



September 2009

National AgrAbility Project News

NTW UPDATES

- **Friday, September 18 is the deadline for regular NTW registration.** After that date, the cost jumps from \$350 to \$400. [More](#)
- **The NTW session schedule has been updated, and the Thursday tour schedule has been finalized.** Check to see your tour options. We will begin the sign-up process for both tour options at the NTW. The rehabilitation tour will be limited to 45 people. [More](#)
- After polling AgrAbility staff members about the need for a **shuttle service at the NTW**, it was determined that such a service would not be feasible. However, other options are available, **including transportation for wheelchair users.** [More](#)
- A light reception is scheduled for 4:30-6:30 Monday evening.
- Standing Committees (Marketing, Networking, and Evaluation) will meet during breakfast on Tuesday morning. Communities of Interest (Ergonomics, AT, Arthritis, Mental/Behavior Health, VR) will meet during breakfast Wednesday morning.
- An Arthritis Foundation Scholarship is being offered for an Arthritis Foundation client to attend the AgrAbility National Training Workshop. [More](#)

The ergonomics Community of Interest has kicked off! Fourteen people from around the nation participated in the first conference call of the Ergo COI. [More](#)

The first conference call on Vocational Rehabilitation community of Interest was held on August 20, 2009. [More](#)

The second presentation in the NAP webinar series, *AgrAbility/Vocational Rehabilitation Relationships: Where are we now, and where should we be going?* was held on August 27. [More](#)

The first two webinars in the AgrAbility Webinar Series are now archived and available for viewing. [More](#)

Help spread the word about the 2009 AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Grand Rapids. [More](#)

State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

California

CalAgrAbility staff have taken advantage of the Communities of Interest series this past month. [More](#)

In August, staff conducted the *Rehabilitating Individuals Farming in California* workshop to Northern Counties VR Region, which included counselors, job developers and CA Employment Development Outreach Reps. [More](#)

In August, Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack held a Rural Tour community forum in Stanislaus County and discussed how USDA is working to assist CA farming. [More](#)

Georgia

Georgia AgrAbility is in the process of creating *AgrAbility Farm*. This one-of-a-kind farm that will showcase the latest technology that can assist agricultural workers that have health conditions or disabilities. [More](#)

Indiana

Indiana AgrAbility/Breaking New Ground Outreach Program, along with the Purdue Agricultural Safety and Health Program, provided three displays for visitors to the Indiana State Fair. [More](#)

Oklahoma

Amanda Erichsen and Shianne Megel attended the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (OCES) new county educator orientation session, giving new educators the opportunity to meet Oklahoma Extension specialists and learn about the resources available through OCES. [More](#)

Amanda Erichsen, Shianne Megel and Kylee Willard will attend local county fairs to increase awareness of the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project. [More](#)

Sandra Stevenson attended a noon Lions meeting in Stillwater August 27, 2009 to increase awareness of the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project. [More](#)

Pennsylvania

AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians, in cooperation with Agromedicine, recently provided free health screenings to hundreds of adults and children at the 2009 Penn State Ag Progress Days (APD) held at Rock Springs on August 18-20. [More](#)

Vermont

The Vermont AgrAbility Project hosted Dr. Therese Willkomm this past July for a day long workshop: *Farming Safely to Prevent a Disability*. [More](#)

West Virginia

Rural Rehabilitation: Agricultural Assessment & Accommodation Workshop was held in Lewisburg WV for occupational therapists, physical therapists and vocational rehabilitation specialists on September 11 & 12. [More](#)

Staff Changes

Oklahoma

Shianne Megel is the new Oklahoma AgrAbility communications assistant with the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. She completed her bachelors degree in agricultural education at West Texas A&M University. Megel served as Colorado State FFA Secretary and State 4-H Officer. She grew up on a small ranch in eastern Colorado raising horses and cattle.

West Virginia

Mary Slabinski, LGSW joined the WV AgrAbility staff in August. She will provide technical assistance, outreach, public awareness materials and ensure media dissemination.

Georgia

Kevin Trotter will be joining the AgrAbility in Georgia project as a Digital Media Professional. Kevin received his BFA in 3D Animation from the Savannah College of Art and Design. In addition to his 3D background, he has agricultural and video gaming experience. Kevin will also work on the many project management tasks of the project, including assisting with our wide variety of trainings and workshops.

