

AgrAbility e-Note

May 2009

National AgrAbility Project News

May 22 is the deadline for registering for the first session in the AgrAbility Webinar Series, *An Introduction to Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship for People with Disabilities*. Why is self-employment an important topic for AgrAbility? [More](#)

Amber Wolfe represented AgrAbility at the National Rural Health Association Conference in Miami Beach, Florida, May 5-8. [More](#)

Amber is also scheduled to present an Arthritis and Agriculture webinar on the AgriSafe Network on July 8. [More](#)

State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

California

California AgrAbility staff has been busy with the "opening" of ag season. [More](#)

The California AgrAbility Project has completed the Spanish translation and editing of a "Farming with Arthritis" fotonovela, which is being produced in collaboration with Breaking New Ground at Purdue. [More](#)

The AgrAbility staff has also received positive reviews from the annual Small Farm Conference held in Sacramento this year. [More](#)

Indiana

Area Agencies on Aging are an important resource that all AgrAbility Projects should be familiar with. The Breaking New Ground (BNG) Outreach Program/Indiana AgrAbility exhibited at the Area Agency on Aging Case Manager Conference in Indianapolis on April 1-2. [More](#)

Steve Swain, the BNG Rural Rehabilitation Specialist, presented to over 30 Master Gardener students *Gardening for People with Disabilities and for People Who are Getting Older*. [More](#)

Missouri

Willard Downs attended the Southeast Region Extension County Council meeting to present Russell Ramsey with a plaque of appreciate for his efforts and contribution to the Missouri AgrAbility Project. [More](#)

Working in concert with the SEMO Alliance for Disability Independence (SADI) the Missouri AgrAbility Project co-sponsored a full day AgrAbility training workshop for farmers and ranchers with disabilities. [More](#)

As a result of the Missouri AgrAbility Project showcasing at the North East Independent Living Services (NEILS) Open House in Kahoka, Missouri, six new consumer cases have successfully opened. [More](#)

The North East Independent Living Services (NEILS) and the local regional University of Missouri Extension Center co-sponsored the North East region Annual Farm/City Night. [More](#)

Women from across state of Missouri attended the first ever *Women in Boots and Blue Jeans*, A Risk Management Conference. [More](#)

The Missouri AgrAbility Project and Gardens for Every Body Project facilitated a full day training workshop about "*Preventing Injuries Through the Use of Smart Tools*" coupled with demonstrating the use of these smart tools. [More](#)

Nebraska

Occupational and physical therapists from northeastern Nebraska recently took part in a day-long seminar, *Rehabilitating Nebraska Farmers and Ranchers Disabilities*. [More](#)

On April 20, Bill Booker, Nebraska AgrAbility received one of two Dinsdale Family Faculty Awards. [More](#)

Oklahoma

On April 8, ABLE Tech Assistive Technology Training to Langston University Physical Therapy Students, was held at the OSU Campus Seretean Wellness Center. [More](#)

The Department of Rehabilitation Services "People with Disabilities Awareness Day at the Capitol", was observed on April 9 in Oklahoma City. [More](#)

Congratulations to Sandra Stevenson, Program Manager, Oklahoma AgrAbility Project, who has successfully completed the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services Training Academy. [More](#)

Pennsylvania

Dr Angela Hissong and Carla Wilhite presented at the American Occupational Therapy Conference in Houston, TX April 23/24. [More](#)

Dr. Hissong also received notice that Green Heron Tools received a seed grant from USDA to design ergo-garden tools for women. [More](#)

The celebration of April as OT Month across the Penn State campuses and other Occupational Therapy Programs across the state was infused with information about the role of OT for farmers with disabilities. [More](#)

Staff Changes

Missouri

Please welcome... USDA-Farm Service Agency to the Missouri AgrAbility Project! Dana Rogge, statewide Program Specialist and Outreach Coordinator for the USDA Farm Service Agency has joined the AgrAbility Project to help assist Missouri operators navigate the FSA.

AgrAbility in the News

[Click here for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects](#)

Other News

[Click here for other news of interest to AgrAbility staff members](#)

Upcoming Events

[Click here for professional development events related to AgrAbility](#)

Problems? Contact Clifford Racz, National AgrAbility Project, racz@purdue.edu

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National Project

Not all AgrAbility customers are candidates for traditional agricultural enterprises, such as row crops or livestock production. However, the options for alternative agricultural enterprises are as unlimited as their imaginations. Organic produce, agri-tourism, and worm farming are just a few examples. Many alternative agricultural enterprises may require business plans, and your state's Vocational Rehabilitation program may be a source of funds.

The first session in the AgrAbility Webinar Series is scheduled for May 28 at 3:00 p.m. EDT / 2:00 p.m. CDT / 1:00 p.m. MDT / 12:00 p.m. PDT. The webinar topic will be ***An Introduction to Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship for People with Disabilities***, and Steve Swain from the NAP/Indiana AgrAbility will be the presenter. Topics include: Why self-employment? Who is suited for self-employment? How should self-employment be explored?

