



Telling the Story Project Ag Literacy Week Toolkit

March 21-25, 2022

**#StoriesSaveLives | #TellAStorySaveALife | #TellingTheStoryProject |
#AgLiteracyWeek | #FarmSafety | #Cultivate Safety**



Telling the Story Project is a collaboration between the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH), Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (CS-CASH), Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (UMASH), National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety (NCCRAHS), and National Farm Medicine Center (NFMC).

Telling the Story Project: Ag Literacy Week Toolkit

[Telling the Story Project](#) creates injury prevention messages that highlight personal stories and first-hand experiences. The storytellers include farmers, agricultural workers, and family and community members who've been impacted by injuries, fatalities, or close calls. Told in their own words, their experiences provide valuable information to learn what went wrong and how to prevent similar incidents. The common thread: "We don't want this to happen to anyone else."

To celebrate Ag Literacy Week in 2022, we have created this [media toolkit](#) to encourage health and safety partners to share these stories far and wide, especially with the next generation of agriculture, such as middle school, high school, and college students. Please feel free to use the provided text and graphics to share about Telling the Story on your social media accounts, anytime, not just during Ag Literacy Week!

Toolkit Guide & Materials

- ☐ **Share** the [press release](#) with your networks.
- ☐ **Share** any template [teaser](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) posts on your organization or personal pages.
 - Download the graphics for each post from [this Flickr album](#). The relevant graphic is noted at the end of each post [PIC: Graphic name]. If you have difficulties accessing the Flickr album, you can also screenshot the graphics from the final pages of this toolkit or [contact Devon Charlier](#) for the files.
 - You can edit the length and content of the posts as you see fit. If you edit the posts, please follow the Media Guidelines for Agricultural Safety ([English](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#))
 - Use the following hashtags wherever possible: **#StoriesSaveLives #TellAStorySaveALife #TellingTheStoryProject #AgLiteracyWeek #FarmSafety #Cultivate Safety**
- ☐ **Follow** Telling the Story partners (and tag us in your posts!)

Center	Twitter	Facebook	Instagram
National Farm Medicine Center (NFMC)	@FarmMedicine	@farmmedicine	@farmmedicine
UNMC Central States Center for Agricultural Safety & Health (CS-CASH)	@unmccscash	@unmccscash	@unmccscash
Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH)	@GPCAH	@GPCAH	
Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety & Health Center (UMASH)	@UMASHcenter	@UMASHcenter	@umashcenter
National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety	@nccrahs	@nccrahs	

- ★ **Note:** Please feel free to use the provided text and graphics to share about Telling the Story on your social media accounts, *anytime*, not just during Ag Literacy Week!

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2022

CONTACT: Scott Heiberger

Heiberger.Scott@marshfieldresearch.org

715-207-1604

Celebrate Agricultural Literacy Week (March 21-25) by sharing agricultural safety stories with a [media toolkit](#) provided by [Telling the Story Project](#), a collaboration of four regional agricultural safety centers funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

The [toolkit](#) contains social media posts linking to personal stories told by farmers, agricultural workers, family and community members who have been impacted by injuries, fatalities, or close calls. Their experiences provide valuable information to learn what went wrong and how to prevent similar outcomes. The common thread: “We don’t want this to happen to anyone else.”

Agriculture Literacy Week, now in its 17th year, is a great opportunity to share these stories, especially with the next generation of agriculture, such as middle school, high school, and college students.

“Ag Literacy Week is about telling stories, reading stories, and hearing stories, all to promote learning. Telling the Story Project stories fit so well with that intent,” said Stephanie Leonard, occupational safety manager at The University of Iowa Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health. “Our stories can be used year-round to teach injury prevention lessons and to initiate safety conversations with family and friends, as well as to normalize these discussions.”

Other participating centers in Telling the Story Project include Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (University of Nebraska Medical Center); Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (University of Minnesota); and National Children’s Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety (National Farm Medicine Center, Marshfield Clinic Research Institute).

Agricultural media editors say that real stories make safety messages more relevant, according to [UMASH-funded research](#) published in the Journal of Extension.