AgrAbility in the News

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

- Oklahoma AgrAbility spotlighted on OETA-The Oklahoma Network Television
- Oklahoma AgrAbility featured on KWEY radio, Weatherford, OK
- Parnell farmer receives PHARM dog
- Grants to Help Disabled Farmers
- Ag Progress Days draw thousands
- MU AgrAbility Project Grant Renewal to Help Disabled Farmers

- AgrAbility Project Gets Green Light
- AgrAbility is Coming to Ohio
- Trained dogs prove helpful as assistant farmhands
- Brother and sister team farm for the future despite health challenges
- AgrAbility to host agricultural rehabilitation workshop

Other News

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

- Check please: Can the din of a restaurant help Parkinson's patients with speech troubles?
- U.S. Department of Labor launches new website

Upcoming Events

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

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



September 2009

National Project

After polling AgrAbility staff members about the need for a **shuttle service at the NTW**, it was determined that such a service would not be feasible. However, other options are available. Call **County Connection Bus Service** at **800-849-1191** a day or more in advance, and for \$14 per person one way, they provide curb to curb service. (Same day service is \$19.)

Transportation is also available for wheelchair users. All services are subject to availability. The NAP has also established an Internet bulletin board that staff members may use to coordinate the pooling of cab rides between the Grand Rapids airport and the conference hotel. [More](#)

An Arthritis Foundation Scholarship is being offered for an Arthritis Foundation client to attend the AgrAbility National Training Workshop. Nomination/application forms are available from Amber Wolfe at awolfe@arthritis.org or 1-800-783-2342. Scholarship applicants/nominees must be an agricultural worker that is affected in their work by arthritis.

Submitted by Amber Wolfe

The Ergonomics Community of Interest has kicked off! Fourteen people from around the nation participated in the first conference call of the Ergo COI. The group moved forward on several fronts, including resource sharing, case study feedback, critiques of ergo solutions/equipment and the development of formal ergonomics methodologies for onsite farm evaluation. In addition, an electronic networking site has been established for Ergo COI members, with slide shows, documents and discussions available to view. The AgrAbility Ergonomics Community of Interest site may be joined [by clicking here](#): or contact Rob Stuthridge rstuthri@purdue.edu to be added to invitation to future conference calls and discussion updates. You will need to register as a Linked In user (free of charge) to access the Ergo COI site, digests which will be sent to any Ergo COI members who don't wish to join the networking group.

submitted by: Rob Stuthridge

The first conference call on Vocational Rehabilitation Community of Interest occurred on August 20, 2009. Thirty-five people signed up, including AgrAbility staff, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, and rehabilitation specialists from other organizations. The call was moderated by Samuel N Mathew, VR Specialist for the NAP. Future interaction will be through conference calls. Those who would like to join the COI should e-mail snm@purdue.edu to be informed of the next VR Community of Interest call.

The second in the NAP webinar series was held on August 27. The webinar titled: "AgrAbility/Vocational Rehabilitation Relationships: Where are we now, and where should we be going?" was based on information gathered from a phone survey in January – Feb 09. Data collected during the phone survey was shared and also success stories from a few states were highlighted. The presentation done by Samuel N Mathew, the NAP VR specialist, lasted for one hour. Thirty five people logged into the webinar.

Submitted by: Sam Mathew

The first two webinars in the AgrAbility Webinar Series are now archived and available for viewing. Links to the Adobe Connect presentations of *An Introduction to Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship for People with Disabilities* and *AgrAbility/Vocational Rehabilitation Relationships: Where are we now, and where should we be going?* are now available at <http://agrability.org/resources/index.html>. An Internet-enabled browser with Adobe Flash Player is required.

Help spread the word about the 2009 AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Grand Rapids. Direct your customers and interested professionals to the conference site at <http://ntw2009.agrability.org/>.

Submitted by: Liz Semmel



September 2009

California

CalAgrAbility staff have taken advantage of the Communities of Interest series this past month. They have not only participated, but also invited many VR, AT, and ergonomists throughout California to join. So far several professionals have joined the VR, Ergonomics, Mental Health and AT conference calls.

