

TO: Grain Safety Mailing list  
FROM: Bill Field, Professor  
DATE: May 4, 2021  
RE: 2020 Summary

Please find attached two items that may be of interest.

1. 2020 Summary of U.S. Agricultural Confined Space-Related Injuries and Fatalities
2. Editorial on grain quality, a significant contributing factor to grain-related entrapments

For over 40 years, Purdue has been attempting to summarize incidents involving grain storage, handling, and transport. Our goal is to reduce the frequency and severity of these incidents by maintaining focus on the problem and providing data to develop evidence-based prevention strategies. However, as you will note in the report, the frequency of grain-related fatalities and injuries has remained almost unchanged over the past six years. During that time hundreds of articles have been published on the problem, tens of thousands of workers have been trained, grain safety stand downs have been conducted, millions of dollars spent on OSHA fines and civil litigation settlements, dramatic movies and training videos produced, thousands of grain rescue tubes sold and given away, and thousands of emergency first responders trained on more effective grain rescue strategies. There are few other agricultural-related hazards that have received more financial and intellectual investments on a national level than entrapments in grain. Maybe, it's time to take a breath and reassess the path being taken. Maybe, there are some adjustments needed. For example, why are we spending so much time and money on training first responders to rescue the relatively small number of victims that survive entrapment or engulfment? Should more of our limited resources be spent on prevention, including maintaining grain quality, reducing the need to enter grain storage, educating young workers, etc.?

Those of us involved with this effort want to thank each of you for your past contributions to protecting those who produce, transport, store, and process the U.S. grain crop. As you will see the struggle is not over.

Please feel free to reprint and distribute the attached information to those who have the capacity to promote safer storage, handling, and transport of grain.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