Adobe Connect software will be used to conduct the webinar, and participants will receive instructions and handouts prior to the session. **The deadline to register for this free webinar is Friday, May 22.** [More](#)



Amber Wolfe, Indiana Arthritis Foundation AgrAbility Project Coordinator, exhibited the "Arthritis and Agriculture" booth at the National Rural Health Association Conference in Miami Beach, Florida from May 5-7. The booth included an 8-foot display wall, numerous educational materials, and promotional items. During the conference, Amber spoke with several professionals from the rural health industry as she spread awareness of the severity of arthritis and its related diseases as it affects those that work in the agricultural industry. Over 150 educational materials were given out, and many opportunities were discussed for planning educational seminars.

Amber Wolfe is scheduled to present an Arthritis and Agriculture webinar on the AgriSafe Network on July 8. For more information on this and other upcoming AgriSafe webinars, see <http://agrisafe.org/education/webinars/>.

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California

California AgrAbility has been busy with the "opening" of ag season. The staff are attending Opening Days at Migrant Housing Centers, setting up CalAgrAbility Arthritis Workshops for employees, and annual health fairs as the migratory ag employees return to work in the state.

The California AgrAbility Project has completed, in collaboration with Breaking New Ground at Purdue, the Spanish translation and editing of a "Farming with Arthritis" [fotonovela](#). In addition, CalAgrAbility and California Arthritis Foundation are developing 3-5 hour Spanish training modules on managing arthritis for agricultural employees.

The AgrAbility Staff has also received positive reviews from the annual Small Farm Conference held in Sacramento this year. Many AgrAbility consumers received scholarships to attend and to enhance their farming knowledge. The California AgrAbility staff continues to work with FSA on assisting consumers and looks forward to developing workshops in various counties in California.

Submitted by: Martha Stiles

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Indiana

Area Agencies on Aging are an important resource that all AgrAbility Projects should be familiar with. They are located in every state, and can provide resources not only to the aging, but also to people with disabilities. Breaking New Ground (BNG) Outreach Program/Indiana AgrAbility exhibited at the Area Agency on Aging Case Manager Conference in Indianapolis on April 1-2. The conference organized by the IAAAA Education Institute brought together over 300 case workers from across the state for training in serving the aging and disabled populations of Indiana.

For more information on Area Agencies on Aging, see <http://www.n4a.org/>.

Steve Swain, the BNG Rural Rehabilitation Specialist, presented to over 30 Master Gardener students *Gardening for People with Disabilities and for People Who are Getting Older*. The presentation included information on accessible pathways, raised beds, and adapted tools and methods. Many examples of tools and technologies were used.

The aim of the Master Gardener Program is to provide information and technical assistance in the areas of gardening and home horticulture through the use of trained and certified volunteers. Master Gardener interns are required to fulfill a minimum of 35 volunteer hours to become certified as a Master Gardener. Some volunteer their time working with nursing homes and assisted living facilities where people are able to get outside and use gardening as therapy and become more independent. The training also is used as a way to help Master Gardeners work more safely and help others do the same. They can also be a source of referrals to BNG and build relationships with extension educators.

Submitted by: Steve Swain

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Missouri

Willard Downs attended the Southeast Region Extension County Council meeting to present Russell Ramsey with a plaque of appreciate for his efforts and contribution to the Missouri AgrAbility Project. Russell Ramsey officially retired from the University of Missouri Extension but, will continue working with the Missouri AgrAbility Project by providing outreach and assistance efforts in the Southeast region.

Working in concert with the SEMO Alliance for Disability Independence (SADI), the Missouri AgrAbility Project co-sponsored a full day AgrAbility training workshop for farmers and ranchers with disabilities. Thirty one farmers and ranchers from the southeast attended this AgrAbility educational workshop to learn how to weave though the maze of social service agencies. Presenters included Marilyn Duncan from the local Southeast Regional Arthritis Center, Ron Parker, Supervisor, Southeast Region Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Russell Ramsey and Karen Funkenbusch from the Missouri AgrAbility Project, and Krystal Berkbigler-Friese, SADI / SEMO-TECH Project.

As a result of the Missouri AgrAbility Project showcasing at the North East Independent Living Services (NEILS) Open House in Kahoka, Missouri, six new consumer cases have successfully opened.

The North East Independent Living Services (NEILS) and the local regional University of Missouri Extension Center co-sponsored the North East region Annual Farm/City Night. Approximately 300+ people attended this exciting Saturday evening activity wherethe Missouri AgrAbility Project along with many local businesses, hospitals, and social service agencies showcased their programs, disseminated informational materials, and provided resources to participants. The Clark County Farm Bureau supplied the free soup and sandwich supper, the Clark County High School Jazz Band performed, and participants enjoyed a motivational/humorist speaker. At the end of the

evening door prizes were given out to attendees.