In August, staff conducted the "Rehabilitating Individuals Farming in California" workshop to Northern Counties VR Region, which included counselors, job developers and CA Employment Development Outreach Reps.

The "Rehabilitating" workshop was also presented to the Veterans and Farmers Coalition and the CA Institute for Rural Studies (CIRS), who conduct outreach to veterans who farm. CIRS works in rural areas to contribute to sustainable agriculture for farmers and workers.

In August, Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack held a 'Rural Tour' community forum in Stanislaus County and discussed how USDA is working to assist CA farming. CalAgrAbility partners attended and heard that USDA's Rural Development has guaranteed 1,543 loans; Farm Service Agency is providing \$5.68 million through 69 Direct Operating Farm Loans. These loans help farmers purchase items such as livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance, and pay for other operating expenses. The Natural Resources Conservation Service announced approximately \$6.6 million for 6 floodplain easement projects and more than \$10 million in funding for watershed operations.

Submitted by: Martha Stiles



September 2009

Georgia

Georgia AgrAbility is in the process of creating *AgrAbility Farm*. This one-of-a-kind farm that will showcase the latest technology that can assist agricultural workers that have health conditions or disabilities. Visitors can see a wide variety of assistive technology devices and work site accommodations in one place. In addition to directly benefiting agricultural workers, there will be specialized training opportunities available for student groups, community members, and service professionals. Georgia AgrAbility will be hosting a media event in November to feature the ground breaking for this exciting project.

Submitted by: Becky Brightwell

AgrAbility e-Note

September 2009

Indiana

Indiana AgrAbility/Breaking New Ground Outreach Program along with Purdue Agricultural Safety and Health provided three displays for visitors to the Indiana State Fair. The display in the Indiana Young Farmer's Building used a grain bin along with a video showing the dangers of grain entrapment. The second display, staffed by FFA members, used a weight scale to demonstrate the forces pulling an individual into flowing grain and the required force to pull them out. A third display in the Farm Bureau Building provided publications on BNG and the services offered. Also on display was information about Arthritis and Farming, the Youth Farm Safety Education and Certification Program, and information on emergency preparedness. Breaking New Ground staff and consultants staffed the Farm Bureau display.



Submitted by Steve Swain

AgrAbility e-Note

September 2009

Oklahoma

Amanda Erichsen and Shianne Megel attended the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (OCES) new county educator orientation session, giving new educators the opportunity to meet Oklahoma Extension specialists and learn about the resources available through OCES. Amanda and Shianne met eight new educators and provided them resources to help their county citizens learn about the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project.

Amanda Erichsen, Shianne Megel and Kylee Willard will attend local county fairs to increase awareness of the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project. The current schedule is to attend the fair in Logan County (Guthrie) August 27-29; Noble County (Perry) September 12-19; and Creek County (Kellyville) September 24-27.

Sandra Stevenson attended a noon Lions meeting in Stillwater August 27, 2009 to increase awareness of the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project.

Submitted by: Amanda Erichsen



September 2009

Pennsylvania

Hundreds Take Advantage of Free Health Screenings at Ag Progress Day

AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians, in cooperation with Agromedicine, recently provided free health screenings to hundreds of adults and children at the 2009 Penn State Ag Progress Days (APD) held at Rock Springs on August 18-20. Attendees were offered a number of screenings, educational offerings, and examples of assistive technology. The following were the week's highlights:

- The Northeast/NY Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH), with the assistance of Centre Volunteers in Medicine, provided private dermatological screenings to 129 attendees. In addition, NYCAMH shared information about skin cancer and sun safety.
- Penny Miles, D.C., Miles Chiropractic, discussed spinal health with nearly 100 attendees during her one-day visit.
- Representatives from the Joint Replacement Center at Evangelical Community Hospital, Lewisburg, spent a day answering questions for more than 80 people who are coping with joint health issues.
- Over 350 Blood Pressure Readings were conducted by Centre Home Care.
- The PA Department of Health provided free Tetanus Shots to 50 individuals; using up the maximum amount of vaccine made available for our event.
- Vision Evaluations, including screening for glaucoma, were conducted by the North Central Sight Services. Ninety-nine attendees took advantage of this important opportunity, including a significant number of children.
- Ergonomic displays focused on simple ways to reduce strain and stress on the body while completing tasks in the shop, garden, or farm. In addition, a 'quick-hitch' and video surveillance unit were displayed as examples of assistive technology on the farm.
- Pesticide credits were earned by a dozen producers during sessions offered by the Office of Rural Health's Farm Worker Protection Safety Specialist.

