

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Tractor Safety/Hazardous Occupations Courses will be offered at seven locations in Nebraska.

A class will be held June 7-8 at the West Central Research and Extension Center, North Platte. Federal law prohibits youth under 16 years of age from working on a farm other than their parents'. Certification through the course grants an exemption to the law allowing 14- and 15-year-olds to drive a tractor and to do field work with mechanized equipment.

The most common cause of death in agriculture accidents in Nebraska is overturn from tractors and all-terrain-vehicles (ATV), said Sharry Nielsen, UNL Extension Educator and course instructor, and are topics covered in-depth in the class work.

Mark Hinze, also a UNL Extension educator and course instructor, will teach the mechanical, safety, and maintenance aspects of tractor operations.

"Instilling an attitude of 'safety first' is a primary goal of the course," Nielsen said, "where youth have the chance to learn respect for agricultural jobs and the tools involved."

Classes consist of two days of instruction plus homework assignments. Classes are from 8 a.m.- 5 p.m. each day.

Pre-registration is strongly encouraged at least one week in advance. Contact Randy Saner, UNL Extension in Lincoln County, 308-532-2692. Call the Lincoln Extension Office or e-mail randy.saner@unl.edu for registration materials. Registration forms are also available at <http://kearney.unl.edu>. Cost is \$60, which includes educational materials, testing, supplies, lunches and breaks. For more information, contact the Extension Office or Sharry Nielsen at (308) 832-0645, snielsen1@unl.edu.

The first day of class will consist of intensive classroom instruction with hands-on demonstrations, concluding with a written test that must be completed satisfactorily before the student may continue driving tests the next day. Classroom instruction will cover the required elements of the National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operation Program. Homework will be assigned to turn in the next day.

The second day will consist of testing, driving and operating machinery. Students must demonstrate competence in hitching equipment and driving a tractor and trailer through a standardized course as well as hitching PTO and hydraulic systems.