Q. Dear Twig: Can animal poop on the road cause a crash? I read about a motorcycle accident. The driver said he wiped out when he drove through some manure!

A.: In theory, it can. Anything slippery can make tires lose their grip. Ice, snow and oil can do it. And so, it seems, can farm-fresh, moist-and-meaty, really slippery meadow muffins. Though mainly and especially if said meadow muffins are there in a great big pile or a puddle. Spilled by accident from a farm truck, for example. Ah! Watch it!

“Mud from construction sites and animal waste can significantly reduce rider safety and should be removed promptly,” says a newsletter called “Motorcycle Notes.” “Motorcycles,” the newsletter (yep!) notes, “are very sensitive to conditions of the road surface.”

The good news: Road-apple wipeouts are rare. Bad road conditions (due to ice, snow, buffalo chips, etc.) cause only about 2 percent of motorcycle crashes — 2 out of every 100 — while animals lead to 1 percent. Slick!

Grippingly,

Twig

Get safety tips at http://www.motorcycle.ohio.gov/. Me, I need four hand grips!

From your scientific friends at The Ohio State University — specifically, the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (www.oardc.ohio-state.edu) and OSU Extension (extension.osu.edu).