Telling the Story Project content is meant to be shared. Farmers, media professionals, teachers, Extension, and safety professionals are especially encouraged to link to the stories and repurpose content. Please see [terms of use](#) for republishing and crediting.

###

Teaser Posts - *The example posts below are intended to be shared before Ag Literacy Week!*

Teaser 1

Mark your calendars - March 21-25 is Ag Literacy Week! Join us throughout the week as we highlight Telling The Story Project.

Hear injury prevention messages that highlight personal stories and first-hand experiences from farmers, agricultural workers, and family and community members. Told in their own words, their experiences provide valuable information to learn what went wrong and how to prevent similar incidents. Visit the website to learn more:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/>

[PIC: Teaser 1]

Teaser 2

Telling and hearing stories is the first step to literacy. March 21-25 is Ag Literacy Week. Use Telling the Story webpage to share stories of past incidents and ways to prevent injuries on your farm. Share your own stories of close calls and what you, your family and your children can do to prevent them. <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/>

[PIC: Teaser 2]

Facebook Posts - *The example posts below are intended to be shared during Ag Literacy Week (or anytime you need a health & safety story!)*

Monday 3/21

In Jerry's story, he describes "the day that he was supposed to die", when he attempted to unclog hay that plugged a manure pump on his family's dairy farm in South Dakota. Read the story of his long-shot survival, his loving family and community, and how they're staying safe on the farm now:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/jerry/>

[PIC: Jerry]

Leon became a passionate safety advocate after a close call pressure washing a poorly ventilated swine finishing building. Suddenly, he was engulfed by a flash fire. Thankfully, Leon's injuries have healed, and now, he's sharing what he knows about being safe on the farm. Check out his story here:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/leon/>

[PIC: Leon]

Tuesday 3/22

Rick was working alone, getting the barn ready for calving, and needed to replace a light bulb. While he balanced on a 10-foot wooden stepladder, the side rail broke, and Rick fell 15 feet to the concrete. It took over a month for his ribs to heal before he could get back to work. Check out his story here:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/rick-juan/>

[PIC: Rick]

In Jason's story, he and his wife, Roxy, tell a story of a close call with manure gas while on a "tractor date" during a busy manure application season. Jason fully recovered, but his doctors said his survival was remarkable. Read about their story and what they're doing now to improve safety on the farm:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/jason/>

[PIC: Jason]

Wednesday 3/23

Calling all Agricultural Instructors! Are you looking for a great classroom assignment to focus on ag literacy and agricultural safety?! Check out Steph's story and discussion guide:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Stephs-story-student-discussion-guide.pdf>

[PIC: Steph]

Kenny was doing farm chores when he suffered a devastating injury. "When he and the ATV tipped left, he knew the outcome would be bad. He heard his thigh bone snap when 700 pounds of equipment rolled over him." Kenny recovered but knows just how lucky he is every time he hears about a fatal ATV injury. Read Kenny's story and learn about safe ATV use here:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/kenny/>

[PIC: Kenny]

Thursday 3/24

At age 8, Brian's left arm was entangled in the auger of a grinder-mixer, resulting in amputation below the shoulder. A lifelong farmer, he has adapted his equipment and processes with safety in mind. "People don't realize that farming after injury is expensive. I don't get things done as fast because everything takes me longer to do," he explained. Read Brian's full story and learn what he's doing to increase safety on the farm:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/briansstory/>

[PIC: Brian]

"Live today like you are going to die tomorrow, but farm today like you are going to farm forever." Mike Biadasz loved farming. Use Mike's story and discussion guide to teach youth about how to stay safe on farms:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/discussion-guides/>

[PIC: Mike]

Friday 3/25

"I was on my back on the ground with my leg in the blower. It happened so fast, my foot slipped, and in I went." Brad is lucky to be alive and sharing his story today. Read more about Brad's incident and story at

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/brad/>

[PIC: Brad]

Tell a story, save a life! Telling The Story Project creates injury prevention messages that highlight personal stories and first-hand experiences. Visit the website to learn more:

<https://tellingthestoryproject.org/>

Do you have a story to share? Share this post with your story about injuries, fatalities, or close calls to encourage others to work safely.

