



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

565th tractor fitted with rollover protection system

CATHARINE YOUNG January 27, 2009

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. (WKTV) - The New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) announces that it has fitted the 565th tractor with a rollover protection system (ROPS) through its rebate program, now entering its third year.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1,412 workers on farms died from tractor overturns between 1992 and 2005.

NYCAMH's efforts have saved hundreds of New York farmers from potential injury and death.

"Our campaign has increased by ten-fold the number of farmers making their tractors safe by retrofitting them with rollover protection systems," said Dr. John May, director of NYCAMH. "This is important because a farmer's risk of dying on the job is 800 percent higher than that of the average American worker."

Tractor overturns are the primary cause of these fatal and permanently crippling injuries. In the event of a rollover, the use of ROPS and a seatbelt reduces the risk of injury by 99 percent. Tractors built after 1985 have built-in rollover protection, but most tractors in use today are older than that.

This month, NYCAMH began its ROPS print advertising campaign featuring New York farmer Don Tetreault of Hidden View Farm in Champlain, New York. "When my tractor flipped over, I broke all the ribs on one side," Tetreault said in one ad. "I had tractor tracks on my back when they pulled me out. I couldn't work for months and almost lost the family farm, and I was one of the lucky ones." Since that time, Tetreault has retrofitted all of his tractors with ROPS.

The ads will appear in Country Folks, Grassroots, Focus on Farming and other New York newspapers. The ROPS program will also be promoted during the annual New York State Farm Show in Syracuse Feb. 26-28.

"We are grateful to the New York State Legislature for their support of this program, in particular lead proponents State Senators James L. Seward and Catharine M. Young, both members of the Senate Agriculture Committee," Dr. May said. "It is especially important in this economic climate to continue to make this financial assistance available." In fact, the average out-of-pocket cost to farmers is just \$380 compared in many cases to nearly \$1,000 before the ROPS program.

Farmers should call toll free 1-877-ROPS-R4U (or 1-877-767-7748) for more information. By calling the "ROPS-R4U" hotline, farmers can both receive information on the program and allow hotline staff to do the legwork for them. In addition to saving farmers money, the ROPS program is specifically designed to reduce the hassle of retrofitting a farm tractor with an approved rollbar and seatbelt.

The rebate amounts to 70% of the cost of purchasing and installing rollover protection on a tractor, a savings of up to \$765.