Women from across state of Missouri attended the first ever *Women in Boots and Blue Jeans*, A Risk Management Conference. This was a great forum for women in agriculture to get together and learn about the business aspects of farming and ranching along with how to network with others in similar situations. The two day educational risk conference focused on agricultural marketing, financial, legal, and health topics. Participants had an opportunity to learn from some of the top professionals in Missouri agriculture. Several featured speakers included Karla Klinger-Diaz from Simon, Diaz, & Ellis Law Firm who talked about the "*Voices for Agriculture-Who is Being Heard?*" Dana Rogge, statewide Program Specialist and Outreach Coordinator discussed the "*Finer Details of FSA.*" Diana Olson, Missouri Farm Bureau Federation discussed ways in which women can be heard while Karen Funkenbusch led an open, interactive discussion with conference participants about the Missouri AgrAbility Program.

The Missouri AgrAbility Project and Gardens for Every Body Project facilitated a full day training workshop about "*Preventing Injuries Through the Use of Smart Tools*" coupled with demonstrating the use of these smart tools. Participants learned how to recognize ways to maximize productivity by decreasing injuries, identify risk factors, and how to access reliable resource materials.

Submitted by: Karen Funkenbusch

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Nebraska

Occupational and physical therapists from northeastern Nebraska recently took part in a day-long seminar, **Rehabilitating Nebraska Farmers and Ranchers Disabilities**. The workshop was held at the Nielsen Community Center in West Point, NE., on April 29th.

Sponsored by Nebraska AgrAbility, the workshop was designed to help health care professionals become more competent in the care they give to an agricultural population that they see on a regular basis.

Lead instructor for the seminar was Carla Wilhite, OTR/L, of University of North Dakota, Casper College. Wilhite was instrumental in developing the AOTA-approved curriculum used in the seminar. She added her own experiences and expertise to supplement topics such as the farm culture, farm tasks and their hazards, and treatment interventions. Wilhite also led the clinical exercises, using information from the day in a scenario to recommend treatment for an AgrAbility client.

Other instructors for the workshop included: Sharry Nielsen UNL Extension Educator - NE AgrAbility; Rodney Peterson and Del Ficke, Easter Seals NE Rural Rehabilitation Specialists NE AgrAbility; Kelly Kahman, ESN; Larry Neimeyer and Karen Zimmerman, Vocational Rehabilitation Services of NE.

Participants learned about the needs of farmers and ranchers with disabilities, and some of the technology that might be used to keep them working in production agriculture. Workshop attendees also learned about the work of AgrAbility and resources available to them. In addition to classroom work, a farm visit to the Eric Beckman farm gave students actual experience in some of the assistive technology used by AgrAbility clients.

On April 20, Bill Booker, Nebraska AgrAbility, received one of two Dinsdale Family Faculty Awards. These awards recognize outstanding teaching, research, and outreach in the Institute of Ag and Natural Resources, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Bill joined IANR as an educator in Box Butte County in 2004 and brought to the position his expertise and experience as an agricultural producer and sunflower seed representative. He joined the Nebraska AgrAbility team in 2008.

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Oklahoma

On April 8, ABLE Tech Assistive Technology Training to Langston University Physical Therapy Students was held at the OSU Campus Seretean Wellness Center.

The Department of Rehabilitation Services "People with Disabilities Awareness Day at the Capitol", was observed on April 9 in Oklahoma City.

Congratulations to Sandra Stevenson, Program Manager, Oklahoma AgrAbility Project, who has successfully completed the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services Training Academy. Ms. Stevenson stated the 3-week course was educational and very informative. The Academy is taught to agency counselors and technicians to ensure quality services in their programs and services.

"I am confident I will be able to better facilitate services for our AgrAbility clients that choose to utilize DRS services now that I am equipped with the expertise and knowledge that is expected of counselors and technicians" said Stevenson.

Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services is a primary funding source for clients of the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project.

Submitted by: Amanda Erichsen

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Pennsylvania

Dr. Angela N. Hissong, OTR/L, CAPS with Carla Wilhite, MNM, OTR/L presented the following at the American Occupational Therapy Conference in Houston, TX on April 23 & 24:

1) An AgrAbility Project: Ergonomics, Tools, and Technology
Gardening Made Easier on the Body

2) The Farmer, The Farm, and Farming: More than Seeds and Manure
*Assisting Farmers tell & own their Story of Everyday Living
Secondary to Injury or Disease*

Dr. Hissong also received notice that Green Heron Tools received a seed grant from USDA to design ergo-garden tools for women. Ann & Liz attended a presentation by Crystal Smithmeyer, Linda Fetzer, and Angela during the 2008 PA Sustainable Ag Conference at State College, PA. They contacted Angela after the presentation to assist with brainstorming and writing for the grant. They are meeting on May 11th to initiate the project's goals.

