

Farm Machinery Theft

The theft of farm machinery causes huge personal and financial losses for farmers. Tractors, ploughs, headers, augers, generators, welders, motor bikes and quad runners are attractive targets for thieves. The theft of machinery parts, such as header lights, batteries, and radios from tractors is also a problem for many farmers.

The costs are high for farmers in replacing stolen equipment. If the theft occurs during the critical periods of planting or harvesting, loss of productivity can compound the total financial damage.



What you can do

There are some things you can do to reduce the opportunity for theft. Although several of the following suggestions may seem somewhat drastic and time consuming, they are worthwhile if a theft is prevented. You are

the best judge of whether it is worth the time and trouble in your particular situation.

Protecting farm equipment

It is sometimes necessary to leave equipment in a paddock overnight. If it is possible, park machinery out of sight of a public road, behind trees or a hill. Proximity to roads increases the probability of theft or vandalism. If possible, position machinery so it can be seen from the farm house or alternatively, park it near a neighbour's house.

- Never leave keys in machinery.
- The doors of machinery with cabs should be locked.
- To prevent thefts of radios from machinery, try to have radios installed that operate only with a security code that is connected to the auxiliary power of the machine.
- When there is a break down, if possible return the machinery to the main shed area. Too often farmers pull down a tractor in a paddock, leave it unattended while seeking replacement parts, and return to find several parts missing.
- Always know where your equipment is located on farm.
- Try to secure or immobilise vehicles or equipment when not in use. Machinery left in paddocks overnight or for longer periods should be disabled by removing the distributor cap or battery. Machinery

stored outside or in remote sheds and only used in certain times of the year should also be disabled in this way.

- You can chain machinery together or to a tree or other strongly anchored objects.
- You can chain and lock the front wheel to rear wheel or axle.
- Where possible, large farm machinery not in use should be stored in a secured shed, preferably in sight of a farmhouse, or grouped in a highly visible area.
- Build a fenced enclosure that can be padlocked shut for heavier equipment that cannot be secured in sheds.
- Ensure that all machinery and pieces of equipment are marked with identification and maintain an inventory with a description, a record of the serial number, chassis and model numbers of machines.
- Using metal engravers or a welder to mark machinery, vehicles and equipment with and NSW for your state and your driver's licence number, your Rural Lands protection Board PIN number or your stock brand. Photograph or video machinery and valuable items of equipment and store them with the inventory.
- Use lockable fuel caps.
- Secure tools and tool boxes.
- Stolen goods need a ready market. Be wary of offers that are too good to be true - they usually are! Report all suspicious incidents to police.



Acknowledgment:

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URL: <http://www.nhwatch.asn.au/>

For more information, or if you wish to comment on the material in this leaflet, or if you have any other suggestions for crime prevention strategies on farm, please contact Elaine Barclay at:

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