

Injury Fact Sheet—Agriculture

Orchard Workers—Struck-by or Against Injuries



421 orchard workers were seriously injured from being struck by or against objects in the years 2000-2004



These injuries were so serious that the workers had to take time off work to recover or in some cases, were permanently disabled. Serious injuries are costly and affect your industrial insurance premiums. They contribute to the reason for the base rate of \$0.55 per hour per orchard worker paid by orchard employers in 2006. If your company has a higher than average number of injuries (claims), your “experience rating” could increase by as much as 25% in one year to \$0.67 per hour per employee.

At first, it may not seem like much but consider this: if you had 5 full-time workers and had an average number of injuries (claims), you would pay about \$5,500 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay about \$6,700 in premiums, or \$1,200 more in 2006.

Causes of struck-by or against injuries

15% of all serious injuries in orchards were struck by injuries. A frequent source of struck by injuries is hand tools such as pruners or knives, tree branches, ladders, and various farm equipment.



Ways to prevent struck-by or against injuries

- Before beginning work, inspect all your machinery safety guards, including chain guards and Power-Take-Off (PTO) guards. If any guards are missing or broken replace or repair them.
- Whenever possible, equip tractors with a Roll Over Protective Structure (ROPS) and wear seat belts.
- Do not move a tractor if a worker is between it and its wagon.
- Wagons and trailers should be on level ground and chocked before unhitching them.
- Keep hand tools in good condition. Handles should be tight and free from defect. Cutting tools should be kept sharp.
- Properly store hand tools (especially cutting tools like saws, axes and knives) so they cannot be brushed against accidentally.

