Farm Worker Watches As Wife Falls To Her Death

A husband watched in horror as his wife fell from the forks of a forklift to the concrete floor 20 feet (six meters) below. The woman was standing in the elevated forklift and placing labels on bins of sweet potatoes when she lost her footing and fell to the barn floor below. She was pronounced dead later at the hospital.

An investigation disclosed this was not the first time workers had used the forklift to reach and label bins of produce. In this case, the worker was late and the forklift driver (her husband) decided to stack the bins unlabeled for his wife to label from the forklift. She was not wearing fall protection when the incident occurred.

This event illustrates how important it is for workers to understand and follow safe work procedures. It also shows how important adequate training can be. With proper training, the forklift driver may have been able to identify the danger and prevent this family tragedy. Always review and follow your company's written safety procedures. Complete safety training before you operate a new piece of equipment and follow standard operating procedures to the letter. Forklift drivers must remember to elevate personnel only with approved lifting cages and safety measures.