

# AgrAbility e•Note

October 2019

*A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility*

## National AgrAbility Project News

The AgrAbility Annual Staff Needs Assessment has been distributed to staff members from funded SRAPs who were on staff by August 31. Please take a few minutes to complete and submit the assessment. Your feedback provides valuable guidance to the National AgrAbility Project. If you didn't receive a survey link, contact [jonesp@purdue.edu](mailto:jonesp@purdue.edu).

The AgrAbility National Training Workshop will take place in Madison, WI, March 23rd - 26th, 2020.



- The keynote speaker will be Davon Goodwin: a farmer, a veteran, and an AgrAbility client from NC. For your planning, this year's keynote address, banquet dinner and live auction will be on Tuesday night, rather than Wednesday night.
- Don't forget to submit your session and poster proposals soon. You can access them here [Call for Presentations Form](#) | [Call for Posters Form](#). Please feel free to forward this link to anyone that you would like to have present at the NTW.
- Please start thinking about possible exhibitors or sponsors. [Online Exhibitor Form](#) | [Printable Exhibitor Form](#). You can also direct anyone interested to contact Tess or JoBeth.
- Contact JoBeth or Tess anytime: - JoBeth Rath - [jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org) 585.402.2059 and Tess McKeel - [tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org) - 585.447.9015

Registration is open for the Regional Workshop in Davis, CA, for December 3-4 at the Mondavi Sensory Theatre. [More](#)

The 2020 AgrAbility *VIRTUAL* National Training Workshop (VNTW) has been scheduled for January 28-30. The VNTW consists of two webinars per day, and this year's sessions are planned for 12:00 p.m. EST and 3:00 p.m. EST. If you would like to give a webinar, [please complete and return this form](#) to [jonesp@purdue.edu](mailto:jonesp@purdue.edu) by Monday, December 2.



The National AgrAbility Project provided materials for display in the Ohio AgrAbility tent at the 2019 Ohio Farm Science Review. The NAP also exhibited at the National Association County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) Annual Meeting in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Chuck Baldwin of the National AgrAbility Project (NAP)/Purdue University and Amanda Harguth with AgrAbility of Wisconsin/University of Wisconsin staffed a booth at the World Dairy Expo the week of October 1-5, 2019. The event is held annually at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, WI.



[More](#)



Paul Jones gave an AgrAbility presentation and staffed a display at the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association Annual Conference in Quebec City, QC, on October 8-10. In addition to sessions at the hotel, the conference included tours, one of which was to a strawberry farm that was still harvesting.

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## Toolbox Spotlight

The [WoodOX Sling Firewood Carrier](#) positions the load under the user's arm (on either side) so that the weight is distributed across the upper body (rather than it being all on one side and transported by one arm). This design means an upward shift in the carrier's center of gravity to promote less strain on the body and less chance of the load tripping in transit.



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## State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

### Alaska



On September 28th, Assistive Technologies of Alaska (ATLA) attended the Mat-Su Emergency Preparedness Expo. [More](#)

The AgrAbility team attended two nights at Rodeo Alaska and two health fairs in late September and talked to a wide variety of folks and ranchers about AgrAbility resources available through CES & ATLA.

### California

California AgrAbility conducted outreach at the Farmworker Appreciation Day hosted by the Mexican consulate in French Camp, an agricultural community near Stockton, California. The event was held in a family migrant center and brought families from nearby migrant centers. [More](#)



California AgrAbility staffed a booth at the annual Mexican Independence Day Celebration in Yuba City. [More](#)



Staff attended the Nutrition, Health, and Safety Fair at the Westwood Elementary school. This event brought resources from the local community as well as from around the state to educate elementary school kids and their parents on various topics. [More](#)

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### Colorado

The Merger is Official! Goodwill Industries of Denver and Discover Goodwill of Southern & Western Colorado have finalized a merger between the two organizations. Discover Goodwill©, based in Colorado Springs, and Goodwill Industries of Denver will maintain their current administrative



offices, retail stores, donation centers, and other localized programs that together serve more than 100,000 individuals throughout Colorado each year. [More](#)



With the merger came a new opportunity. CO AgrAbility staff were invited to attend the Colorado Springs Farmers Market, hosted by Discover Goodwill of Southern and Western Colorado. [More](#)

Staff at CAP have for some years been reaching out to rural health care organizations to establish some form of mutual connection. Though all serve many of the same populations in the rural farm areas of the state, many communities have never heard of CAP.

[More](#)



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## Georgia

Georgia AgrAbility co-sponsored the Vermiculture 101 Workshop held at the UGA Greenhouse Complex in Athens, Georgia, September 7th. [More](#)



September 13th, Georgia AgrAbility held a rapid fabrication workshop for physical and occupational therapists. This "make and take" workshop explored different fabrication tools and materials that can be used to create hundreds of assistive technology solutions in minutes. [More](#)

Georgia AgrAbility staff hosted a volunteer day at a client's hog farm in Lincolnton, Georgia, September 19th. The client is a veteran, had recently suffered from a mini-stroke, and needed assistance getting fencing complete on the farm so that he can obtain NRCS funding.

[More](#)



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## Illinois



AgrAbility of Illinois managed the Health and Public Safety Tent at the Farm Progress Show on August 27-29. [More](#)

Kelly Gagnon, the AgrAbility IL communications coordinator, presented at the Illinois Rural Health Association's annual conference.

[More](#)

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## Indiana

Steve Swain, Indiana AgrAbility rural rehabilitation specialist, presented "Practical AT User Assessments" to a graduate level class during which he presented the assessment process and showed examples of assistive technology on the farm.

Indiana AgrAbility has continued to conduct farm assessments for Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services and provide the basic services to the farmers of Indiana. Recent assessments included a farmer with a traumatic brain injury and one with multiple impairments. Job coaching has been added to the services offered.

