

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Taking Risks: All-Terrain Vehicle Safety Among Agricultural Communities

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Purpose/Objective:

ATVs are extremely popular in rural areas for both recreational and work purposes. From 1992-2007, 68% of ATV work-related fatalities in the US were among those in agriculture. Despite this, the epidemiology of agricultural-related ATV use is largely unknown. The objective of this study was to describe the epidemiology of ATV use, riding behaviors, crash history and safety knowledge among visitors to the nation's largest outdoor farm show.

Methods/Efforts:

Visitors to the 2012 and 2013 Farm Progress Shows were surveyed on ATV use and their history of safety behaviors at the Iowa ATV Safety Task Force tent. An ATV was defined as a vehicle with low-pressure tires with a seat that is straddled and handlebars for steering (excludes side-by-sides). Descriptive and comparative analyses were performed including the examination of differences among ATV riders and non-riders, and those with and without a history of an ATV crash.

Results/Findings:

Data from the 2013 Farm Progress Show will be added to the data and analyzed for presentation at the ISASH meeting. For the 2012 Farm Progress Show, 411 visitors completed the survey. Over 50% of those surveyed were male, lived on a farm and 90.1% had ridden an ATV. One in 10 riders was over the age of 65 with the majority of riders being 31-65 years of age. The youngest ATV rider surveyed was less than 6 years old. Among riders, 55% rode daily or weekly, 80% had ridden with a passenger and 33% had been in a crash. Half of riders reported never wearing a helmet. Safety knowledge did not correspond with safe behaviors. For example, 80% of those who knew you should only have one rider on an ATV still rode with passengers.

Application to Field Research:

ATV use is prevalent in farming populations but few riders report safe riding behaviors. Study and input from agricultural producers is needed to understand how to increase safety behaviors among this population. ATV safety education and training programs should be developed to target agricultural populations, particularly for young farm workers, and those > 65 years of age.

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