

New Representatives on the Nebraska Beef Council Board



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Pictured above are the NBC Board of Directors, back row, l-r: District 4, Jim Ramm; District 1, Butch Schuler; District 9, John Schroeder; District 8, Mark Goes; District 3, Keith Kreikemeier. Front row, l-r: District 6, Michele Cutler; District 5, Shannon Peterson; District 7, June Loseke; District 2, Rosemary Vinton Anderson.

Nebraska Beef Council is pleased to announce the four new members that have been elected to its Board of Directors. The newly elected board members bring a wealth of expertise, commitment, and a shared vision for the future of the organization.

The newly elected members are:

District 1: Butch Schuler of Redington.

District 3: Keith Kreikemeier of West Point.

District 5: Shannon Peterson of Gothenburg.

District 9: John Schroeder of Cozad.

The election of these members reflects the organization's ongoing commitment to ensuring strong leadership and diverse perspectives at the decision-making table in

beef promotion, education, and research. With varied backgrounds in cattle operations, the new board members will play a pivotal role in shaping the strategic direction of Nebraska Beef Council in the coming years.

Ann Marie Bosshamer, Executive Director at Nebraska Beef Council, stated, "We are thrilled to welcome these producers to our Board of Directors. Their unique insights, experience, and passion for our mission will be invaluable as we continue to focus on the future of beef. We look forward to the contributions they will make to strengthen and grow our organization."

Current board members are Rosemary Vinton An-

derson of Whitman, Jim Ramm of Atkinson, Michele Cutler of Elsie, and Mark Goes of O'Dell. June Loseke of Columbus will begin her second term representing District 7. Board members may serve a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms.

Officers for the Nebraska Beef Council Board were also elected to serve in 2025 including: Rosemary Vinton Anderson of Whitman as Chair; June Loseke of Columbus as Vice Chair; Michele Cutler of Elsie as Treasurer; and Jim Ramm of Atkinson as Secretary.

For more information about the Nebraska Beef Council, visit www.nebeef.org.

ROPS Save Lives

Your Life Is Well Worth Protecting

BY: UNMC, Central States Center For Agricultural Safety And Health, Omaha, NE

Statistics have shown that 99.9% of tractor operators using a Roll Over Protective Structure (ROPS) and a seat belt survive a rollover with few injuries. University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) College of Public Health Associate Professor, UNMC Department of Environmental, Agricultural & Occupational Health, Aaron Yoder, PhD, says there has been no documentation of a rollover fatality when tractor operators used ROPS and a seatbelt.

"Old tractors pose the most rollover risk," Yoder said. "Scenarios, where rollovers occur most often, are in hayfields with hilly or rolling terrain or when operators mow, bale, or haul hay on uneven terrain. Those are the situations where tractor operators are most at risk."

ROPS are roll bar or cage frames designed specifically for wheel and track-type agricultural tractors. They are available as two-post frames (with solid fold-down versions), four-post frames, and ROPS with enclosed cabs. ROPS don't prevent overturns, but they all provide a zone of protection for operators if one occurs.

ROPS are engineered to mount on specific tractor models and designed to operate with the tractor's mounting brackets and frame. This makes the structure flexible yet rigid enough to withstand loads produced during a turnover. Any prototype ROPS must pass engineered, crush, static, and dynamic tests to ensure adequate performance before being mass-produced. The Society sets standards for ROPS prototypes for Automotive Engineers (SAE) and the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE). Factory-installed ROPS are certified to meet maximum rollover impact and dynamic forces.

Statistics show that:

- 1 in 10 operators overturn a tractor in their lifetime.

- 80% of deaths caused by tractor overturns involve experienced operators.

- 1 in 7 farmers involved in tractor overturns is permanently disabled.

- 7 of 10 farms will go out of business within 5 years following a tractor-related fatality.

- A one-time installation of a ROPS (Rollover Protective Structure) will protect whoever drives the tractor for the life of the tractor.



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- Use of a ROPS and a seat belt is estimated to be 99% effective in preventing death or serious injury in the event of a tractor rollover.

- A ROPS normally limits the degree of rollover, thereby reducing damage to the tractor.

- A ROPS with an enclosed cab also prevents tractor operators from being knocked out of their tractor seat from rough ground or low-hanging tree limbs, provides protection from the sun and other weather hazards, and reduces risk for the unsafe practice of extra riders on tractors.

Before 1967, farmers had little protection against these types of incidents. However, by 1986, ROPS became part of the design of new tractor models. ROPS is 99% effective in preventing serious injury or death when used with a seatbelt. The National ROPS Rebate Program has made retrofitting ROPS on older model tractors very cost-effective. ROPS kit costs generally fall under \$500 per tractor.

"Rebate conditions vary from state to state," Yoder said. "According to the rebate rules, ROPS kits must be certified to national or international standards. Tractor dealers or ROPS manufacturers can discuss certification standards with tractor owners."

Yoder notes that tractor rollover incidents are less frequent in Nebraska because most farmers use newer tractors. However, a rollover can still occur with a newer tractor, and the potential for a fatality is significantly increased if ROPS aren't in place.