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## Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility participated in Women and Ag in Oberlin, Kansas. [More](#)

KAP staff joined the KSU Biological and Agricultural Engineering

Department for the annual BAE Showcase for students of the department and undeclared majors in the College of Engineering and College of Agriculture. [More](#)



## Maine

Maine's veteran outreach specialist, Anne Devin, had an AgrAbility display table at the Northeast Mechanical Weed Expo in Old Town, Maine, on September 12. [More](#)



AgrAbility staff exhibited project information at the three-day Common Ground Fair in Unity (September 20-22). The theme was aging farmers asking, "What's your body telling you?" This display generated lots of conversations with fairgoers, and staff were able to speak with about 300 people about aches and pains and possible work modification ideas.



On Sunday, September 22, Anne Devin gave the Sunday keynote speech, "United We Grow: Veterans in Agriculture" at the Common Ground Fair. In her keynote, Devin discussed how her military experiences have been helping her and her family navigate farming as a lifestyle and business. [More](#)



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On September 26, Brie Weisman hosted a free yoga class for gardeners and farmers. She demonstrated ways to incorporate yoga into daily routines, using stretches that can be done sitting or standing.



## Michigan

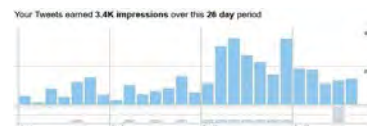


After reconstructive ankle surgery, Bill Renshaw of Union City struggled to climb onto some of his farm equipment, especially the skid loader. Bill's need was submitted to the MSU Mechanical Engineering 481 class for senior students to design and build a solution as a capstone project. [More](#)

Last month, Michigan AgrAbility announced the opening of the AgrAbility Demonstration Farm partnering with Holland area farmer Doug VerHoeven so farmers can "try before they buy". [More](#)

## Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility participated in Suicide Prevention Month and Farm Safety Week to help raise awareness and provide resources to MO AgrAbility's following and farmers. [More](#)



MU Extension staff members provided education and networking activities to educate

participants about AgrAbility eligibility criteria for services, ergonomic tools that help to make farming easier, and the Internet of Things (IoT) introduced by demonstrating advanced technologies and robotics. [More](#)

On September 4, staff attended a Women in Agriculture program for 32 participants in northwest Missouri.

The Women in Agriculture Summit took place in Jefferson City, Missouri, September 5-6. It was co-sponsored by Farm Bureau, MU Extension, and Missouri AgrAbility. One hundred twenty-five women attended the Summit.

Missouri AgrAbility team members Karen Funkenbusch, Debi Kelly, and Tricia Barrett presented two posters at the 2019 NACCA national conference September 9-13.

On September 14, 500 Mennonite farm families participated in an AgrAbility safety and health workshop in Fortuna, Missouri. Mennonite materials were shared by AgrAbility Pennsylvania and Indiana Rural Safety and Health Association.

Missouri AgrAbility staff members participated in the AgrAbility All-Staff Meeting hosted by National AgrAbility on September 23.

On September 24, AgrAbility clients learned about ergonomic tools, proper body mechanics, and hand/foot protection. [More](#)

Susan Butterfield, MO AgrAbility ambassador, Valerie Tate, MU Extension agronomy specialist and Karen Funkenbusch, MO AgrAbility director, hosted a Farmer and Rancher AgrAbility Workshop September 25 at the Forage Research Farm.

September 27, Missouri AgrAbility worked with 10 Latino/Hispanic AgrAbility clients and their families.



Pharm to Farm and University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy (UMKC SOP), Missouri AgrAbility collaborative partners, provided free point-of-care health screenings at the Farm Safety Day hosted by Missouri Extension and Missouri AgrAbility for the Mennonite community in Fortuna, MO. [More](#)

Lincoln University's Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program (ISFOP), in collaboration with the University of Missouri, has been busy throughout the month of September. David Middleton and Nahshon Bishop spoke to 1,500 high school and college students, [More](#)



Susan Jaster attended the 2019 Veteran Mental Health, Suicide Prevention, and Resiliency Summit on September 11 at the Kaufman Foundation Conference Center in Kansas City, MO. She set up a display to promote Missouri AgrAbility and the Brain Injury Association of Missouri. [More](#)

The Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) hosted the St. Louis Professional Networking Coffee at the BIA-MO Office on September 3, 2019. Professionals attended to meet others who are involved in the care of survivors of brain injury and to learn about the Missouri AgrAbility Project (MAP).

Maureen Cunningham, BIA-MO executive director, attended the MODOT 2019 Highway Safety and Traffic Blueprint Conference as a presenter and exhibitor September 9 - 11. She displayed information for the Missouri AgrAbility Project and talked with conference attendees.

Maureen Cunningham presented "Brain Injury and Farming" at the Women in Agriculture Conference on September 16. She discussed the causes and impact of brain injury in

rural settings and the Missouri AgrAbility Project as a resource for survivors who are farmers.

Maureen Cunningham attended the Missouri Association of Rehabilitation Facilities meeting and shared information about BIA-MO services and Missouri AgrAbility Project programs.

Maureen Cunningham, BIA-MO, and Susan Jaster, Lincoln University, presented at the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators Conference on September 25. [More](#)

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## Nebraska



Nebraska AgrAbility was there when PHARM Dog "Lassie" and a Nebraska AgrAbility client, Kyle Lammers, were united. Lassie is shaping up to be a great asset to his operation, mainly to help him with working cattle. [More](#)

Husker Harvest Days was the great event this year. While attendance may have been down due to natural disasters in the state, connections were made with potential clients, staff were educated on stress and mental wellness, and everyone enjoyed visiting with people from across Nebraska. [More](#)



September 16-20 was National Farm Safety and Health Week, and staff educated kids at a Progressive Ag Safety Day in Franklin. Staff also educated on social media platforms about tractor safety, farmer health, safety & health for youth, confined spaces, and safety & health for women. [More](#)

Staff set up at the Columbus Health Fair to educate people about AgrAbility, stress management, and other programs available through Nebraska Extension. [More](#)

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## New Mexico

New Mexico AgrAbility will give an informational session on the project at the San Miguel County Health Council Meeting in Las Vegas, New Mexico, October 22.

