

Hygiene and protection against diseases

48-hour rule

- ❖ If you leave Finland and are in contact with domestic animals or pets abroad, you must wait for 48 hours before you can enter a Finnish farm keeping domestic animals. This waiting period starts from the time when you last were in contact with animals.
- ❖ If you have not been in contact with animals during your time abroad, the waiting time is negotiable.

When you return to Finland, have sauna. Wash all clothes you used abroad. Clean and disinfect your shoes.

- ❖ You are not allowed to bring back animal-based products, such as meat, milk or eggs.

- ❖ If you travel by car and use the same car to visit foreign farms keeping domestic animals, make sure that no manure or dirt is brought back in your car to Finnish farms.

For more information, visit Association for Animal Disease Prevention, www.ett.fi
Finnish Food Safety Agency, <http://www.evira.fi/portal/en/>

Partners



Hygiene and protection against diseases

If during the construction project you work on the farm's animal shelters or feed storages, you must follow the instructions given by the farm owners and your employer in order to maintain production hygiene and protection against infectious diseases. In order to maintain good production hygiene, stop manure and dirt from getting from dirty areas into clean areas, such as feed storages, animal feeding tables, dairy, maintenance areas, and toilets and washrooms. The purpose of measures taken against diseases is to prevent the introduction and spreading of infectious diseases on the farm.

- ❖ You must follow these instructions at all times, for example when you move between dirty and clean areas. Make sure you do not bring manure or dirt in your shoes and tools from the dirty area to the clean area.
- ❖ Use the protective clothing and footwear provided. The protective clothing is only used in the production premises and must be taken off before you leave. For example, you cannot wear the same shoes to take a break outside.
- ❖ Follow the instructions provided for washing hands, shoes and tools, and for working on the feeding areas and feed storages.
- ❖ In Finland, it is strictly forbidden to feed domestic animals in the food production chain with food waste that contains meat.
- ❖ If you have food that you have brought from abroad, you are not allowed to take it to a production building on farms that keep cows, pigs, chicken etc.
- ❖ Make sure that the tools and machinery you use are clean and, if necessary, disinfected before they are taken to the farm and that no manure or dirt is brought to the farm with them. Wash and, if necessary, disinfect dirt, tools and machines before you take them away from the farm.



Animals on site

Never try to frighten animals. A cow that is afraid of people is an occupational safety hazard. She will try to escape and, if feeling cornered, may panic and run over people. Cows can be afraid of sudden high-pitched noises. If the construction work produces such noises, take them into account in your work plan and agree on the working practices with the person caring for the animals and the person responsible for occupational safety. Cows can hear some sounds, high-pitch noises in particular, better than humans. The sound of compressed air or clinking metal may frighten cattle.

If you are working in a conventional barn where cows are tied to their stalls, note that, despite their wide field of vision, cows cannot see what is behind them. Let the animals know that you are there, and do not just suddenly appear behind them.

Cows follow a ranking order and always try their best to avoid those that are above them in the hierarchy. If the cows are moving freely but are in a confined space, it may be more reasonable for a cow to barge into a human rather than threaten a higher-ranking cow. Notice narrow passages, tight corners and closed spaces from where you cannot escape.

Do not go near cows that have just given birth to a calf, for example in the calving pen. Hormones generated during calving may cause cows to behave abnormally and aggressively towards humans. Cows may also try to defend their calves.

When you are climbing up a ladder, you may seem large and abnormal to animal eyes.

Move calmly among animals, avoiding loud noises and sudden movements. Cows may also approach visitors because they are curious. You can get to know them by talking to them in a quiet voice.



WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT FARM CONSTRUCTION?



- Safety instructions for workers

Address and/or coordinates of the construction site:

General

On farms, there are many aspects that affect occupational safety. The purpose of this brochure is to remind you of some of them.

Your employer, the supervisor and the client are responsible for maintaining occupational safety.

For more information, visit

Government Decree on the Safety of Construction Work 205/2009, www.finlex.fi/en/
Occupational Safety and Health Act, www.finlex.fi/en/
Occupational Safety and Health Administration
<http://www.tyosuojelu.fi/fi/workingfinland/>

Farm environment

When a construction site is located on a farm, remember that normal farm work will continue during construction. As the site cannot always be fenced off, it is important to store construction materials and other supplies in the areas designated on the site plan, and to collect and place waste in the area reserved for it. When you move around the construction site, be aware of farm traffic, which can be fast-moving at busy times and may share the routes with construction traffic. The farm's owners live on site and they may have children, who can access the construction site but are not aware of the dangers.

Farm machinery and equipment may be suited to moving and lifting building materials. However, such machinery is not meant to be used in construction with prefabricated elements or hoisting personnel.