The celebration of April as OT Month across the Penn State campuses and other Occupational Therapy Programs across the state was infused with information about the role of OT for farmers with disabilities.

Submitted by: Angela Hissong

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AgrAbility in the News

Reynolds County University of Missouri Extension Council Honors Dedicated and Respected Director

3/10/2009

The Sun Over Reynolds County Newspaper

Programs Mentioned: Missouri AgrAbility Project, USDA AgrAbility Project, University of Missouri Extension

Missouri AgrAbility Project-PHARM Dog Program

April 2009

Chronicle--American Chronic Pain Association

Programs Mentioned: Missouri AgrAbility Project, PHARM Dog Program

[Read Story](#)

AgrAbility Day at the Capitol Successful

4/9/2009

High Plains Journal

Programs Mentioned: Oklahoma AgrAbility

[Read Story](#)

Occupational Therapy Roles in AgrAbility Project

4/18/2009

Record Herald

Programs Mentioned: AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians, Penn State Extension, Easter Seals, Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation

[Read Story](#)

Goodwill Advocates Urge Congress to Invest in the American Worker

PR-USA.net

Programs Mentioned: Goodwill, AgrAbility

[Read Story](#)

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Other News

Argo Medical Technologies

Argo Medical Technologies Ltd. develops and markets walk restoration devices for people with lower limb disabilities...[More](#)

2010 Budget notes: Department of Agriculture (\$32.9B)

Highlights of the 2010 White House budget....[More](#)

Position Opening:

The National Farm Medicine Center is recruiting for an Agricultural Safety Program Leader for our Dairy Worker Initiative to join the staff at the Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation. Please contact Marlene Stueland for the position description and details.

Marlene Stueland,
Center Research Administrator
National Farm Medicine Center &
Center for Human Genetics
Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation
1000 North Oak Avenue
Marshfield WI 54449-5790
Tel: 715-389-3754
Fax: 715-389-4496
email: stueland.marlene@mcrf.mfldclin.edu

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Upcoming Events

* new addition this month

Name * Langston University Small Farmer's Conference
Dates May 27-29, 2009
City, State Oklahoma City Campus
Contact Info/web link

Name * *Introduction to Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship for People with Disabilities*
 The first session in the AgrAbility Webinar Series
Dates **May 28** at 3:00 p.m. EDT / 2:00 p.m. CDT / 1:00 p.m. MDT / 12:00 p.m. PDT
City, State
Contact Info/web link Steve Swain
 Adobe Connect software will be used to conduct the webinar, and participants will receive instructions and handouts prior to the session. [More info](#)

Name * Arthritis Foundation Self Help Program
Dates June 18- July 23, 2009
City, State Stillwater, OK 74078
Contact Info/web link Sandra Stevenson, Program Manager
 888-885-5588
sandra.stevenson@okstate.edu

Name * I.L. Summit 2009
 presenters: Ray Drake (VR) and Brad Marsh (SIL)
Dates June 28-30, 2009
City, State Columbia, MO
Contact Info/web link [More info \(PDF\)](#)

Name AgrAbility Assessment Training
Dates June 1-3, 2009
City, State Madison, WI
Contact Info/web link Mary Beck 608-262-9336
mfbeck@wisc.edu

Name Agricultural Medicine Course
Dates June 8-12, 2009

City, State Iowa City, IA
Contact Kay Mohling 319-335-4219
Info/web link kay-mohling@uiowa.edu
www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash

Name Rehabilitating the Colorado Farmer & Rancher (therapist, voc. counselor, extension agent training)

Dates June 26-27, 2009

City, State Fort Collins, CO

Contact Jill Sump, OTR/L 303-937-7713 x224
Info/web link

Name Distance Learning Course:
AgrAbility: Rehabilitating the Farmer, Rancher or Farmworker with a Disability

Dates Session 1: March 30-May 10, 2009
Session 2: June 8-July 19, 2009

Contact Mary Beck, University of Wisconsin-Extension, AgrAbility Project, 608-262-9336
Info/web link

[More info \(PDF\)](#)

Name NIFS Annual Meeting (National Institute for Farm Safety)

Dates June 14-18, 2009

City, State New Orleans, LA

Info/web link <http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~agsafety/NIFS/meetings2005.htm>

Name 2009 Amputee Coalition of America Annual Conference

Dates June 18-21, 2009

City, State Atlanta, GA

Info/web link <http://www.amputee-coalition.org/conference/index.html>

Name RESNA 2009 Annual Conference

Dates June 23-27, 2009

City, State New Orleans, LA

Info/web link <http://www.resna.org/conference/index.php>