#TellAStorySaveALife

[PIC: Call to Action]

Tweets - *The example posts below are intended to be shared during Ag Literacy Week (or anytime you need a health & safety story!)*

Monday 3/21

In Jerry's story, he describes "the day he was supposed to die" when he attempted to unclog hay that plugged a #manurepump. Read the story of his long-shot survival, his loving family & community, and how they're staying safe now: <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/jerry/> #TellAStorySaveALife

[PIC: Jerry]

Leon is a passionate #safetyadvocate after a close call in a poorly ventilated swine finishing building. Suddenly, he was engulfed by a flash fire. Now, he's sharing how to be safe in ag. <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/leon/> #TellAStorySaveALife

[PIC: Leon]

Tuesday 3/22

Rick was #workingalone, getting the barn ready for #calving, & needed to replace a light bulb. While he balanced on a 10-foot wooden stepladder, the side rail broke, and Rick fell 15 feet to the concrete. Check out his #laddersafety story here: <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/rick-juan/> #TellAStorySaveALife

[PIC: Rick]

In Jason & his wife, Roxy's story, they tell of a close call with #manuregas while on a tractor date during a busy manure application season. Jason fully recovered, but his doctors said his survival was remarkable. Read their story: <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/jason/> #TellAStorySaveALife

[PIC: Jason]

Wednesday 3/23

Calling all Ag Instructors! #FFA Are you looking for a great classroom assignment to focus on ag literacy and agricultural safety?! Check out Steph's story and discussion guide: <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Stephs-story-student-discussion-guide.pdf> #TellAStorySaveALife

[PIC: Steph]

Kenny was doing #farmchores when he suffered a devastating injury. "When he and the #ATV tipped left, he knew the outcome would be bad. He heard his thigh bone snap." Kenny recovered & knows just how lucky he is. Read Kenny's story here: <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/kenny/> #AgLiteracy

[PIC: Kenny]

Thursday 3/24

At age 8, Brian's left arm was entangled in the auger of a grinder-mixer, resulting in amputation below the shoulder. A lifelong farmer, he has adapted his equipment & processes with safety in mind. Read Brian's full story: <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/briansstory/> #AgLiteracy #TellAStorySaveALife

[PIC: Brian]

"Live today like you are going to die tomorrow, but farm today like you are going to farm forever." Mike Biadasz loved #farming. Use Mike's story and discussion guide to teach youth about how to stay safe on farms: <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/discussion-guides/> #TellAStorySaveALife #FFA #4H #Classroom

[PIC: Mike]

Friday 3/25

"I was on my back on the ground with my leg in the blower. It happened so fast, my foot slipped, and in I went." Brad is so lucky to be alive and sharing his story today. Read more about the incident and story at <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/brad/> #TellAStorySaveALife #AgLiteracyWeek

[PIC: Brad]

#TellAStorySaveALife! Telling The Story Project is creating injury prevention messages that highlight personal stories. <https://tellingthestoryproject.org/>

Do you have a story to share? Share this post with your story about injuries, fatalities, or close calls to encourage others to work safely. #TellAStorySaveALife

[PIC: Call to Action]

Instagram Posts - *The example posts below are intended to be shared during Ag Literacy Week (or anytime you need a health & safety story!)*

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Rick was #workingalone, getting the barn ready for calving, and needed to replace a light bulb. While he balanced on a 10-foot wooden stepladder, the side rail broke, and Rick fell 15 feet to the concrete. It took over a month for his ribs to heal before he could get back to work.

[PIC: Rick]

In Jason's story, he and his wife, Roxy, tell a story of a close call with #manuregas while on a "tractor date" during a busy manure application season. Jason fully recovered, but his doctors said his survival was remarkable. Read about their story and what they're doing now to improve safety on the farm: tellingthestoryproject.org/jason

[PIC: Jason]

Wednesday 3/23

Calling all Agricultural Instructors! Are you looking for a great classroom assignment to focus on ag literacy and agricultural safety?! Check out Steph's story and discussion guide on Telling the Story project webpage.

Crash, snap, groan. Those were the sounds of a shortcut.

