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.

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

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

2. **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** 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

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