THE 2012 ACTION PLAN FOR PREVENTING CHILDHOOD AGRICULTURAL INJURIES IN THE USA

Background
More than one million children live on farms in the USA and many more visit and/or work on the 2.2 million farms where they are exposed to an array of occupational hazards.

Purpose
Since the USA adopted its 1996 National Action Plan for Childhood Agricultural Injury Prevention, injury surveillance revealed a decline by 59% of nonfatal injuries but minimal change in fatalities. Research and intervention evaluations highlighted the importance of multifaceted strategies to influence behaviour change.

Methods
To update the national plan, 16 scholars authored papers on topics relevant to children, agriculture and safety. Their peer-reviewed manuscripts with action recommendations guided a six-member team that drafted and refined a 2012 National Action Plan. Input was secured from various audiences, including a public posting on the internet.

Results
Tangible outcomes include a dedicated issue of Journal of Agromedicine: Practice, Policy and Research featuring surveillance, special populations, global strategies, and related topics; and a comprehensive document depicting the 2012 action plan’s seven goals with their respective strategies, background, injury data, news reports of child injuries and deaths, and references to justify goals and strategies.

Significance
Short-term, the Blueprint for Protecting Children in Agriculture: 2012 National Action Plan serves as a guidance document for public and private funding of priority areas, as well as direction for researchers, educators and practitioners to address the most pressing issues. Long-term, this has potential to influence interventions that will continue the reduction in childhood agricultural injuries and impact the number of youth fatalities.