

Hearing Protection on Dairy & Crop Farms

Why It Matters:

Hearing loss from prolonged exposure to loud farm equipment is **permanent** and **irreversible**. Protecting your ears is essential for long-term health.

Key Safety Points:

- **Wear hearing protection** (earplugs or earmuffs) when working around loud machinery (tractors, grinders, milking systems).
- If you have to **shout** to be heard within **three feet**, the noise level is too high.
- Limit time spent near **high-noise areas** whenever possible.
- Use **sound-dampening materials** (rubber mats, insulation) to reduce noise levels in work areas.
- Get regular **hearing tests** to monitor any signs of hearing damage.

Real-Life Risks:

- Many farmers experience gradual hearing loss without realizing it until it's too late.
- Constant exposure to high noise levels can lead to tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and difficulty hearing conversations.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the noisiest tasks you do daily?
- What are some ways we can reduce noise exposure on the farm?