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## North Carolina

On September 1, North Carolina was awarded by USDA-NIFA with a 2019-2023 AgrAbility grant to support farmers with disabilities in the state. [More](#)

NC AgrAbility was invited to train NRCS agents on how to work with veterans and disabled farmers at the NRCS annual meeting in Morganton on September 11. [More](#)



NC AgrAbility participated as an exhibitor at the first Hispanic Farmers and Agricultural Professionals Symposium which was held Friday, September 13 at the North Carolina Farm Bureau headquarters in Raleigh. [More](#)

The NC AgrAbility advisory board met for the first time in the new cycle on September 18. The board is gaining more members from various

organizations across the state and from other departments at NCA&T. [More](#)



NC AgrAbility was invited to the NCA&T county operations Zoom Meeting on September 20. [More](#)



On September 21, Dr. Crystal Kyle and Beatriz Rodriguez were invited as keynote speakers at the Beekeepers and Farmers Conference at the Hill Family Farm and Educational Center in Whitakers, NC. [More](#)

NC AgrAbility participated as an exhibitor and presenter at the Assistive Technology Vendor EXPO in Raleigh, NC, on September 26. This event is the largest gathering of vendors who help individuals with disabilities across the state. [More](#)



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## Ohio



The Ohio AgrAbility Program's dual missions of education and assistance to farmers with disabilities were on display at the 2019 Farm Science Review on September 17-19. Staff, farmers, and vendors were on hand to answer questions, greet visitors, demonstrate assistive technology and equipment, and talk about Ohio AgrAbility. [More](#)

OAP held daily "Fitness for Farm Life: Stretching and Everyday Exercises" sessions. Attendees were offered tips on safely lifting and carrying heavy items and other ways to protect their backs from injury. [More](#)



In addition to publications and workshops, OAP showcased some of its most important education and outreach partners: their farmers. [More](#)

AgrAbility education and outreach went well beyond the OAP exhibit tent. In the Utzinger Memorial Garden, staff presented a session on gardening through the life span. Even when staff were not presenting workshops in the garden, OAP was still on display: [More](#)

OAP featured a new exhibit area in 2019 - "Ohio AgrAbility: A Focus on Livestock", with adapted equipment and information posters detailing how modifications and assistive technology can help farmers with and without disabilities farm safely. [More](#)

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## Pennsylvania

Linda Fetzter, Abbie Spackman, and Kendra Martin attended the Child Ag Injury Prevention workshop held in Hershey, PA, in mid-September. [More](#)



Jaylen, who helps her parents on their farm, Blue Dog Farms, is a self-described "differently-abled" farm girl who overcomes challenges and obstacles with grace and dignity. [More](#)

Abbie Spackman provided a training session to over 50 FSA staff member and loan officers. The full day workshop focused on mental health and stress among farmers. [More](#)

## Tennessee

Tennessee State University, one of Tennessee AgrAbility Project's (TNAP's) land-grant partners, hosted the Small Farm Expo National Women in Agriculture Association Conference. Read more [here](#).

TNAP exhibited at TN State University's annual Small Farm Expo in Nashville. Dr. Deborah Reed represented AgrAbility there and also presented AgrAbility with farm health and safety at the National Women in Ag Symposium in Nashville that highlighted women in Ag and opportunities.

TNAP exhibited at the 100th TN Valley Fair in Knoxville, TN, and the Houston County Fair in Erin, TN.

TNAP hosted a Progressive Farmer Ag Safety Day with Farm Bureau and Extension on Farm Day for over 1000 participants.

"Thank Your Farmer Fair" was a new event where Trosts represented AgrAbility, Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN, and Pokedot Hops and Garden.



TSU New Farmer Academy graduated prospective farmers from across the country ([TSU News Service](#)). [More](#)

TNAP was a co-sponsor of the Gibson County Ag Day for 4th graders two-day event. There were 520 students involved and 10 agriculture-related stations. The students learned about different agriculture practices in Gibson County.



The 2019 TN AgrAbility Ag-Run-Ability 5K/2 mi. WALK to raise awareness for TN AgrAbility within the UTIA system was held September 14-19. Thirty-one registered and 23 participated in this event. Thank you to TN Farmers Coop for being a sponsor. [More](#)

"The Dust Rolls" with 40 days of 90+ degree temperatures and only 1/2 inch of rain in Tennessee. Harvest set in, and TNAP distributed goodie bags of water, ear plugs, soap in a hose, paper towels, and window cleaner to combines, tractors, sprayers, grain trucks, and cotton pickers... [More](#)



A helmet safety presentation was delivered to 120 third grade students at the Decatur County TRAE fair.

TNAP participated in various webinars promoting National Farm Health and Safety Week 2019. [More](#)

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## Texas

Twenty-six veterans and beginning farmers and ranchers were admitted into the BattleGround to Breaking Ground program. Training farms in Gatesville and Nixon will be hosting participants to gain their 100 hours of hands-on training. [More](#)



Eighteen new participants of the BattleGround to Breaking Ground Program attended the basic training weekend. AgrAbility staff member Makenzie Thomas presented AgrAbility to participants, and a local farm equipment dealership conducted an equipment selection and safety presentation. [More](#)



The FSA Farmer Veteran Streamlined Eligibility program and BattleGround to Breaking Ground cohorts graduated 24 individuals in September. [More](#)



Russ Clanton, farm loan chief for USDA FSA, attended the Cohort 3&4 graduation lunch. By completing the program, participants are eligible for USDA FSA microloans and down payment assistance loans to start their own operations.

Texas AgrAbility published a new fact sheet *Safety for Aging Farmers & Ranchers*. Check it out [here](#).

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## Utah

Resource Facilitator Michael Porter of AgrAbility of Utah attended the Sevier County Watershed Tour and Conference on September 16 and explained AgrAbility to the participants. The Natural Resources Conservation Services of Utah sponsored the conference.

