

# Private initiatives for Health & Safety in Agriculture - Sweden

**Geopa-Copa SEMINAR - Maastricht (NL)**

**7 – 10 June 2012**

Implementing policies to prevent work-related MSDs in  
agriculture: development of the European agreement  
from 21 November 2005 on preventing MSDs in  
agriculture

# Agricultural sector in Sweden is small

- The number of employees within the agricultural sector is less than 1 % of all employed in Sweden
- The number of companies within the agricultural sector is approximately 10 % of all companies in Sweden
- More than 90 % of all companies within the agricultural sector in Sweden have no employees

# MSD related diseases reported to the Swedish labour inspectorate 2010

- Total of 9,075 diseases reported (all sectors)
- Total of 4,323 MSD related diseases (all sectors), i.e. appr. 50 % of all diseases are MSD related
- Total of 20 MSD related diseases reported in the agricultural sector, i.e. 0.5 % of all MSD in Sweden
- MSD reported within agricultural sector
  - 50 % loading and unloading heavy weights
  - 25 % bad postures
  - 20 % repeated gestures
  - 5 % whole body vibrations

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# Organisations in Health & Safety

- A number of central organisations and projects focus on Health & Safety in Sweden
- Most of them are on H&S in general, but a few national projects focus on H&S in agriculture (and similar areas, eg. forestry, landscaping etc.)

- **Work Environment Authority (AV)**
  - Government and Parliament mandate to ensure that H&S and working time legislation is followed
  - Goal is to reduce risks of illness and accidents at work and improving the work environment both in terms of physical, mental, social and work-organisational perspective
  - Responsible for statistics on occupational safety and occupational injuries



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- Carries out inspections to point out and explain the risks, and regulations regarding them, in the workplace.
  - Inspections are usually scheduled, but can be unannounced
  - Focus lies on sectors that are deemed especially exposed to risks
- Webpage with:
  - information and support for preventive H&S work
  - pages for specific sectors
  - interactive course material





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- Examples:
  - webpage on agriculture, risks and prevention
  - webpage on ergonomics, risks and prevention:
    - strenuous work postures and movements
    - manual handling/lifting/pushing/pulling
    - monotonous work
    - poor vision/visibility
  - Interactive web course on MSDs, risks and prevention
  - Power Point presentation on MSD from the perspective of legislation



SLA

- **Prevent**
  - non-profit organisation within the field of Health & Safety (H&S), owned and governed by the social partners
  - mission is to spread knowledge concerning H&S issues, and develop methods that will support every workplace in the on-going H&S work
- Webpage with news, facts on H&S, supportive material, eg. checklists for agriculture

- Webshop with books on H&S, eg.:
  - ergonomics
  - full body vibrations
  - hand and arm vibrations
  - risk assessment
- Also offered by Prevent:
  - courses and training
  - seminars and conferences
  - free monthly magazine "Work life" on H&S

- **Afa Insurance**

- Organisation owned by Sweden's social partners. Insures employees within the private sector, municipalities and county councils.
- More than four million people are covered by at least one of their insurances
- Afa Insurance provide financial support in the event of incapacity for work due to sickness, work injury, shortage of work, death and parental leave.

- In addition to the core insurance activities, Afa work to prevent ill-health in the workplace.
- In this way, collectively agreed insurance lays the foundations for a better working life, with greater security for all.
- IA – web based, free, system for reporting of accidents and incidents in eg. forestry work. System may also be developed for agriculture.
  - enables all employees to take part in the H&S work
  - collects statistics on injuries for whole trade



- **(LAMK) The Swedish Committee on Working Environment in Agriculture**
  - consists of reps of authorities, institutions, insurance companies, producers/importers/sellers of machines and equipment, advising institutions and organisations referring to the agricultural sector
- Holds an annual conference on annual topic;
  - 2012 “Safe Handling of Machinery”



- Agricultural H&S Award
  - annual price awarded to employer who has taken extraordinary actions regarding the topic of the year, as well systematic and on-going H&S work.
  - winner must have CA (i.e. be member of SLA)
  - price sum 30 000 SEK



# Private initiatives

- Regional Experts on H&S in the Agricultural Workplace
  - Project started in 2007, by **SLA**
  - Mission: improve the work environment on the members' farms
  - Experts have cutting edge expertise in different areas; construction, forestry, animals, risk assessment, rehabilitation etc.





# Private initiatives, cont.

- SLA's members contact one of eight contracted regional experts to come to their farm for a two hour long consultation, free of charge



# Private initiatives, cont.

- The experts can help with a number of things:
  - education; general or specific
  - assessment of farm, through farm visit
  - consultation reg. construction
  - contacting authorities
  - risk assessment




# Private initiatives, cont.

- Visits can be on a specific issue the employer wants consultation on, or a general walk-through of the farm, where our experts point out certain risk areas, and suggest how the employer can come to terms with them.



# Private initiatives, cont.

-  Säkert Bondförnuft
  - national campaign by The Federation of Swedish Farmers with the goal to cut accidents in agriculture in half by 2013, through information and education
  - 180 advisors have been educated through the campaign, and offer visits to farms to help farmers review their and their families safety on the farm
  - the campaign also arranges courses and farm visits that focus on childrens safety

