladders • Livestock yards

Section 3 – Agricultural Show Specific Hazards

A dedicated section that doesn't appear in the generic SafeWork documents:

- Livestock pavilions
- Horse areas
- Cattle and sheep yards
- Machinery displays
- Carnival and amusement areas
- Camping areas
- Night events
- Wet weather contingencies

Section 4 – Managing the Risk

Using the Hierarchy of Controls:

Control	Agricultural Show Example
Eliminate	Remove unnecessary cables and clutter
Substitute	Install non-slip matting
Isolate	Close muddy pathways
Engineering	Improve lighting and drainage
Administrative	Signage, inspections and inductions
PPE	Enclosed, non-slip footwear

This aligns directly with Safe Work Australia guidance.

Section 5 – Inspection Checklist for Shows

Adapted from the WorkSafe checklist.

Ground Conditions

- Mud and water accumulation controlled
- Wash-down areas identified
- Gravel and loose surfaces inspected

Walkways

- Walkways clear of clutter
- Cables protected or removed
- Temporary flooring secured

Lighting

- Public pathways adequately lit
- Amenities and livestock areas illuminated

Livestock Areas

- Manure regularly removed
- Feed and water spillages addressed
- Designated animal pathways established

Temporary Infrastructure

- Marquees secured
- Flooring inspected
- Ramps and steps stable

Aged Infrastructure

- Remains fit for purpose and still suitable for intended use
- No risk of failure
- Still in working order i.e appropriate ramps if required, smooth edging (timber seats), etc.

Weather

- Wet weather plan in place
- Alternative pedestrian routes available

Section 6 – Show Day Monitoring Checklist

A simple operational checklist:

1. Morning Inspection

2. Midday Inspection
3. After Significant Rainfall
4. Before Evening Events
5. Post-Event Review

Section 7 – Incident Response

- Isolate the hazard
- Treat injured person
- Record incident
- Investigate cause
- Implement corrective action
- Review risk controls

Section 8 – Practical Tips for Agricultural Shows

Practical Tips for Agricultural Shows

Consider incorporating the following into your event planning:

- Conduct daily site inspections during the Show
- Include slips, trips and falls in volunteer and exhibitor inductions
- Monitor weather forecasts and prepare contingency plans
- Ensure adequate lighting for evening activities
- Install matting in high-risk livestock and wash-down areas
- Use clear signage to warn patrons of changing ground conditions
- Promptly address hazards as they arise
- Encourage appropriate footwear for workers, volunteers and exhibitors

Section 9 – Resources

- SafeWork NSW
- Safe Work Australia
- AgShows NSW Risk Management Resources
- AgShows NSW Risk Assessment Templates