

Campaign report

Olive industry

WorkSafe inspectors recently conducted inspections of groves within the olive industry to check compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act and regulations.

Selected groves received a copy of the Agricultural Safety and Health Workbook, produced by WorkSafe to assist in establishing safety standards. These groves were given time to work through the information and make any changes that were needed, prior to an Inspector making an appointment to visit the workplace.

Working from the checklist contained within the Workbook the Inspector conducted an inspection of the grove, in the company of the manager. Any areas requiring improvement were identified and a time frame negotiated to rectify those deficiencies.

The project was well received by the industry participants and the WorkSafe inspector was afforded all possible courtesy and country hospitality.

Things that were noted as good safety practice across the groves included:

- Well managed traffic movements;
- Good machine guarding, including PTO output shaft guarding;
- Signposting of hazards;
- Induction training for employees and contractors; and
- General housekeeping of the workplace.

However there were a number of common areas identified across the groves that afforded opportunity for improvement.

These included:

- Locating appropriate fire extinguishers at fuel storage facilities;
- Conducting risk assessments of hazardous substances;
- Provision of current material safety data sheets (MSDS) for hazardous substances;
- Developing procedures for working in the vicinity of power lines;
- Regular testing of Residual Current Devices (RCD);
- Protection of openings in floors and ground;
- Locating flash back arrestors at both the regulators and the hand pieces of oxy-acetylene sets; and,
- Wearing helmets on agricultural bikes.

Although there was training of employees and contractors, there was only sporadic documentation that this was occurring. Whilst it is not a legislative requirement to document training it assists in establishing that training has been undertaken.

WorkSafe will continue to conduct inspections within the industry to assist groves to ensure that every worker comes home safe.

For more information and assistance the Agriculture WorkBook is available on the WorkSafe website.

