

## Safety for Poultry Farm Workers

At a recent tour of a poultry farm in Quebec during this years 2013 Canadian Agricultural Safety Association Conference, a great, innovative idea was shown by a farmer who took the steps to improve safety on his farm after an accident occurred inside his 2 storey poultry barn.

One day a farm employee was cleaning the housing area, where the birds were kept, when he lost track of where he was standing and fell through the floor. The barn was designed with openings in the floor that open up to dispose of animal waste and bedding when cleaning. When the employee was re-bedding the area he lost track of his surroundings and stepped backwards, falling through the opening, down to the lower level where he sustained serious injuries.

The farmer has since equipped the barn with a simple rope system. Four 2x4 boards are hinged from the ceiling that come down around the parameter of the openings in the floor when they are open; a simple rope is strung across the boards to make a protective barrier. If an employee forgets where his footing is, or happens to back up into the rope, the pressure from the rope will act as safety reminder to the worker. The farmer uses this system throughout the barn where all openings are present. When the system is not needed the farmer simply folds the boards back up to the ceiling and locks them into place with a simple latch. He found this to be an effective affordable means to improve safety for his workers.