It was a beautiful Sunday in May, and I was gung-ho to get a lot done: weed, clean gutters, till garden, and set up my patio...Read more with your students tellingthestoryproject.org

[PIC: Steph]

Kenny was doing farm chores when he suffered a devastating injury. "When he and the ATV tipped left, he knew the outcome would be bad. He heard his thigh bone snap when 700 pounds of equipment rolled over him." Kenny recovered but knows just how lucky he is every time he hears about a fatal ATV injury. Read Kenny's story and learn about safe ATV use.

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[PIC: Brian]

"Live today like you are going to die tomorrow, but farm today like you are going to farm forever." Mike Biadasz loved #farming. Use Mike's story and discussion guide to teach youth about how to stay safe on farms: tellingthestoryproject.org

#TellAStorySaveALife #FFA #4H #Classroom

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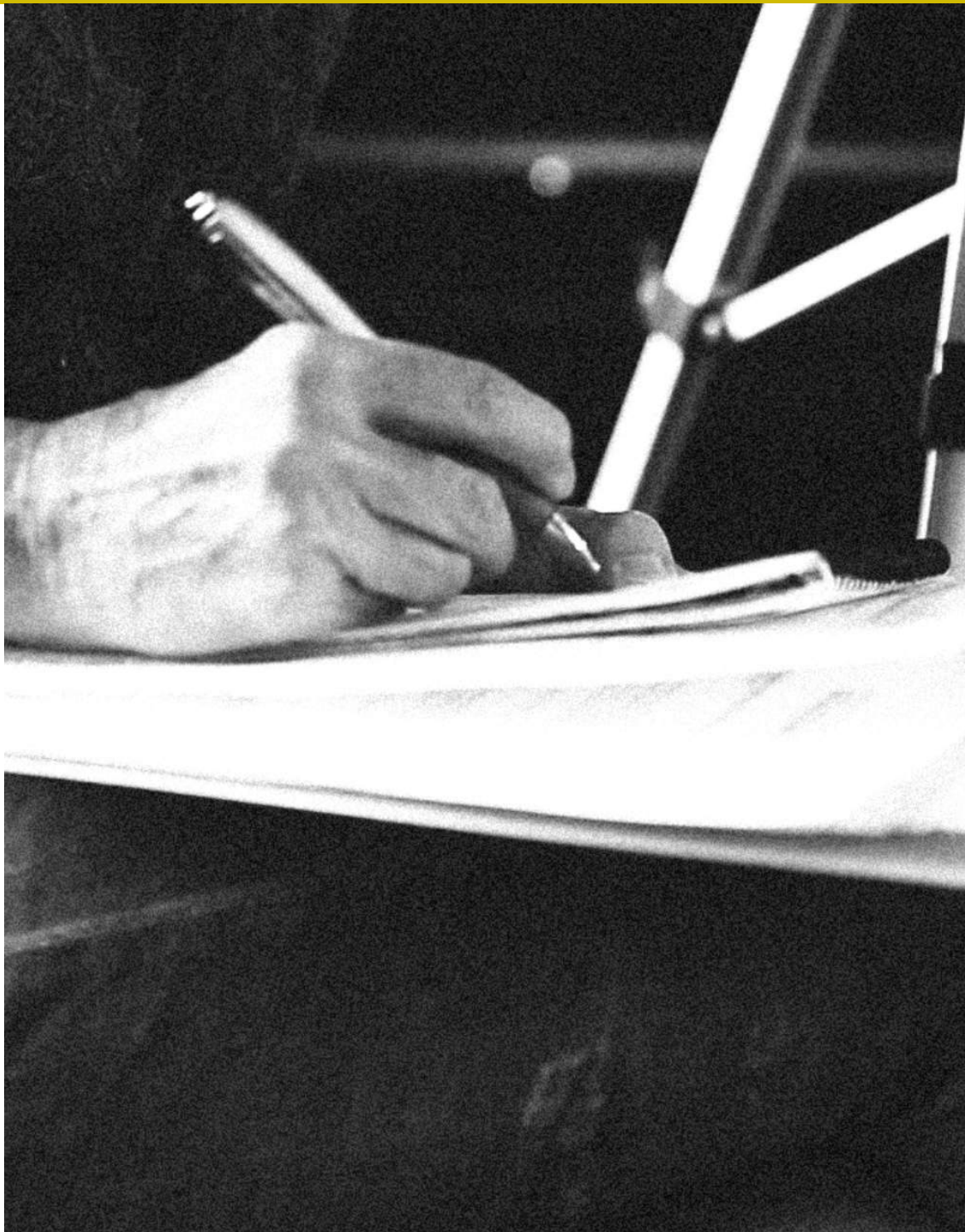
[PIC: Brad]

