



FARM SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM Implementation guidance



The B+LNZ Farm Safety Management System provides you with all you need to make your farm a safer workplace and to meet your obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA).

The system, as it is provided, is about 80% complete. In order to complete it you must do the following:

Farm safety management system—to do list	Date completed
1. Familiarise yourself with your new Safety Management System (SMS)	
2. Review your farm hazards and assess the associated risks	
3. Complete the Risk Register	
4. Ensure that the people that work under your SMS are competent	
5. Communicate the risks with your regular visitors and contractors	
6. Check that you have the necessary equipment in place	

STEP 1

Familiarise yourself with your new Safety Management System (SMS)

Although your new system isn't complicated, it will take a little while to read through and absorb the information. The first part of your SMS (Tab 01) contains your Safety Management Plan. This plan explains how safety on the farm will be achieved. It covers key topics such as risk management, roles and responsibilities, employee management, contractor management, etc. The remaining tabs provide the key tools and information you will need to implement your system and maintain it.

STEP 2

Review your farm hazards and assess the associated risks

This step involves identifying the things on your farm that have the potential to cause harm. Once you have done this you need to assess the risk which may arise from those hazards. This should be done in consultation with other people that work on your farm such as employees and family members. You may also find it useful to team up with people in your area and help each other complete the process. The more eyes the better.

You should assess the risk using the risk assessment matrix on pages 3-4 of your Safety Management Plan. Be careful during this stage not to get stuck in the weeds. Focus on key hazards such as quad bikes, tractors, livestock and terrain first. Then start looking at more specific hazards such as bridges, machinery and bodies of water.

Use the example risk register in Tab 03 for guidance.

STEP 3

Complete the Risk Register

All hazards that you have assessed as high risk (before they have had controls applied) need to be written down in your Risk Register (Tab 03). You might also decide to list some of the hazards that you assessed as being medium risk if you are concerned about them. Don't worry about listing short term hazards that you are going to fix straight away.

Once you have written down your farms high risk hazards, you need to identify ways of reducing their risk level. This is called 'controlling' the risk. Ideally, we try to reduce the risk by eliminating it altogether. Examples of this might include using a different route or doing something a different way.

If you cannot eliminate the risk altogether, you need to identify ways to reduce it to an acceptable level, being medium or lower. The best way to do this is by using a Safe Work Procedure (SWP). A SWP is a written instruction that sets out how a task is to be done safely. There are a number of SWP's already completed for you under Tab 02. If there is not an SWP already written for one of your particular hazards, or the existing SWP doesn't match your specific situation, you can write your own using the same format.

Other ways of reducing the level of risk include isolating the hazard (i.e. fencing it off), substituting a hazardous type of equipment for one less hazard, using protective equipment such as earmuffs or gloves, or raising the level of competency of the person doing the task.

STEP 4

Ensure that the people that work under your SMS are competent

Once you have completed your Risk Register you will need to introduce it to those people who work on your farm. This does not include any contractors or work related visitors who operate under their own SMS.

Once you have advised them of the farm risks, how they are to be managed, their responsibilities, and any other parts of the SMS applicable to them, you'll need to get them to complete an employee induction form. This provides you with evidence that you have given them this information and that they have acknowledged it.

You will also need to make sure that people are competent to do the work you are asking them to do. Don't just take their word that they can do a job. You need to physically check that they can do it safely. This might include moving cattle, riding a quad bike or operating machinery. If they're not, then you need to get them up to a level of competence that you are happy with.

STEP 5

Communicate the risks with your regular visitors and contractors

The law requires that you advise contractors and visitors of any risks on your farm in the area that they are working. They also have an obligation to tell you about any risks that their work might pose to people who work on your farm.

There are two ways you can do this. You can get contractors and visitors to complete an Induction Form every 12 months and get them to call you before they arrive on your farm (Induction forms are found under Tab 07). An easier way is to get them to get a FarmPass from www.safetyregister.co.nz—this is provided at no cost to you the farmer, and includes a searchable register of people that have successfully completed the induction. FarmPass helps you ensure that any visitors and contractors are fully aware of common farm risks, outlines general farm rules and expectations and ensures that they call you prior to entry. Please note that both the Induction Form and FarmPass require you to discuss site-specific risks with your work-related visitors and contractors prior to any visit.

STEP 6

Check that you have the necessary equipment in place

Your SMS requires you to have certain equipment in place. This may include items such as signs for your hazardous substances, first aid kits, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for your workers and guards for your machinery. If you are unsure what is required, you can check by asking B+LNZ or WorkSafe NZ.

Maintaining your SMS

Once you have implemented your SMS you need to make sure that it is maintained. This is an important requirement and is one of the things the regulator will look for if they come onto your farm.

The easiest way to maintain your SMS is to follow the farm annual safety improvement plan detailed on page 2 of your safety management plan (Tab 01). You can complete the refresher training and do the checks at any time of the year that suits.

It's also really important to make sure that your Risk Register remains up-to-date. Review this on a regular basis and update as required. This includes changing your control measures if the existing ones are no longer effective or you can see a way to improve them. Your Risk Register is your primary means of demonstrating that you know what your risks are and have measures in place to control them.