"We are very pleased by the response to our screening," notes Arleen Clark, RN, Certified Occupational Health Nurse-Specialist with NYCAMH. "I spoke with so many people who have skin conditions that they've worried about for some time, but never took the time to have them checked. However, thanks to Dr. James Dunne and Dr. Gay Dunne, who volunteered their time and expertise through the Centre Volunteers in Medicine, we were able to screen these individuals. All individuals were educated about skin cancer, as well as, how to be safe while working or playing in the sun. NYCAMH's investment of

time and resources will have been repaid if we got just one person to receive the medical intervention they need to save their life."

AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians assists farmers and farm family members who are coping with a long-term injury or health condition. The project is funded through a grant of the US Department of Agriculture and is conducted in PA through a partnership between Easter Seals Central Pennsylvania, Penn State Cooperative Extension, and the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation. For more information regarding AgrAbility services, call toll free within PA to 1-800-416-6061 or visit the following website: <http://AgExtEd.cas.psu.edu/agrab/>

Submitted by: Crystal Smithmyer

The logo for AgrAbility e-Note, featuring a green square with a white stylized 'A' and the text 'AgrAbility e-Note' in a green sans-serif font.**September 2009****Vermont**

The Vermont AgrAbility Project hosted Dr. Therese Willkomm this past July for a day long workshop: "Farming Safely to Prevent a Disability". Dr. Willkomm is a nationally recognized expert in the area of adaptive technology and brought her engaging presentation of "Duct Tape, Velcro and Beyond" to a workshop participants that included farmers with disabilities, adaptive technology professionals, vocational rehabilitation professionals and FSA professionals.

The workshop was held in two different locations, day one in the southern half of the state followed by the northern section the following day. This allowed 75 participants to attend the day and location that was most practical for them. Given that the workshops were day long and held in mid July when farmers were likely to be out in the field, the turn-out was most impressive.

Submitted by: Alexandra Jump

The logo for AgrAbility e-Note, featuring a green square with a white stylized 'A' and the text 'AgrAbility e-Note' in a green sans-serif font.**September 2009****West Virginia**

Rural Rehabilitation: Agricultural Assessment & Accommodation Workshop was held in Lewisburg WV for occupational therapists, physical therapists and vocational rehabilitation specialists on September 11 & 12. The workshop featured the operation of a local cattle farmer to highlight the diverse components of a typical Appalachian small farm.

Submitted by: Mary Slabinski



September 2009

AgrAbility in the News

Oklahoma AgrAbility spotlighted on OETA-The Oklahoma Network Television

8/22/2009

An interview was conducted with Sandra Stevenson, the Program Manager for Oklahoma AgrAbility. Stevenson discussed the Project's mission, how it was funded and several farmer success stories. The interview aired the week of August 22-28, 2009.

Oklahoma AgrAbility featured on KWEY radio, Weatherford, OK

8/17/09

A successful client case was featured on the Weatherford radio station spotlighting Oklahoma AgrAbility's effort to help a local farmer succeed in his farming operation.

Parnell farmer receives PHARM dog

8/21/2009

Nodaway News Leader
Programs mentioned: Missouri AgrAbility Project, MERIL
[Read Story](#)

Grants to Help Disabled Farmers

7/27/2009

Farm Progress Mid-South Farmer
Programs mentioned: National AgrAbility Project
[Read Story](#)

Ag Progress Days draw thousands

8/24/2009

The Daily Collegian
Programs mentioned: AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians
[Read Story](#)

MU AgrAbility Project Grant Renewal to Help Disabled Farmers

8/24/2009

Freshare.net
Programs mentioned: Missouri AgrAbility Project
[Read Story](#)

AgrAbility Project Gets Green Light

9/3/2009

Farm Progress Missouri Ruralist
Programs mentioned: Missouri AgrAbility Project
[Read Story](#)