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[PIC: Call to Action]

Telling the Story Project



Telling the Story Project creates injury prevention messages that highlight personal stories and first-hand experiences.

The common thread is:

“We don’t want this to happen to anyone else.”

#TellAStorySaveALife

#StoriesSaveLives

#FarmSafety

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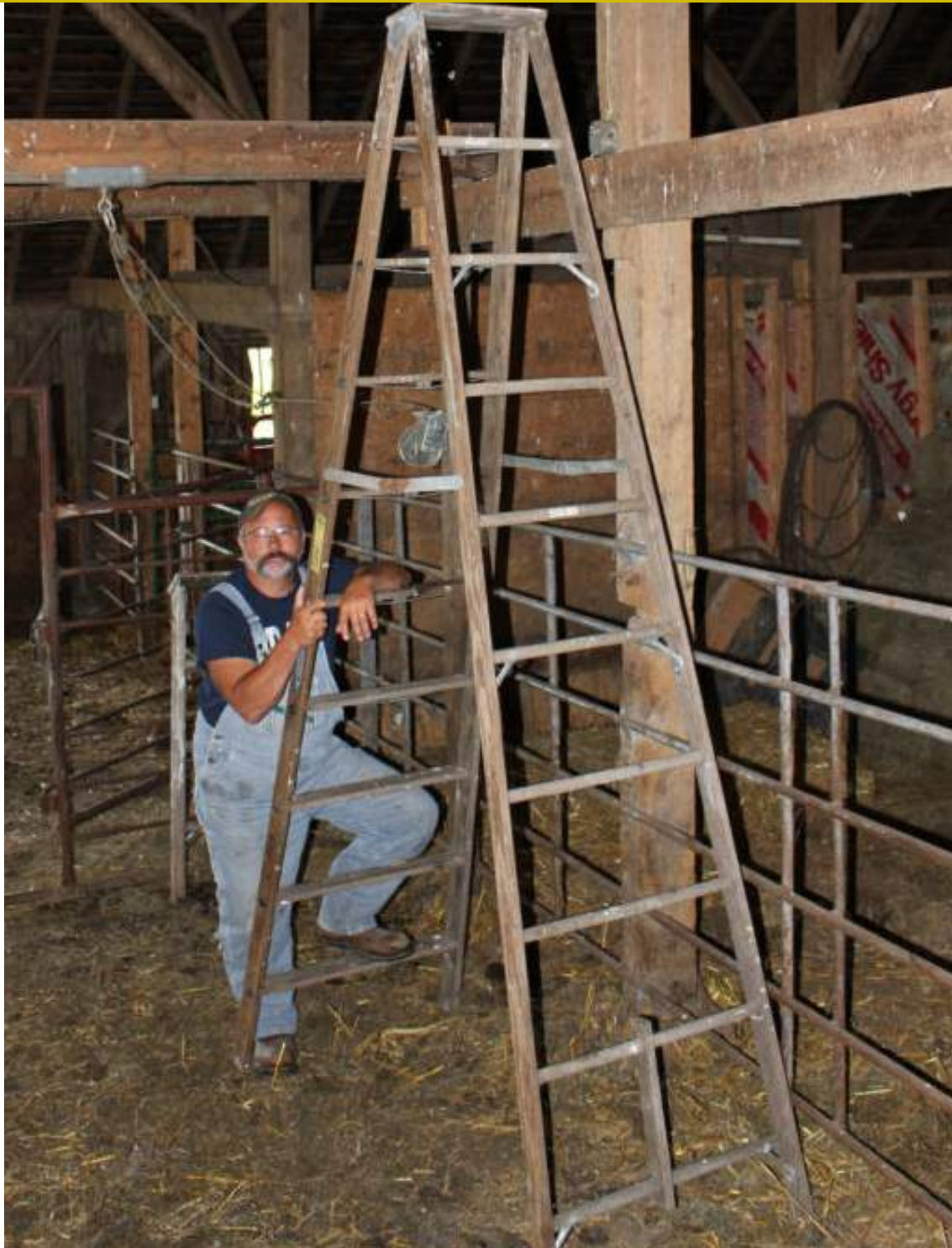
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Telling the Story Project



