



SAFETY ALERT

Driving to the conditions

WHAT HAPPENED?

The below incident occurred when the tractor lost traction due to wet conditions, highlighting the risks in operating in changing conditions and in making decisions that did not prioritise safety.

WHY DID IT HAPPEN?

- A tractor operator had placed a bale feeder at the edge of an incline in a paddock.
- Conditions changed, the paddock became wetter, cattle pugged the surface and the paddock became slippery.
- When the operator retrieved the empty bale feeder the tractor lost traction. As he tried to regain control the tractor started sliding down the hill sideways. The tractor tumbled down the hill, coming to a rest at the bottom.
- The operator was taken to the hospital and treated for broken ribs.

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND?

- **Don't be complacent.** You may have driven or ridden many times in a paddock, but conditions change. Reassess conditions every time you go into a paddock. Be prepared to change the way you do things.
- **Stop, think and then do**, but only if it is safe to do so. Your safety is our highest priority. In both situations the things that had gone wrong were minor in comparison to the harm to staff who tried to fix them.
- **Always carry your radio, phone and PLB on you.** The operator was able to get help quickly, because he had a communication device on him.
- **Seatbelts Work.** The safety system worked in the tractor as it should have, with the driver relatively unhurt because he was wearing his seatbelt. Nearly half the vehicle related deaths on farm could have been avoided by seatbelt use.



His injuries and the destruction of the tractor could have been avoided by leaving the bale feeder in the paddock until it was safe to remove it.



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CONVERSATIONS WORTH HAVING:



What hazardous conditions do we have on our farm?



How do we approach changing conditions on farm?



Could this happen on our farm?



Are we making sure to always wear communications devices?

SAFE FARMING STARTS HERE:

farmwithoutharm.org.nz/safety-alerts