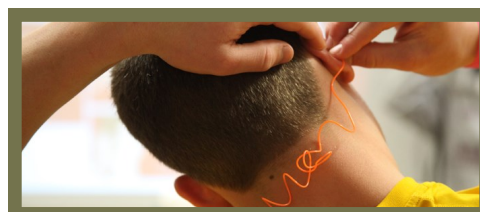


# Protect Your Hearing!

## On and Off the Farm



### Did You Know?

- ◆ Noise Injury affects the hearing of up to two-thirds of the farming community. Have you been tested?
- ◆ Noise injury occurs when tiny hairs in the inner ear (cochlea) are damaged by excessive noise. Once destroyed cochlear hair cells are not replaced. Hearing loss is painless, progressive and permanent.
- ◆ **Hearing loss is preventable.**

Machinery or Activity	Average Noise levels dB(A) at operators ear	Time period before hearing damage (no hearing protection)	Min. protection level needed (ear muffs or ear plugs)
Firearms	140+	No Safe Exposure	26dB+
Pig Handling—suckers	109	1-2 minutes	26dB+
Chainsaws	106	3 minutes	26dB+
Irrigation Pumps (diesel)	100	15 minutes	22-25dB
Circular Saws	99	18 minutes	18-21dB
Augers	93	1 hour	14-17dB
Tractors without cabs	92	1.5 hours	14-17dB
Ride on lawn mowers	92	1.5 hours	14-17dB

### Please Consider:

- ◆ Use of a radio in older machinery can expose operators to average noise levels over 85dB.
- ◆ Ear muffs or ear plugs are both suitable forms of hearing protection. Hearing protection needs to be clean, seal well and provide enough protection for the job. Check the decibel reduction level.
- ◆ Intense noise (discharging firearms) can cause instant damage.
- ◆ The degree of noise injury will depend on the length of time exposed to the noise. Limit exposure.
- ◆ **The best way to prevent hearing loss is to reduce farm noise and exposure.**



For more information on protecting your hearing visit the CS-CASH website: [www.unmc.edu/publichealth/cscash](http://www.unmc.edu/publichealth/cscash)



## How Loud is Too Loud?

- Noise over **85 decibels** is too loud. **Wear hearing protection.**
- If someone standing next to you can hear music from your earbud your music is too loud. **Turn down the volume.**
- If your ears ring or feel numb - the noise that caused this is too loud.
- If you can't hear the person next to you talking - the noise you are exposed to is too loud. **Move away from the noise.**
- If you have to raise your voice above normal levels to talk to someone next to you then the noise you are exposed to is too loud.

*Take Good Care of Your Hearing - When it's Gone it's Gone...*

### How to Wear Soft Foam Earplugs

1. Roll



**Roll** the earplug up into a small, thin "snake" with your fingers. You can use one or both hands.

2. Pull



**Pull** the top of your ear up and back with your opposite hand to straighten out your ear canal. The rolled-up earplug should slide right in.

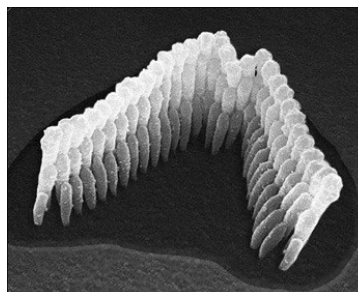
3. Hold



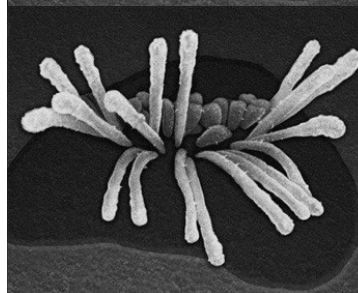
**Hold** the earplug in with your finger. Count to 20 out loud while waiting for the plug to expand and fill the ear canal. Your voice will sound muffled when the plug has made a good seal.

Check the fit when you are done. Most of the earplug should be within the ear canal.

### Cochlear Hair Cells– Healthy and Damaged by Exposure to Loud Noise



Healthy cochlear hair cells - no damage from loud noise



Damaged cochlear hair cells - damage caused by exposure to loud noise