“I know if someone was watching me, I would not have taken that risk of getting on the top step. Now I think about that every time I grab a ladder. Why does it take getting hurt to learn the lesson?”

-Rick's Story

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#StoriesSaveLives

#FarmSafety

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Telling the Story Project



"About 90 seconds after starting to rinse off the floor with his cold water electric washer,' Sheets said, he heard 'a WHOOM and a BOOM.'"

-Leon's Story

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#StoriesSaveLives

#FarmSafety

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Telling the Story Project

suffers toxic gas



"What I had was hydrogen sulfide which is H_2S . When it comes into contact with your lungs it can change to sulfuric acid which is stronger than battery acid."

permitted to backflow, they too can become a confinement unit. Manure pit gases are an acute hazard when the liquid manure slurry is agitated, a common operation performed to suspend solids so pits can be pumped easily. During this process, H_2S can be released rapidly, rising from usual ambient levels of less than 1 ppm to lethal levels of over 500 ppm in seconds. Animals have died and humans have become seriously ill in swine confinement buildings when H_2S has risen from agitated pits underneath. Several humans have died when entering a pit dur-

ing this process. H_2S is H_2S and when it comes into contact with your lungs it can change to sulfuric acid, much stronger than battery acid. So you don't die just from blood but all the other organs what my lungs were filled with.

Jerry was found floating in the manure pit by his father, who had been on him. His father didn't know how to run to summon help. To save Jerry, his parents got a pump and opened the other lid to the manure pit. According to Jerry, McKen-

"If I can get someone out there to just think twice before they rush to do 'this thing' - whatever it may be - those few seconds of hesitation and thought might save you from something like I suffered. Thirty years on, I'm grateful for every day above ground."