Connor Dyreng and Michael Porter set up an AgrAbility display booth at the first-ever Central Utah Grazing Expo on September 17 and 18. The event took place in Ephraim and Salina, Utah, and was hosted by Utah State University Extension.

Darlene Carlisle and Randall Bagley attended the Assistive Technology Fair at Salt Lake Community College on September 17. At their booth, they demonstrated examples of assistive technology and let participants play an interactive AgrAbility game with their phones.



KMTI Radio 95.1 in Manti, UT, interviewed Connor Dyreng and Randall Bagley about the AgrAbility of Utah program on September 23.

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## StaffChanges and Recognition

### Illinois



AgrAbility of Illinois is pleased to announce Josie Rudolphi as co-director of the program. Rudolphi brings 10 years of professional experience to the position and previously served as an associate research scientist for the National Farm Research Center in Marshfield, WI. She earned a B.S. in agricultural communications and a M.S. in agricultural education from Iowa State University. She also earned a Ph.D. in occupational and environmental health from the University of Iowa. Dr. Josie Rudolphi will join Dr. Robert Aherin as a co-director of the AgrAbility of Illinois program. Dr. Aherin has served as the director of the Illinois AgrAbility program since it was established in 1990.

### New Mexico



As the New Mexico AgrAbility Project says adios and thank you to occupational therapy student Craig Charlton, they now welcome occupational therapy students Evangeline Randall and Callie Ward to Mandy's Farm. The OT graduate students will be assisting April Wood, AgrAbility team member and farm manager, in creating the farming curriculum for people with disabilities, assisting individual food growers be



successful in food growing tasks, and recommending, adapting, or modifying simple tools or environments to accommodate disability in the workplace.

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## AgrAbility in the News

**Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects.**

- Are injuries or health conditions making farming difficult? We can help! (Georgia Farmers and Consumers Market Bulletin, Vol. 102, No.18)
- 42nd Sunbelt AG Expo offers the latest in farm technology, research (Georgia Farmers and Consumers Market Bulletin, Vol. 102, No.20)
- [AgrAbility demonstration farm opening in Michigan](#) (Michigan AgrAbility Project)  
Also at: <https://tinyurl.com/yx9a7htt>
- [Ready for annual Farm Science review](#) (Ohio AgrAbility Project)
- [Movement made easy](#) (National AgrAbility Project)
- [#nmagrability medias](#) (New Mexico AgrAbility Project)
- [Review grain bin safety rules before harvest begins](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [Farmers face hazardous work conditions, potential injury](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [Maine AgrAbility Project: Featuring Farming and Fishing with a Disability](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [Maine AgrAbility Project: Featuring Steven, Lobster Fishing with a Disability](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [Agricultural tools, equipment, machinery & buildings for farmers & ranchers with physical disabilities](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project, National AgrAbility Project)
- [Maine AgrAbility](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [Workshop explains federal programs for beginning farmers and ranchers](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [AgrAbility works to keeps farmers doing what they love](#) (Nebraska AgrAbility)
- [Dawson County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting](#) (Nebraska AgrAbility)
- [Agriculture symposium in Augusta for military veterans](#) (Maine AgrAbility)

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## OtherNews

**Click titles below for other news of interest to AgrAbility staff members.**

- [Veterans with PTSD turn to beekeeping for relief](#)
- [Ag one of Indiana's most hazardous occupations](#)
- [Race, ethnicity, & gender in the Census of Ag](#)

- [GROWMARK, Growers Edge develop yield guarantee program](#)
  - [Purdue on actions to streamline H-2A process](#)
  - [Farmers attend Dairy Strong for free – Register by Nov. 1](#)
  - [Finding farmland: Resources to support land access](#)
  - [Soap from straw](#)
  - [National FFA announces record student membership](#)
  - [After Watching Brother Give Up on Gardening, Man Designs Tabletop Gardens for People in Wheelchairs](#)
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## UpcomingEvents

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

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Problems? Contact Chuck Baldwin, National AgrAbility Project, [baldwi19@purdue.edu](mailto:baldwi19@purdue.edu)  
[Unsubscribe from the e-Note](#)

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October 2019

## National AgrAbility Project

The AgrAbility National Training Workshop will take place in Madison, WI, March 23rd - 26th, 2020.



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- Contact JoBeth or Tess anytime at: - JoBeth Rath - [jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org) 585.402.2059 and Tess McKeel - [tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org](mailto:tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org) - 585.447.9015

Registration is open for the Regional Workshop in Davis, CA, for December 3-4 at the Mondavi Sensory Theatre. This Workshop will focus on how occupational therapists, physical therapists, and other rehabilitation professionals can collaborate with AgrAbility, working with the issues of migrant farmworkers, and collaborating with other partners such as VR and the centers for agriculture, health and safety. The second day will feature tours of some local agricultural businesses and a migrant center.

You can find more information about the workshop and register [HERE](#).

Hotel rooms are blocked at the Hyatt UC Davis. You can reserve your hotel room [HERE](#) until November 4th.

Submitted by Goodwill of the Finger Lakes

Chuck Baldwin of the National AgrAbility Project (NAP)/Purdue University and Amanda Harguth with AgrAbility of Wisconsin/University of Wisconsin staffed a booth at the World Dairy Expo the week of October 1-5, 2019. The event is held annually at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, WI.

According to the [Wisconsin Ag Connection](#), more than 62,200 people from 94 countries attended the event. By count, the top nations represented were Canada, Mexico, Italy, China, Brazil, and Japan respectively.



Nearly 860 companies featured their products and services in the trade show areas, and among them was AgrAbility. The AgrAbility exhibit included general information on both the National and the Wisconsin AgrAbility projects, brochures and booklets on such topics as arthritis and agriculture (in Spanish and English), back problems in agriculture, and AgrAbility services for veterans. Free DVDs sharing AgrAbility's vision and mission were offered, as were a few free samples of assistive technology in the way

of handles that could be added to long-handled implements, such as rakes or snow shovels, to ease strain on the back and shoulders. Many good contacts were made and follow-up is being done by the respective AgrAbility staffs.

