

## Rural Roadways Still Claim Lives

At harvest time, every driver needs to be especially cautious while driving on rural roads. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration calculated that while only one-fifth of the U.S. population lives in rural areas, three out of five fatal crashes occur there.<sup>1</sup>

The NHTSA attributes the greater risk for drivers on rural roads to<sup>1</sup>:

- a.) lack of seatbelt use,
- b.) the greater likelihood of traveling on a roadway with a speed limit of 55mph or higher, and
- c.) a higher frequency of traveling on a road that is not straight.

To help keep farmers and other drivers safe during harvest season, the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety recommends the following:

For farmers: Make yourself easy to be seen

1. use your lights and flashers
2. replace worn Slow Moving Vehicle emblems and
3. use retro-reflective marking materials on all equipment operated on a roadway.

For people living or driving through rural areas:

1. be on the look out for farm equipment
2. slow down when encountering slow moving vehicles and
3. wait for a safe place to pass
4. avoid using a cell phone while driving

Together we can make this a safe and productive harvest season.

This public safety message is brought to you by the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety. For more information about National Farm Safety and Health Week, please call 1-888-844-6322 or visit us online at [www.nsc.org/necas](http://www.nsc.org/necas)

### References:

<sup>1</sup>National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Traffic Crashes Take Their Toll on America's Rural Roads*, Dec. 2006. [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/airbags/RuralCrashes.pdf](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/airbags/RuralCrashes.pdf)