AgrAbility Coming to Ohio

Sept 2009

Morgan County Herald
Programs Mentioned: Ohio Agrability, National Agrability Project

Trained dogs prove helpful as assistant farmhands

8/19/2009

St Joe News
Programs mentioned: Missouri AgrAbility, National AgrAbility, PHARM Dog
[Read Story](#)

Brother and sister team farm for the future despite health challenges

7/28/2009

Farm and Dairy
Programs Mentioned: AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians
[Read Story](#)

AgrAbility to host agricultural rehabilitation workshop

9/14/2009

High Plains Journal
Programs Mentioned: Oklahoma AgrAbility
[Read Story](#)



September 2009

Other News**Check please: Can the din of a restaurant help Parkinson's patients with speech troubles?**

Parkinson's disease sufferers typically face a long, difficult battle against the disorder's degenerative effects on their motor skills and speech.

[Read Story](#)

U.S. Department of Labor launches new website

The U.S. Department of Labor this week launched **Disability.gov**, a redesigned federal Web site that connects the more than 50 million Americans with disabilities to thousands of trusted resources on disability-related issues, programs and services. Formerly known as DisabilityInfo.gov, the site has been completely redesigned and updated with new social media tools, such as a blog and a Twitter feed, to encourage feedback and interaction among visitors. [Read More](#)

Copyright © 2009 *Purdue University*

An equal access/equal opportunity *university* All rights reserved.



September 2009

Upcoming Events*** new addition this month**

Name * Driving Rural Awareness for Healthy Joints-National Farm Safety and Health Week
Dates September 20-26, 2009
City, State
Contact Info/web link Amber Wolfe, awolfe@arthritis.org
 800-783-2342

[More information](#)

Name * Arthritis Community of Interest Conference Call #2
Dates September 23, 2009 12:00 PM EST
City, State
Contact Info/web link Amber Wolfe, awolfe@arthritis.org
 800-783-2342

Name * Ergonomics Conference Community of Interest Conference Call #2
Dates September 30, 2009 2:00 PM EST
City, State
Contact Info/web link Rob Stuthridge, rstuthri@purdue.edu

Name * Rural Health Association of Oklahoma Fall Conference
Dates September 17 & 18, 2009

City, State Norman, Oklahoma
Contact Shianne Megel and Stacy Bauter
Info/web link

Name Oklahoma AgrAbility Fall Conference-Rehabilitating Oklahoma Farmers and Ranchers
Dates October 23-24, 2009
City, State Oklahoma State University, Stillwater Campus, Stillwater, OK
Contact Sandra Stevenson, Program Manager
Info/web link 888-885-5588, sandrastevenson@okstate.edu
<http://agrability.okstate.edu>

Copyright © 2009 Purdue University
An equal access/equal opportunity university All rights reserved.

Arthritis and Agriculture

Driving rural awareness for healthy joints.



Healthy joints enable rural agricultural workers to farm safe.

The Arthritis Foundation – Indiana Chapter is driving awareness of arthritis and its diseases to America’s rural communities. Funded through the USDA’s National AgrAbility Project, and led by Purdue University, the “Arthritis and Agriculture” initiative is in full-force nation-wide.

Resources Available

- Arthritis and Agriculture Brochure
- Plain Facts About Arthritis (Amish) Brochure
- Gardening and Arthritis Pamphlet
- Gaining Ground on Arthritis DVD
- Arthritis Answers Booklet and Over 30 Other Informational Titles, including Nutrition and Exercise
- Spanish Versions Available!

We can help!

Presentations are available for all meetings, seminars and conferences!

The Arthritis Foundation Indiana Chapter

Amber Wolfe
AgrAbility Project Coordinator

615 N. Alabama Street, Suite 430
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Phone: 317-879-0321, Ext. 212
Fax: 317-876-5608
Toll Free: 1-800-783-2342
E-mail: awolfe@arthritis.org

The mission of the Arthritis Foundation is to improve lives through leadership in the prevention, control, and cure of arthritis and related diseases.

AgrAbility Project, CSREES, USDA
Special Project 08-41590-04796



The vision of the National AgrAbility Project is to enable a lifestyle of high quality for farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers with disabilities, so that they, their families, and their communities continue to succeed in rural America.