Submitted by Chuck Baldwin

October 2019

## Alaska

On September 28th, Assistive Technologies of Alaska (ATLA) attended the Mat-Su Emergency Preparedness Expo. This all-ages event begins with people lined up out the door of the Menard Center waiting to learn more about how they can be prepared in an emergency. Many Mat-Su residents run farms and were interested in exploring the AgrAbility program.



Submitted by DeShana York

October 2019

## California

California AgrAbility conducted outreach at the Farmworker Appreciation Day hosted by the Mexican consulate in French Camp, an agricultural community near Stockton, California. The event was held in a family migrant center and brought families from nearby migrant centers. Staff spoke to about 150 families and children about agricultural health and safety. Many of the children brought their parents to the AgrAbility booth. Staff led various arthritis exercises for farmworkers suffering with low joint mobility and aches and pains from laborious tasks such as hoeing and pruning. The event featured dancing and singing performances from the children living in these communities.



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California AgrAbility staffed a booth at the annual Mexican Independence Day Celebration in Yuba City. Located in Sutter County, the community is largely composed of small orchard farmers plus agricultural and packing plant workers. The festivities attracted 1,000 attendees. Staff spoke to attendees about program services and networked with representatives from the Employment Development Department, Sutter County, and Farm Bureau.



Staff attended the Nutrition, Health, and Safety Fair at the Westwood Elementary school. This event brought resources from the local community as well as from around the state to educate elementary school kids and their parents on various topics. Topics ranged from dental care to pesticide regulation awareness. Staff was able to educate around 100 students, teachers, and parents on gardening safely while showcasing assistive tools that would help prevent chronic illness.

Submitted by Sara Wat

October 2019

## Colorado

The Merger is Official! Goodwill Industries of Denver and Discover Goodwill of Southern & Western Colorado have finalized a merger between the two organizations. Discover Goodwill®, based in Colorado Springs, and Goodwill Industries of Denver will maintain their current administrative offices, retail stores, donation centers, and other localized programs that together serve more than 100,000 individuals throughout Colorado each year. Both organizational boards approved the merger, and with the Goodwill Industries International board of directors' approval of the consolidation of territory, the two organizations will combine operations effective immediately.



Operating as one organization will allow both regions to leverage their collective expertise in community programming to expand Goodwill's mission of employment placement and job training across the state and help even more Coloradans with disadvantages achieve greater independence. The combined organization will now serve all 64 counties in Colorado with localized career development programming, 43 retail stores, 4 outlets, and 12 stand-alone donation centers, employing more than 2,700 workers.

Program Manager Candiss Leathers advises that the mailing address for AgrAbility has not changed and will remain 6850 Federal Blvd, Denver, CO 80249. Matters involving accounts payable or accounts receivable should be mailed to Discover Goodwill of Southern & Western Colorado, 1460 Garden of the Gods Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80907. Please call her if there are any questions about which address to use.



With the merger came a new opportunity. CO AgrAbility staff were invited to attend the Colorado Spring's Farmers Market, hosted by Discover Goodwill of Southern and Western Colorado. The daylong event provides the community with many locally grown produce, homemade goods, and crafts. It also gave the AgrAbility staff an opportunity to meet many staff members and

clients of the southern campus of Goodwill.

Staff at CAP have for some years been reaching out to rural health care organizations to establish some form of mutual connection. Though all serve many of the same populations in the rural farm areas of the state, many communities have never heard of CAP. Because the right connection was finally made, staff members were invited to attend as exhibitor and presenter at the El Paso County Health Fair held in Callahan, CO. The health care organizations were thrilled to have AgrAbility present to their attendees. The fair promoters advised that in excess of 200 residents were in attendance.



Submitted by Jim Craig



October 2019

## Georgia

Georgia AgrAbility co-sponsored the Vermiculture 101 Workshop held at the UGA Greenhouse Complex in Athens, Georgia, September 7th. The program featured a hands-on experience where participants learned how to get started with vermiculture. Topics covered earthworm biology, the do's and don'ts of feeding worms, how to identify and troubleshoot problems, how to use finished worm compost as a soil amendment, and much more. Participants even left with their very own bin with starter worms.



September 13th, Georgia AgrAbility held a rapid fabrication workshop for physical and occupational therapists. This "make and take" workshop explored different fabrication tools and materials that can be used to create hundreds of assistive technology solutions in minutes. While attending the workshop, participants also learned about the Georgia AgrAbility project and how staff



assist clients with assistive technology recommendations and solutions.



Georgia AgrAbility staff hosted a volunteer day at a client's hog farm in Lincolnton, Georgia, September 19th. The client is a veteran, had recently suffered from a mini-stroke, and needed assistance getting fencing complete on the farm so that he can obtain NRCS funding. Staff also partnered with the local Lincoln County High School FFA chapter and could not have pulled it off without their assistance and hard work. GA AgrAbility staff truly enjoy volunteer days as they get to know and work alongside their clients.



Submitted by Rebecca Brightwell

October 2019

## Illinois

AgrAbility of Illinois managed the Health and Public Safety Tent at the Farm Progress Show on August 27-29. Forty nonprofit organizations in the agricultural industry were offered free exhibit space and the opportunity to share the services they offer to the more than 100,000 show attendees. The tent also provided screenings and information about strokes, skin cancer, healthy eating, hearing, and vision.



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Kelly Gagnon, the AgrAbility IL communications coordinator, presented at the Illinois Rural Health Association's annual conference. She shared with the healthcare professionals in attendance about the AgrAbility program in Illinois, the program's impact story, and how the referral process to become involved works.

Submitted by Megan Crowhurst

October 2019

## Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility participated in Women and Ag in Oberlin, Kansas. The conference included speakers from USDA-FSA and K-State Extension and Research, including AgrAbility. Other topics included estate planning, farm financials, handling farm stress, and a general panel on the future of agriculture from a woman's point of view.



