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Keeping People Connected in Northeast Indiana & Northwest Ohio

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Assistance available to farmers, rural caregivers

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ANGOLA - Farmers who thought they could no longer do their work due to a disability may find help from the League for the Blind and the Disabled and Purdue University.

"Purdue's breaking new ground," said Mike Hines, AgrAbility case coordinator for the League, headquartered in Fort Wayne.

The Indiana AgrAbility Project helps farmers and rural residents who are caregivers of the blind or disabled, or disabled farmers themselves. It is administered through a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Breaking New Ground Outreach Program by Purdue and several disability and



Ed Bell of Hagerstown gets a lift onto his tractor with equipment made possible through the League for the Blind and the Disabled, headquartered in Fort Wayne. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

agriculture-related

organizations. It has been in

the works for about a year-and-a-half, and Hines said the League is trying to get the word out.

Farming has one of the highest disabling injury rates of any industry. Nineteen percent of people involved in such an accident cannot return to their work due to a disability.

The services offered through Breaking New Ground and Indiana AgrAbility focus on disabilities that include spinal cord injury, back injuries, arthritis, stroke, respiratory impairment, amputation, visual impairment, hearing problems, head injury and disease-related disabilities. They provide resources and information about worksite modifications, adaptive tools, business and education programs and alternative enterprises.

Representatives make on-site visits, and training is available. There is a Barn Builders support network as well.

More details are available at [agrability.org](http://agrability.org) or (800) 825-4264.

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