

# Farm safety a priority this holiday season

## A spotlight is being put on safety as the summer school holidays approach and children and visitors begin spending more time on the nation's dairy farms.

With challenging conditions adding to pressures on farm, Dairy Australia's Sarah Thompson says the safety of farm families is too important to let hazards go unaddressed.

"In the blink of an eye, an accident can happen on farm and your child, grandchild or a visitor could be seriously injured," Ms Thompson said.

As many farmers are working longer hours, possibly with fewer staff, Dairy Australia is highlighting its farm safety resources ahead of the summer school break.

Dairy farmers can use Dairy Australia's Farm Safety Starter Kit to conduct quick safety scans of their properties before school wraps up for the year.

The Farm Safety Manual and workshops conducted in dairy regions also guide farmers through the development of a comprehensive safety system on farm.

"Nothing is more important than ensuring our loved ones, staff and visitors are safe," Ms Thompson said.

"Every accident involving a child on farm is preventable, and there is no better time to consider safety on farm than as the school holidays approach."

For Gippsland dairy farmer Trish Hammond, school holidays are an opportunity to remind her young children about the importance of safety on her 650 cow farm in Labourtouche.

"When we are out on the farm, the kids are with us as well – and during school holidays, this means we take the time to keep them safe," Trish said.

"At the dairy, kids are always exposed to safety hazards but we have a number of rules in place to make sure they stay safe."

Trish and husband Mark have been dairy farming for eight years. During school holidays, their three kids – Dane, 10, Amber, 8 and Lara, 6, will be spending more time on farm.

Mindful of potential safety risks, Trish's kids are not allowed in the dairy without a parent present, and children and visitors are supervised at all times.

"We're very close to a road and my fear has always been that the kids will venture off, so we put in place an 'invisible line' the kids are not allowed to cross – they know the places on farm that are out of bounds," Trish said.

Before heading out in the paddock with their parents, Dane, Amber and Lara are reminded to be careful around the herd and never go near the effluent ponds.

"Sometimes, kids do come out into the paddocks with us but we spend a fair bit of time with them talking about how cows can be volatile and teaching them about animal behaviour," Trish said.

"The kids always know never to get close to a cow and they are always watching the distance between them and the animal.

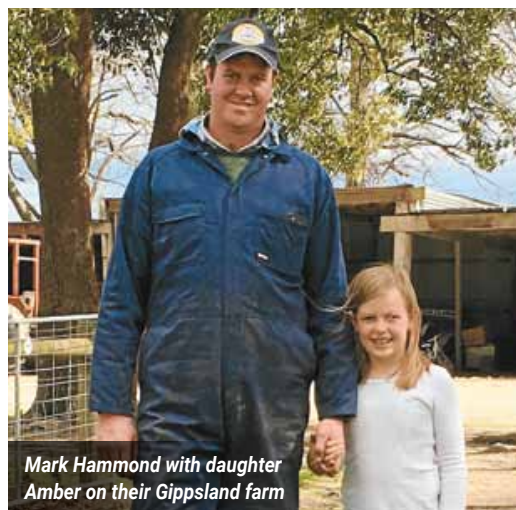
"Effluent ponds are also off limits – they are no go zones and the kids have grown up knowing the ponds are absolutely out of bounds."

At a recent Women in Dairy event hosted by GippsDairy, Trish received high visibility Legendairy vests for her kids to wear on farm to boost their visibility and encourage greater safety awareness.

With milk tankers and other vehicles often coming and going from Trish's farm at odd hours, Trish knows Dane, Amber and Lara will be clearly visible to drivers.

"The kids are always highlighted with these vests and the tanker driver knows to watch out for them too," she said.

"You don't always know when a truck will turn up but with the kids wearing high vis vests, a truck can always spot them and they are always in our sight." ■■



Mark Hammond with daughter Amber on their Gippsland farm

Farmers can access Dairy Australia's farm safety tools at [thepeopleindairy.com.au](http://thepeopleindairy.com.au) or register for workshops by contacting their local Regional Development Program.



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