KAP staff joined the KSU Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department for the annual BAE Showcase for students of the department and undeclared majors in the College of Engineering and College of Agriculture. One of KAP's outreach goals is to present to student ag groups on campus, inform them about AgrAbility's program, and to encourage them to share the information with family and community in their hometowns.

Submitted by Tawnie Larson

October 2019

## Maine

Maine's veteran outreach specialist, Anne Devin, had an AgrAbility display table at the Northeast Mechanical Weed Expo in Old Town, Maine, on September 12. The room was filled with many enthusiasts and one special Maine farmer named Eliot Coleman who talked with Anne about the adaptive tools.

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On Sunday, September 22, Anne Devin gave the Sunday keynote speech, "United We Grow: Veterans in Agriculture" at the Common Ground Fair. In her keynote, Devin discussed how her military experiences have been helping her and her family navigate farming as a lifestyle and business. She also laid out their vision of developing a veteran-to-farmer transition program and how the community can help support its local veteran farmers.



Submitted by Lani Carlson

October 2019

## Michigan



After reconstructive ankle surgery, Bill Renshaw of Union City struggled to climb onto some of his farm equipment, especially the skid loader. Bill's need was submitted to the MSU Mechanical Engineering 481 class for senior students to design and build a solution as a capstone project.



With some additional engineering by ag engineer Ned Stoller, the accommodation works perfectly. Bars extending from the loader cab provide handles that Bill can use from either the front or side to



safely pull himself into the cab. The attached chains give easy access for retracting the bars back in place once he is seated. Safety hinges move the bar extensions upward in case they are accidentally left in the extended position. The bars are sturdy - made of 1-inch square steel tubing -



secure, and don't compromise existing cab safety features. A simple solution to make access easier to a piece of equipment that gets lots of use!

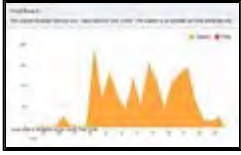
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Last month, Michigan AgrAbility announced the opening of the AgrAbility Demonstration Farm partnering with Holland area farmer Doug VerHoeven so farmers can "try before they buy". Michigan AgrAbility submitted a short article about the demonstration farm and a picture of Doug VerHoeven to the MSU Extension Dairy Work Group for inclusion in their annual "upcoming programs" booklet. The booklet is sent to all Michigan dairy producers so they can review all of the MSU Extension dairy programs and ongoing research projects that will be of interest to them. (BTW - the Michigan AgrAbility media release about the demonstration farm reached all the way to Sioux Country Radio in Iowa!)

Submitted by Deb Chester

October 2019

## Missouri



Missouri AgrAbility participated in Suicide Prevention Month and Farm Safety Week to help raise awareness and provide resources to MO AgrAbility's following and farmers. The following is ever growing, and in the month of September MO AgrAbility's Facebook earned 2023 total impressions, Tweets earned 3,400

impressions, and their Instagram post had 819 impressions. Check out Missouri AgrAbility on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @MOAgrAbility.



Submitted by Tevin Uthlaut, MU Extension

MU Extension staff members provided education and networking activities to educate participants about AgrAbility eligibility criteria for services, ergonomic tools that help to make farming easier, and the Internet of Things (IoT) introduced by demonstrating advanced technologies and robotics. Missouri-specific stress, depression, and suicide prevention materials, as well as opioid resources, were given to all participants. Pre- and post-evaluations were also facilitated.

On September 24, AgrAbility clients learned about ergonomic tools, proper body mechanics, and hand/foot protection. Twenty-eight lady landowners and six women veterans also learned farming techniques about urban agriculture (program materials provided by The Ohio State University), Women in Woodland (WOW), and EQUIP program, as well as other programs outlined in the Farm Bill.

Submitted by Karen Funkenbusch, MU Extension



Pharm to Farm and University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy (UMKC SOP), Missouri AgrAbility collaborative partners, provided free point-of-care [health screenings](#) at the Farm Safety Day hosted by Missouri Extension and Missouri AgrAbility for the Mennonite community in Fortuna, MO. Seven students from UMKC SOP traveled to

Fortuna to provide screenings and wellness education on how to manage blood glucose and blood pressure. The 31 participants of the screenings were provided with Missouri



AgrAbility resource materials, as well as educational materials about healthy sleep habits, stroke prevention, falls prevention, farm equipment safety, and hearing loss prevention strategies. Eight participants were referred to seek primary care and provided addresses of local health care facilities in their surrounding area for follow-up.



Submitted by Kelly Cochran, Pharm to Farm

Lincoln University's Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program (ISFOP), in collaboration with the University of Missouri, has been busy throughout the month of September. David Middleton and Nahshon Bishop spoke to 1,500 high school and



college students, highlighting farm technology and safety during the annual Southwest Center Field day on the University of Missouri's Mt. Vernon Research Campus, September 12.

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Susan Jaster attended the 2019 Veteran Mental Health, Suicide Prevention, and Resiliency Summit on September 11 at the Kaufman Foundation Conference Center in Kansas City, MO. She set up a display to promote Missouri AgrAbility and the Brain Injury Association of Missouri. There were several sessions that pertained to female veterans. Susan led the one-hour discussion over lunch about farmer veterans with suicidal conflicts. One hundred fifty participants attended the summit whose primary job responsibility is suicide prevention in the Kansas City Region. Susan also attended the NASHIA Conference at the Crown Plaza Center in Kansas City, MO, on September 25. At this conference, she participated as a panel member who discussed collaboration, successes, and challenges of official collaborating partners of the NASHIA in Missouri. The partners are Brain Injury Association of Missouri, Department of Health and Senior Services, University of Missouri Kansas City, and MO AgrAbility. Susan represented and presented the Missouri AgrAbility Project.

Submitted by Shon Bishop and Susan Jaster, Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program, Lincoln University Cooperative Extension

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Maureen Cunningham, BIA-MO, and Susan Jaster, Lincoln University, presented at the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators Conference on September 25. They discussed collaborative efforts for the Missouri AgrAbility Project with BIA-MO, Lincoln University, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, and Missouri Extension.

Submitted by Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association of Missouri, Inc.

