

# 28 April 10th International Commemoration Day (ICD) For Dead And Injured Workers World Day for Safety and Health at Work

**Geneva, March 22 2005 (ACTRAV Info): SAFE FROM PLOUGH TO PLATE**

## **New trade union manual tackles the health, safety and environment impacts of agriculture**

Geneva, April 28 2005 (ACTRAV Info) : Employing half of the world's labour force, modern-day agriculture is anything but idyllic. Along with mining and construction, it is one of the three most hazardous sectors in industrialized and developing countries alike. Of an estimated 355,000 fatal work accidents per year worldwide, more than half are in agriculture. A disproportionate share of work-related injuries and diseases is also borne by agricultural workers. And child labourers, all too commonly employed in this sector, face particular dangers.

A new trade union education manual lays down a solid basis for improving health and safety among agricultural workers. At the same time, it strongly links these issues to environmental concerns and food safety. This is very much in line with the "plough to plate" approach of the manual's publisher, the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF).

"Agricultural workplaces have to be sustainable both in terms of protecting the workers employed there, and in reducing any negative impact of production on public health, food quality and the general environment," explains IUF General Secretary Ron Oswald. "This is important in winning broad public and political support for union work on health, safety and the environment. Trade unions and their members have a vested interest in promoting their industry and ensuring its long-term profitability and sustainability."

So health, safety and the environment (HS&E) are tackled as a single issue.

Published with the support of the ILO and its Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), ***Health, Safety and Environment - Trade Union Education Manual For Agricultural Workers*** is, in fact, six manuals rolled into one:

- An ***educator's guide*** gives background on setting up and evaluating training courses, on tutoring techniques and on how to use the manual.
- ***HS&E for "grassroots" members*** gives advice on identifying the main workplace problems, creating awareness, encouraging workers' participation, strengthening union action and preventing accidents, ill-health and environmental damage.
- ***HS&E for worker HS&E reps*** looks at workplace hazards and at union organization for tackling them.
- Twenty ***HS&E fact sheets*** focus on accidents, incidents and ill-health; HIV/AIDS; biological hazards; chemicals; child labour; dusts; electricity at work; enclosed and confined spaces; ergonomics; falls; first aid; HS&E and women workers; hours of work; Integrated Production & Pest Management (IPPM); manual handling; noise; personal protective equipment (PPE); transport at work; and voluntary initiatives, including codes of conduct; welfare and accommodation.

- ***Pesticides*** gives vital information on the occupational and environmental hazards of pesticides. After looking at ways of improving health and safety and at alternatives to pesticides, it maps out a future strategy.
- ***How to ratify and use ILO Convention No. 184 on Safety and Health in Agriculture*** gives practical information on this vital ILO instrument. Adopted in 2001, it is the first-ever comprehensive international standard on agricultural workers' health and safety.

Designed primarily for agricultural unions, this manual will also be a useful resource for anyone interested in the health, safety and environmental impacts of modern agriculture.

For details contact Luc Demaret, ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities, tel +41/22/799.72.33