- ❖ Always make sure that you are allowed to use the machines for the intended purpose, that you can operate the equipment correctly, and that you have the required driving permit.
- ❖ Check that the ground or the building floor or grates can take the machine weight also during lifting.
- ❖ Transfer and installation of elements must be performed using machinery that is intended for such use and has passed the relevant checks. The operator must be qualified to drive the lifting equipment.
- ❖ Persons may only be lifted using lifting devices that are manufactured for the purpose and have passed the relevant checks. Operators of such personnel hoists must have a driving permit signed by their employer.
- ❖ When being lifted in the man cage of telescopic or knuckle boom lifts, employees must always wear personal protective equipment against falls from a height.

Accident hazards

Scaffolding and unfixed ladders are the most typical causes of accidents in farm construction, and falls from a height are the most common cause of injury. Accident statistics indicate that uneven, slippery or unstable ground, hand tools and machinery also cause accidents on farm construction sites. Please note that farm animals can also cause hazardous situations.

MOST COMMON CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS	Number of accidents
Scaffolding/unfixed ladders	219
Uneven or slippery ground	163
Products, objects, tools	155
Disk saws, circular saws, machine tools	120
Hand tools	111
Working conditions, working movements and positions	110

Source: Mela Injure Claims Statistics 2005–2008.

Accident cases

"I stepped back to avoid a falling beam and fell into an open manure gutter."

"I was installing a water pipe in a trench. The trench edge collapsed on top of me and I was buried up to my chest under the soil, which crushed my ribs and chest."

"I was fixing a pen gate on a pig farm. The pigs got scared of something and rammed the gate. My left hand was trapped."

"We were repairing electric wires in a barn attic. Mice, bank voles, rats and other rodents had made their nests under the roof. I caught epidemic nephropathy (viral haemorrhagic fever or 'mole fever')."

Biological hazards

A farm environment poses biological risks, such as mould, ticks, bacteria and viruses. You may be exposed to such hazards when handling dusty or mouldy materials. Exposure usually occurs via respiratory passages but also via skin or the digestive tract. Biological factors may cause allergic reactions, such as colds or asthma, fever and infections.

Remember to follow your employer's instructions on protective equipment and safe working practices. Use approved respiratory protective equipment against mould and other biological dust. Use class FFP3 disposable masks, class P3 half masks, and class TH3P powered respirators when using a helmet or a hooded respirator.

Dangerous gases

On farms, gases may be dangerous because they are toxic or explosive, or they displace oxygen in breathing air.

Manure slurry generates gases that can cause death. The most harmful of these are hydrogen sulphide, methane, ammonia and carbon dioxide. They may suffocate you and cause rapid loss of consciousness. High concentrations of hydrogen sulphide will numb your sense of smell, meaning that you will not notice its distinctive smell of rotten eggs.

Gases may explode. You should never smoke or perform hot work in the vicinity of manure pits or tankers. Do not go near manure pits, hatches, pumps or tankers. Manure slurry is at its most hazardous when it has been or is moving.

Spaces that have no oxygen

Gases accumulating in containers or silos may displace oxygen in the air. Farmers have died when they have entered nearly empty slurry tanks. Conditions where oxygen is lacking can only be detected with special gauges, and spending even a few seconds in such environment may cause death. Never enter containers or silos without immediate rescue capacity (rescue rope and the required number of rescuers) and a compressed air line breathing apparatus, or without otherwise ensuring that the air is safe to breathe.



For more information, visit

Farmers' Social Insurance Institution Mela, www.mela.fi/en
Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, www.ttl.fi/en/
The Centre for Occupational Safety, www.tyoturva.fi/en
Occupational Safety and Health Administration,
<http://www.tyosuojelu.fi/fi/workingfinland/>
Association of Finnish Suppliers of Labour Safety Equipment, <http://www.styl.fi/en/front-page/>

Fire safety

The conditions on farms may be favourable for fire ignition and spreading. Putting out fires may be especially challenging due to small yards, large buildings grouped closed together, and containers and storage for silage, litter, fertilisers, oil and woodchip. Old electrical installations have caused many fires on farms.

Building and renovation of farm buildings increase the fire risk. You can decrease the risk by taking into account at least the following factors:

- ❖ Employees must read the farm's emergency and rescue plan. The construction site must have a plan for dealing with fires.
- ❖ All employees on the construction site must know the location of fire extinguishers and how to use them. Fire extinguishers must be located in a place that allows easy access.
- ❖ Avoid storing combustible and highly flammable materials on the construction site unless it is necessary. Remove all highly flammable waste from the site.
- ❖ Never store building materials and supplies in places where they can, even temporarily, block the farm or construction site emergency entry ways for the fire fighters.
- ❖ When wiring up the construction site, take into account farmhouse traffic and the condition and capacity of the existing wiring.
- ❖ If hot work is carried out on the construction site (work that generates sparks or involves using flames or heated elements and causes a fire hazard), make sure that:
 - the construction site has a hot work control plan in place and that employees have read it
 - the hot work site has appropriate fire extinguishing equipment
 - the site is guarded in case of fires for at least an hour after the hot work is finished

Emergency number

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