

Farming company fined after worker injured in fall from height

A Somerset farming company has been fined after a worker fell 3 metres from a silage clamp onto a concrete floor, sustaining life changing injuries.

Yeovil Magistrates' Court heard how Ian Stewart, a contract herdsman for Evercreech Park Farms Ltd, fractured two vertebrae in his neck and back, suffered nerve damage and was in intensive care for four days when he fell from an adjacent silage clamp whilst assisting lining the walls of a silage bay.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident, which occurred on the 16 May 2016, found the company did not have a risk assessment or safe system of work in place for working at height. The investigation also found it would have been reasonably practicable to carry out these tasks in other safer ways, such as by using a mobile elevating work platform

Evercreech Park Farms Ltd of Shepton Mallet pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and has been fined £16,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,467.07.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Annette Walker said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out safe working practices."

"If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the life changing injuries sustained by Mr Stewart could have been prevented."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. hse.gov.uk^[1]
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/^[2]
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>^[3]
4. Further information about safe techniques can be found at: hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg270.htm www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg401.pdf

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.