

News Release/ For information contact Lorraine Merrill, NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food at 603-271-3551; or John C. Porter, UNH Extension Professor, Emeritus, at 603-796-2151, ext. 322.

## **Tractor Rollover Protection Systems Program (ROPS) launched in New Hampshire**

On November 30<sup>th</sup> three simultaneous events were held around New Hampshire to launch the New Hampshire Tractor Roll Over Protection Systems (ROPS) Program. This has been established to offer a rebate program to farmers for installing rollover protection on their tractors. The number one cause of farming fatalities is tractor rollover, and a ROPS system and seat belt are 99% effective in preventing these deaths. The purpose of these events was to make farmers aware of the benefits of rollover protection and introduce a new cost-share program in the state to help defray the expense of installing the steel roll bar unit, which provides a space of safety for the operator in the case of a tractor overturn.

The John Deere companies of New Hampshire accepted the challenge to host the launch event and area representatives, Anthony Souhrada and Raymond Nunez, helped put together a meeting and refreshments at Blackmount Equipment in North Haverhill, R.N. Johnson in Walpole, and James Rosencrantz and Sons in Kensington. The sessions were organized in partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Foods; New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH); UNH Cooperative Extension; and the New Hampshire Farm and Rural Education Foundation, and New Hampshire Farm Bureau.

About 20-25 people were present at each site, representing farmers, program supporters and the media. Several newspapers were present, plus WMUR television at the Kensington site, and many more newspapers and radio stations reported on the ROPS program and the roll-out event. Presentations consisted of an overview of the importance of rollover protection, introduction of the dealership and display of tractors with ROPS installations, explanation of how the rollover protection rebate program works, farmer testimonials about farm safety and an opportunity to sign up for the New Hampshire program.

A typical ROPS installation can cost \$700- \$1,500 and the New Hampshire ROPS Rebate Program will reimburse farmers 70 percent of the cost of a tractor rollover protection kit- a roll bar and seatbelt- up to \$765. New Hampshire will have the benefit of using the resources of the NYCAMH ROPS hotline which provides assistance identifying and pricing the appropriate rollover kits for tractors.

The New Hampshire ROPS Rebate Program is entirely funded by donations and to date has been supported by: John Deere, the NH Department of Agriculture Markets & Food, Co-Operative Insurance Companies, Farm Family Life and Casualty Insurance Companies, Blackmount Equipment, RN Johnson, James Rosencrantz & Sons, Farm Credit East, Yankee Farm Credit, Farm Service Agency, Chappell Tractor and Townline Equipment.

People wishing to support the New Hampshire effort can send checks payable to the **NH Farm and Rural Education Foundation**, 295 Sheep Davis Road, Concord, NH. 03301.

To find out about participating in the program, call toll-free 877-ROPS-R4U (877-767-7748) or visit [www.ropsr4u.com](http://www.ropsr4u.com).