According to tractor rollover statistics, 8 out of 10 rollover incidents involve inexperienced or aging operators. Young drivers and older operators are more likely to use an older model tractor for minor farm activities.

During testing, a ROPS must absorb impact energy without excessive deformation, so the operator's protection zone is intact. A dynamic test involves hitting the ROPS in a prescribed manner with a 4,410-pound pendulum weight from and behind and from both sides. The ROPS must re-

main intact and maintain specific distances from the operator. A ROPS can be made from any material if that material meets temperature requirements and passes the tests set forth by the standards. Typically, ROPS are made of precision welded steel that will not fracture in cold temperatures.

Homemade ROPS are not recommended because they cannot be verified to meet design standards or tested for durability, which puts operators at significant risk. The special steels, bolts, and welding supplies used for certified ROPS are not readily available to farmers. Using homemade ROPS could also result in serious liability issues if an overturn occurs.

ROPS maintenance includes inspecting for rust, cracks, or other signs of wear. Any of these could cause the ROPS to fail during a rollover. If wear is a concern, contact the ROPS manufacturer or dealer to determine a suitable course of action.

Never modify, abuse, or misuse a ROPS. Never drill holes into the ROPS frame or weld additional steel to it. Any lighting or light attachments should be clamped onto a ROPS.

Never use a ROPS as a point of attachment for a chain, hook, or cable. Using it to pull another object could damage it or result in a rear overturn.

If a tractor with ROPS overturns, the ROPS must be replaced because they are specifically designed to absorb energy generated when the tractor contacts the ground. ROPS are designed and certified to withstand a single overturn.

Tractor and aftermarket manufacturers have designed and developed ROPS for most tractor models. Low-cost retrofit kits are available for many tractor brands. Agricultural equipment dealers are approved to install a retrofit ROPS and seat belt.

A Guide to Agricultural Rollover Protection for various tractor models is

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Importance Of Flowmeters & Keeping Them Maintained

Flow meters play a very important role, as they provide accurate data on water usage, allowing the Natural Resource Districts to effectively manage groundwater resources. The data collected helps the producers to identify potential

water waste, monitor the efficiency of the irrigation wells and apply proper amounts of water based on crops planted. To make wise decisions, based on the data collected each year, it is important to keep the flow meters in proper working

order. The data collected helps in providing a "history" of needed water use for current irrigators and is used in statewide hydrologic models. This data helps us protect the

*See Flowmeters
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Game and Parks after two incidents: Use caution on ice

Nebraska Game and Parks reminds people to use caution and test the ice when going onto frozen lakes or ponds after conservation officers responded to two incidents on Jan. 11 in western Nebraska.

No injuries or fatalities were reported in either incident, one at Lake Maloney State Recreation Area and one at Cottonwood-Steverson Wildlife Management Area, where all-terrain vehicles broke through the ice.

At Lake Maloney in Lincoln County, four people who had been ice fishing were riding the ATV at about 7 p.m. when it broke through the ice. Game and Parks Officers and Lincoln County Sheriff's Office responded to the scene.

Other anglers initially assisted the four, who declined medical treatment from law enforcement.

No citations were issued, and Game and Parks will work with Nebraska Public Power District to remove the ATV

from the lake.

At Cottonwood-Steverson in Cherry County, an all-terrain vehicle broke through the ice on Saturday; the incident was reported Sunday to Nebraska Game and Parks. The ATV remains in the lake.

Safety guidelines

People going onto lakes for winter recreation are reminded of the following clear-ice thickness guidelines, according to state fish, wildlife and parks agencies:

Under 4 inches: Stay off the ice

4 inches: Can support ice fishing or other activities on foot

5-7 inches: Can support a snowmobile or small ATV

7-8 inches: Can support side-by-side ATV

People should use an ice chisel or spud bar to strike the ice and evaluate conditions as they venture out.

Remember as winter progresses, ice changes. Cloudy ice of frozen slush is about half as strong as

clear lake ice, so people should double the minimum thickness when encountering such conditions.

Ice near shore may be weakened by heat from the ground, or thinner because of rising water levels. If temperatures are below freezing, but warm during the day, go early and leave before ice melts near the shore.

Be especially careful on any ice that has moving water below it. Water movement hinders freezing causing hard-to-detect thin spots.

Materials embedded in ice, such as weeds or logs, also weaken ice. Large objects on the ice, such as duck blinds or ice shacks, can absorb the sun's heat and melt ice.

If venturing out, tell someone your plan, bring a long throw rope and ice picks, and pack extra dry clothes.

Visit OutdoorNebraska.gov for other ice safety tips for anglers and ATV riders.

Thedford Blood Drive January 30

The Thedford seniors will be hosting their January Blood Drive on Thursday, January 30 from 1:00 to 6:30 p.m. at Thedford High School.

Blood & platelet donations create a flurry of hope for patients in need. More donors are needed this winter! When you come to give Jan. 27-Feb. 28, the Red Cross will send you a \$15 e-gift card to a merchant you choose. Make your appointment to give hope:



<https://rcblood.org/4gLIElq>

To schedule an appoint-

ment contact Mrs. Taylor or one of the Thedford seniors.