-Jerry's Story

#TellAStorySaveALife

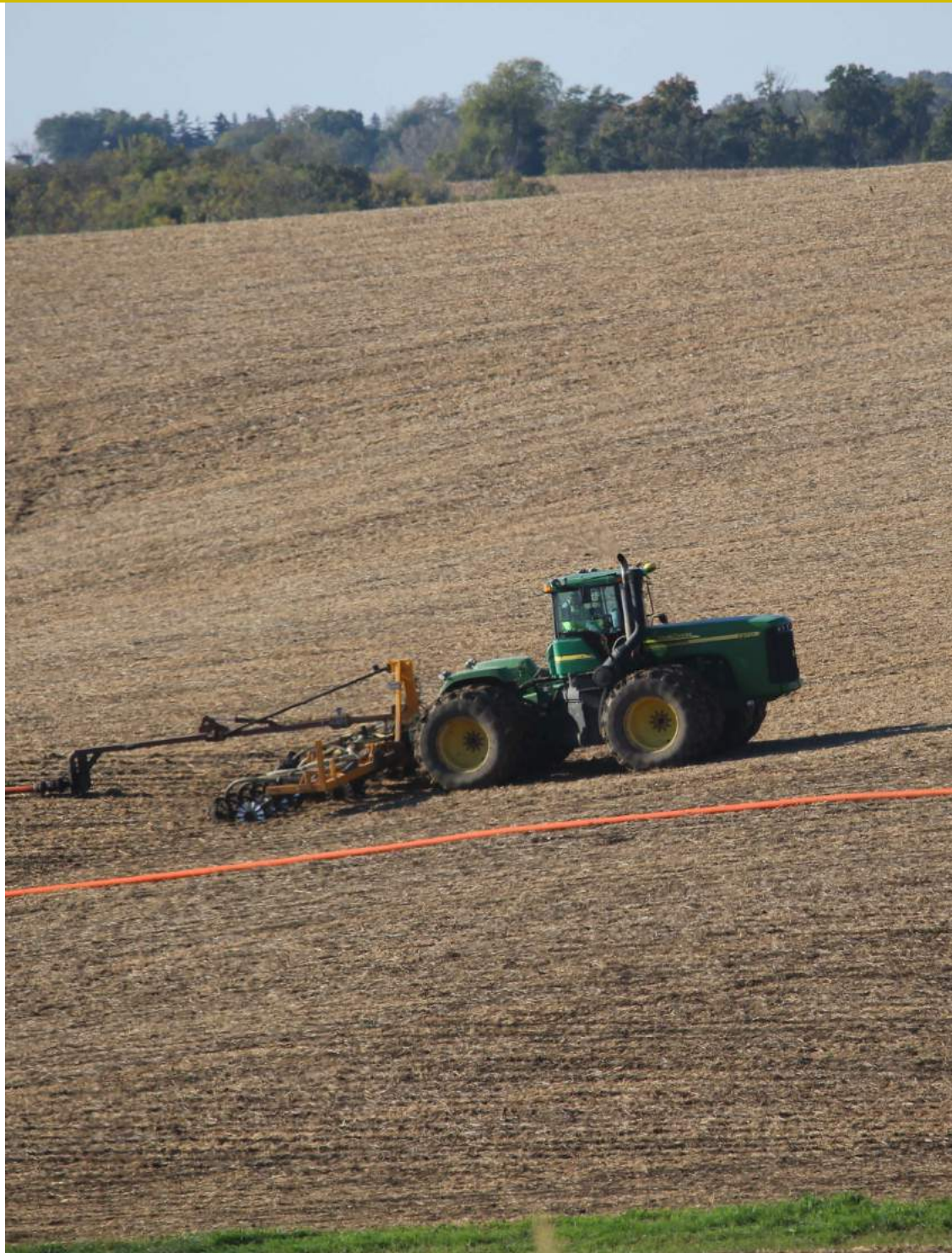
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"It is with me every single day: that he could have died, he could not be here. It doesn't affect him as much, because he doesn't remember as much. I remember everything."

**-Roxy,
in Jason's Story**

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Telling the Story Project



"To this day, every time I hear a silo blower kick in, my right leg tingles with the memory...had I taken just a couple more seconds and walked around the blower instead of reaching across, I would not have been a part of that farm accident."

-Brad's Story

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#StoriesSaveLives

#FarmSafety

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"When she first saw where that 4-wheeler was, she just burst into tears. She said 'How'd you ever survive that?' It was quite emotional for her."

-David's Story

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#StoriesSaveLives

#FarmSafety

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Telling the Story Project



"But playing down her injury as 'just a livestock injury' or 'a small injury' didn't work with livestock producers who set her straight about the other possible outcomes: 'You could've lost your hand ... or your life.'"

-Susan's Story

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#StoriesSaveLives

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Telling the Story Project



"It was at the funeral home, preparing to bury their only son, that the Biadasz family became farm safety advocates. In lieu of flowers they decided to invite donations to a farm safety fund."

-Mike's Story

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#StoriesSaveLives

#FarmSafety

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“Think everything through before you do a job,” Brian added. “It’s the little things, everyday things you take for granted that can go bad and get you hurt.”

-Brian's Story

#TellAStorySaveALife

#StoriesSaveLives

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Telling the Story Project



"When he and the
ATV tipped left, he
knew the outcome
would be bad. He
heard his thigh bone
snap when 700
pounds of equipment
rolled over him."

-Kenny's Story

#TellAStorySaveALife

#StoriesSaveLives

#FarmSafety

tellingthestoryproject.org



Telling the Story Project



"I knew the short ladder was the poorer choice, safety-wise. I wouldn't have three points of contact on the ladder that the 10-foot ladder allowed. I had a heavy pot to lift. I knew you shouldn't get on the top step. There was no soft place to fall."

-Steph's Story

#TellAStorySaveALife

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Telling the Story Project



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