October 2019

## Nebraska



Nebraska AgrAbility was there when PHARM Dog "Lassie" and a Nebraska AgrAbility client, Kyle Lammers, were united. Lassie is shaping up to be a great asset to his operation, mainly to help him with working cattle. Due to Kyle's upper extremity amputation, he still can become easily unbalanced, and a fall could occur while in the cattle yards. Lassie will be used to help Kyle bring cattle up and into his working corrals. She will also work so that Kyle will not have to be in the enclosed spaces with cattle. In addition, Kyle's dog will be used to watch gates while he feeds in order to eliminate

transfers in and out of the tractor.

Husker Harvest Days was the great event this year. While attendance may have been down due to natural disasters in the state, connections were made with potential clients, staff were educated on stress and mental wellness, and everyone enjoyed visiting with people from across Nebraska.



While at Husker Harvest Days, staff got to preview the movie "Silo". What a great reminder on the hazards of grain bins. See more about how you can host a screening of this movie in your area by clicking [here](#).



September 16-20 was National Farm Safety and Health Week, and staff educated kids at a Progressive Ag Safety Day in Franklin. Staff also educated on social media platforms about tractor safety, farmer health, safety & health for youth, confined spaces, and safety & health for women. AgriSafe courses were promoted through social media as well.

Staff set up at the Columbus Health Fair to educate people about AgrAbility, stress management, and other programs available through Nebraska Extension. Several conversations with those who had experienced disaster trauma occurred in this venue. It is still a depressing situation for many Nebraskans.

Submitted by Susan Harris-Broomfield



October 2019

## North Carolina

On September 1, North Carolina was awarded by USDA-NIFA with a 2019-2023 AgrAbility grant to support farmers with disabilities in the state. With the main goal of increasing independent living and the quality of life for agricultural workers with disabilities, NC AgrAbility will be providing agricultural farm workers and their families with farm safety education, assistive technology assistance, and networking support.

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NC AgrAbility was invited to train NRCS agents on how to work with veterans and disabled farmers at the NRCS annual meeting in Morganton on September 11. The event was attended by around 45 NRCS agents from the western region in NC. It was a great opportunity for networking and increasing awareness about working with farmers with disabilities. Most of the agents who participated at the event enrolled in the NC AgrAbility listserv and one of them committed to serving on the NC AgrAbility Advisory Board.



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NC AgrAbility participated as an exhibitor at the first Hispanic Farmers and Agricultural Professionals Symposium which was held Friday, September 13 at the North Carolina Farm Bureau headquarters in Raleigh. Over 125 people from the southeastern region attended; among them, 39 Hispanic farmers had the opportunity to connect and learn about the different resources available to them in the U.S.



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The NC AgrAbility advisory board met for the first time in the new cycle on September 18. The board is gaining more members from various organizations across the state and from other departments at NCA&T. In an effort to gain a better understanding of the issues that NC AgrAbility faces in serving the NC farmers, the meeting was held at the NC A&T farm and ended with touring the farm while opening discussion about how to better assist and educate farmers with disabilities in North Carolina.



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NC AgrAbility was invited to the NCA&T county operations Zoom Meeting on September 20. At this meeting, county Extension directors and county Extension agents had the opportunity to learn more about the services provided by NC AgrAbility and about how to refer farmers to the program for direct services. They were also provided information about the educational activities that NC AgrAbility has that can be used when they have activities with farmers in their counties.

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On September 21, Dr. Crystal Kyle and Beatriz Rodriguez were invited as keynote speakers at the Beekeepers and Farmers Conference at the Hill Family Farm and Educational Center in Whitakers, NC. The event was attended by



around 40 participants who learned about NC AgrAbility among many other interesting topics provided by the Bee Excellent Association and the USDA NRCS program.



NC AgrAbility participated as an exhibitor and presenter at the Assistive Technology Vendor EXPO in Raleigh, NC, on September 26. This event is the largest gathering of vendors who help individuals with disabilities across the state. It provided hands-on assistive technology demos and a 20-minute vendor training. This year, the event was attended by more than 350 participants.

Submitted by Beatriz (Betty) Rodriguez

October 2019

## Ohio



The Ohio AgrAbility Program's dual missions of education and assistance to farmers with disabilities were on display at the 2019 Farm Science Review on September 17-19. Staff, farmers, and vendors were on hand to answer questions, greet visitors, demonstrate assistive technology and equipment, and talk about Ohio AgrAbility. To ensure no mobility devices ran out of power, OAP provided a mobility scooter and chair charging station for participants needing a re-charge. To facilitate access to the field demonstrations, AgrAbility sponsored an accessible shuttle bus to transport visitors from the main exhibit area to the farm fields.

OAP held daily "Fitness for Farm Life: Stretching and Everyday Exercises" sessions. Attendees were offered tips on safely lifting and carrying heavy items and other ways to protect their backs from injury. Leah Schwinn, occupational therapy doctoral student, also led participants in a quick stretching routine, demonstrating how farmers can easily add stretching to their workday.



In addition to publications and workshops, OAP showcased some of its most important education and outreach partners: their farmers. For FSR 2019, OAP invited their farmers to spend a few hours in the tent to greet visitors, try out new equipment, share their experiences with Ohio AgrAbility, and talk to students about farming with a disability.

AgrAbility education and outreach went well beyond the OAP exhibit tent. In the Utzinger Memorial Garden, staff presented a session on gardening through the life span. Even when staff were not presenting workshops in the garden, OAP was still on display: staff designed large "[garden signs](#)" with tips on gardening with low vision, arthritis, and other imitations, which were planted throughout the garden. In addition to the exhibit tent and workshops, Ohio AgrAbility hosted the Universal Design Garage (part of a larger UD house) and offered examples and information on using universal design in the workshop and farm.

