Hearing Loss is one of the easiest farm hazards to protect against

You can begin to save your hearing today even if you have experienced some hearing loss by using:

Formable Foam Plugs

These are compressed in the fingers and then they gently expand when inserted in the ear.

Earmuffs

These hard plastic earcups are lined with sound absorbing foam or oil filled bags with an adjustable head band.

Plugs and Muffs are:

Comfortable
Simple
Inexpensive
Convenient
Effective

It’s never too late to start!

Hearing Loss Can Lead to:

Constant ringing in the ears
Partial to full deafness
Difficulty hearing conversations on radio
Difficulty hearing conversations in groups
Need to use hearing aids
Increased stress or fatigue
Reduced productivity and safety
Social isolation and depression

The recommended response to stop hearing loss is to fix the noise source. If this is not practical, then you need to use ear plugs or ear muffs whenever noise is 85 decibels or more. A handy rule of thumb is to think about this as the level when you have to shout to be heard by someone a few feet away.
The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends the maximum noise level should be limited to 85 dB(A) for 8 hours of exposure. This is the same level at which the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires a hearing conservation program if there are paid employees.

Hearing Loss is Permanent and Irreversible!

A recent study at Northern Illinois University found that in farm communities 92% of males and 66% of females have lost some level of hearing.

Agricultural workers are a high risk group where hearing loss is concerned. There is documented hearing loss in farmers. Over 25% experience hearing loss by age 30 and over 50% by age 50.

Damage not only comes from a single, loud, explosive sound, but also from prolonged daily exposure to high levels of noise.

The constant chirp of a squeaky ventilation fan, a vibrating milking house pump, an old grain dryer motor in need of lubrication and even farm animals can create enough noise to cause hearing damage over time.

Hearing aids will not completely reverse hearing loss and will not stop the constant ringing in the ears caused by hearing loss.

**Become Aware of the Risks:**

Even tractors with enclosed cabs can have noise levels above 85 dB(A). A cab without vibration mounts, not being tightly closed, and without soundproofing covering material inside can actually be worse than no cab at all.

Damage from prolonged daily exposure to high levels of noise can cause hearing loss.

**dB(A) readings from a decibel meter for the following sources of damaging noise:**

- **120 dB(A)** Chainsaw
- **110 dB(A)** Grain Dryer
- **90 dB(A)** Harvester
- **100 dB(A)** Tractor without sound proof cab
- **100 dB(A)** Bench Grinder

**75% of all farmers suffer some degree of hearing loss compared to only 10% of the general public**