

OLDER FARMERS

Making farm work easier as we get older

The natural effects of growing older such as loss of muscle strength and agility; slower reaction times; diminished eyesight and hearing; impaired balance and reduced concentration, can all make jobs we once did easily, much harder and more likely to result in injury.

GREAT IDEA BANK

Farmers across Australia identified the specific farm tasks that are more difficult for them to achieve, then using their considerable experience, outlined the things they do to find ways to make the work easier.

Farmers reported increased difficulty with:

- Climbing in and of trucks and utes due to loss of strength in shoulders, poor flexibility and agility
- Climbing up and down from the back of the ute due to loss of strength, flexibility and agility
- Reversing due to neck stiffness and pain
- Lifting the trailer onto the tow-bar due to loss of strength
- Getting on and off quads due to loss of flexibility and agility
- Changing tyres due to loss of strength in getting nuts undone and moving heavy tyres
- Night time driving due to poorer vision and problems with bright lights.



MAKING WORK EASIER

Farmers identified four major principles that could be used to make work easier.

- Make your changes sooner rather than later!**
The sooner you make the job easier, the better your quality of life. In addition, we'll get the most from our early investment in time or resources.
- Wheels can solve lots of problems**
Wheels can make moving many things much easier - gates, small machines, trailers, augers. Think wheels!
- Steps and rails make life much easier**
Putting better and lower steps on trucks, machines and buildings, with strong handrails to grab and help take the weight, work like magic. We need to look for where we might make these changes.
- Most changes are not that expensive**
Many of the changes need not cost the earth - and it's not self indulgent to spend a bit on ourselves - we've earned it!

TIPS FROM FARMERS FOR FARMERS

- Better yard design including slam latch gates makes stock work easier.



- Weld up a safe access platform on your tractor to make it easier to get on and off.



- Install a hydraulic lifting device, “ute crane” or hoist, on the back of the ute.



- Forget the quad - get into a side by side, they are easier to sit in, come with a passenger seat, ROPS, seatbelt and you can carry and tow loads.



- A low mobile stool can be great for the workshop, getting up and down or under vehicles.



- Reading glasses come very cheaply in those bargain stores. Have pairs in the workshop, the chemical store, the ute, the tractor as well as for reading the paper or doing the bookwork.



- Wheels are great!



If you want more information and Great Ideas, or if you have your own Great Ideas that you would like to share with other farmers, please go to www.farmsafe.org.au or contact:

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