OAP featured a new exhibit area in 2019 - "Ohio AgrAbility: A Focus on Livestock", with adapted equipment and information posters detailing how modifications and assistive technology can help farmers with and without disabilities farm safely. The exhibit featured equipment and vendors from [Life Essentials](#), [PWR EZ Systems](#), [K & M Manufacturing](#), and [Propel Sliding Door Automation](#). The vendors displayed and demonstrated their products, answered questions, and worked with staff and farmers to problem-solve issues that may limit the farmers' productivity or ability to safely use and access their equipment and facilities.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

October 2019

## Pennsylvania

Linda Fetzer, Abbie Spackman, and Kendra Martin attended the Child Ag Injury Prevention workshop held in Hershey, PA, in mid-September. All three women had a chance to present and lead discussions on several topics surrounding the prevention of, and attention to, child ag injuries and general farm safety topics for all ages on the farm. Thanks to the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health for hosting this important workshop.



Jaylen, who helps her parents on their farm, Blue Dog Farms, is a self-described "differently-abled" farm girl who overcomes challenges and obstacles with grace and dignity. Isn't it awesome to see a young person eager about agriculture!

Video Link: [Click here](#).

What AT Jaylen is using. [Click here](#).

Abbie Spackman provided a training session to over 50 FSA staff member and loan officers. The full day workshop focused on mental health and stress among farmers. AgrAbility provided an overview of the AgrAbility project, resources for farmers in PA, and networking opportunities for FSA and AgrAbility.

Submitted by Abbie Spackman

October 2019

## Tennessee

TSU New Farmer Academy graduated prospective farmers from across the country ([TSU News Service](#)). East TN New Farmer Academy graduated 20 beginning farmers. TN AgrAbility referred and sponsored 30 veterans with disabilities to attend the New Farmer Academy across the state of Tennessee.



The 2019 TN AgrAbility Ag-Run-Ability 5K/2 mi. WALK to raise awareness for TN AgrAbility within the UTIA system was held September 14-19. Thirty-one registered and 23 participated in this event. Thank you to TN Farmers Coop for being a sponsor. Some of the participants shared their experiences: they walked for their dad who was a farmer veteran; ran in honor/memory of producers in their county; ran in honor of youth in agriculture who have a disability; and one enjoyed mother-daughter time.



"The Dust Rolls" with 40 days of 90+ degree temperatures and only 1/2 inch of rain in Tennessee. Harvest set in, and TNAP distributed goodie bags of water, ear plugs, soap in a hose, paper towels, and window cleaner to combines, tractors, sprayers, grain trucks, and cotton pickers that were sitting in fields during early morning hours. All were compliments of TN AgrAbility to



show a little love during the hot and dusty harvest season.

TNAP participated in various webinars promoting National Farm Health and Safety Week 2019. To date, in Gibson County, TN, there have been three cotton picker fires and one field fire (20 acres of irrigated corn possibly from a cigarette) and in a neighboring county a combine blew up while the 70-year-old driver was climbing up the steps; sad to report, he was killed instantly. Always remember to "Shift Farm Safety into High Gear!"

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

October 2019

## Texas



Twenty-six veterans and beginning farmers and ranchers were admitted into the BattleGround to Breaking Ground program. Training farms in Gatesville and Nixon will be hosting participants to gain their 100 hours of hands-on training. The program consists of 16 weeks of business planning courses along with agriculture production education and hands-on training.

Eighteen new participants of the BattleGround to Breaking Ground Program attended the basic training weekend. AgrAbility staff member Makenzie Thomas presented AgrAbility to participants, and a local farm equipment dealership conducted an equipment selection and safety presentation.



Participants also visited Howdy! Farm, an on-campus farm managed by students of Texas A&M. Howdy! Farm has enabling gardens for individuals in wheelchairs or with mobility limitations. Farm managers demonstrated the farm's innovative agricultural practices that individuals can implement in their own operations.

The FSA Farmer Veteran Streamlined Eligibility program and BattleGround to Breaking Ground cohorts graduated 24 individuals in September. Graduates completed their business plans, 100 hours of hands-on training with a mentor, and 20 agriculture production courses. These individuals will serve as mentors for incoming cohort members.



Submitted by Makenzie McLaurin Thomas

October 2019

## Upcoming Events

**Name** Sunbelt Ag Expo  
**Dates** October 15-17, 2019  
**City, State** Moultrie, Georgia  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://sunbeltexpo.com/>

**Name** 4th National Farm Viability Conference  
**Dates** October 22-24, 2019  
**City, State** Red Wing, Minnesota  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://www.farmviabilityconference.com/>

**Name** Heart of America Grazing Conference  
**Dates** October 29-30, 2019  
**City, State** Burlington, Kentucky  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://forages.ca.uky.edu/event/heart-america-grazing-conference-0>

**Name** Organic & Non-GMO Forum  
**Dates** October 29-30, 2019  
**City, State** Minneapolis, Minnesota  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://tinyurl.com/yyde59qy>

**Name** 2019 Sustainable Agriculture Conference  
**Dates** November 1-3, 2019  
**City, State** Durham, North Carolina  
**Contact Info/Web link** <https://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/sac/>

**Name** Veterans in Agriculture Conference  
**Dates** November 2, 2019  
**City, State** Flowood, Mississippi  
**Contact Info/Web link** Carolyn Banks

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**Name** Seven Habits for Effective Farmers Webinar Series: Succession Planning

**Dates** November 6, 2019

**City, State** Online Webinar

**Contact Info/Web link** <http://tiny.utk.edu/sevenhabits> - register online  
<https://ag.tennessee.edu/cpa/Pages/webinars.aspx> – additional information

**Name** National Conference for Food and Agribusiness

**Dates** November 6-7, 2019

**City, State** West Lafayette, Indiana

**Contact Info/Web link** <https://agribusiness.purdue.edu/program/nc/>

**Name** Farmer Veteran Coalition Lone Star Stripes 2019 Stakeholders Conference

**Dates** November 17-20, 2019

**City, State** Austin, Texas

**Contact Info/Web link** <https://conference.farmvetco.org/>

**Name** Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show

**Dates** February 5-7, 2019

**City, State** San Antonio, Texas

**Contact Info/Web link** <https://convention.ncba.org/>