

AgrAbility e•Note

February 2020

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

NTW Updates

Don't get stuck without a hotel room. The hotel block at the **Madison Concourse Hotel closes February 25** and the block at the **Hilton Madison Monona Terrace closes February 21**. You can reserve your hotel room online [HERE](#). You can also call to make your reservation:
Madison Concourse Hotel: 800-356-8293 and give them reference code 805513.
Hilton Madison Monona Terrace: 877-510-7465 and give them group code Agra.



Other things "To Do" before the NTW

1. Register. You can get to registration through the NTW website [HERE](#)
2. While you are on the NTW website don't forget to check out the great [tours](#) that are planned (additional fee applies).
3. Register as an AgrAbility exhibitor. This is an option on the registration site. You can contact Goodwill staff if you have already registered online but would like to have an AgrAbility display.
4. Suggest vendors or sponsors. You can find information for both by clicking on either option- [vendor](#) or [sponsor](#).
5. Put together your state raffle basket. These have been a hit the last two years. Put together a basket with items from your state or any theme that you would like and let's see whose basket gets the most tickets.
6. Solicit auction items. We need auction items to help support the cost of our farmer guests. You can mail your items ahead of time, if needed, to Amanda Harguth, 460 Henry Mall, Room B20, Madison, WI 53706. Please indicate that it is for the NTW and also include the attached [item description form](#).
7. Start thinking about the snacks you would like to share in the hospitality suite.

If you have any questions, contact us anytime.

Tess McKeel - tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org -585.447.9015
or JoBeth Rath - jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org - 585.402.2059

The 2020 AgrAbility VIRTUAL National Training Workshop logged a near-record combined attendance of 238. Archived recording of all presentations and presentation files are available at www.agrability.org/online-training/virtualntw. Many thanks to the presenters, especially those from SRAPs: Farzaneh Khorsandi (CA), Esmeralda

Mandujano (CA), Ned Stoller (MI), along with Chuck Baldwin and Ed Sheldon of the NAP.

The NAP is preparing to reprint *Arthritis and Gardening*. If you are interested in pre-ordering copies, please email jonesp@purdue.edu by Friday, February 28.

The Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund, sponsored by NAP collaborating partner the Farmer Veteran Coalition, is accepting applications until March 6. Awards range from \$1,000 to \$5,000, though funds do not go directly to the veteran, but rather to third-party vendors for items the veteran has identified. Visit www.farmvetco.org/fvfellowship for more information and the application form.

Toolbox Spotlight



The **AguaCheck Wireless Stock Tank Sensor** is designed to allow one to monitor a remote water tank, which includes status reports daily and low-water-level or rapid-water-loss alerts instantly, all via text messages. Among the cited benefits: knowing when to turn a pump on and off without wasting time or overflowing a tank, lowering pump electricity cost, detecting a broken float valve or other leak before the tank is drained, and enabling water usage planning and rationing.

State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

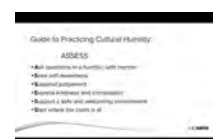
Springtime in Alaska and it's 20 below! Even though there has been extreme cold weather in the great state of Alaska this January, it has not stopped the AgrAbility team from pressing forward with many outreach events and engagements. [More](#)

AgrAbility in Alaska is beginning to gain further name recognition and awareness. In January the following events had AgrAbility representation:

- January 21-23, Alaska AgrAbility had a booth at the Alaska Public Health Association Conference-Alaska Health Summit 2020 in Anchorage. [More](#)
- AK AgrAbility participated in the Alaska Young Fisherman's Summit in Juneau January 21-23. [More](#)
- Washington State University and Alaska AgrAbility co-sponsored a Women in Agriculture event at the Anchorage, AK, site January 25. The theme of this virtual engagement was "Healthy Farms" and was all about mental health and stress management. [More](#)
- Staff had a booth January 30-February at the Alaska Peony Growers Association (APGA) 2020 Winter Conference in Fairbanks. [More](#)

California

California AgrAbility presented at the 2020 AgrAbility Virtual National Training Workshop. Dr. Farzaneh Khorsandi presented on AgrAbility and agricultural all-terrain vehicle safety. Esmeralda Mandujano gave a presentation titled "Applications of Cultural Humility in Everyday AgrAbility." [More](#)



California AgrAbility staff attended the Center for Occupational Health and Safety (COEH) Builds Bridges Conference. Attendees explored in depth the ergonomic and occupation safety hazards of warehouses. [More](#)



California AgrAbility staff did outreach at the Zenith Ag Safety and Compliance Summit in Fresno. The summit brought together over 300 farmworkers, farm supervisors, and farm owners, to learn about agricultural health and safety topics and technologies. [More](#)

Georgia

Georgia AgrAbility staff attended the 2020 Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference in Savannah, Georgia, January 10-12. The event is the largest educational conference and trade show in the southeastern United States that unites growers, vendors, and suppliers. [More](#)



January 9, Georgia AgrAbility staff attended and presented at the Southern Center for FSMA Annual Meeting in Savannah, Georgia. Shown is Rebecca Brightwell presenting on her grant project "Produce Food Safety Training for Military Veterans."

Illinois

AgrAbility of Illinois and University of Illinois Extension will be hosting the Illinois Ag Mental Health Summit at the Illinois Farm Bureau on March 4 in Bloomington, IL. The Summit seeks to identify and showcase the mental health and stress management resources available to farmers in Illinois. [More](#)

Indiana

Steve Swain, Indiana AgrAbility rural rehabilitation specialist, staffed an exhibit at the 2020 Illiana Vegetable Growers Symposium at Teibel's Restaurant in Schererville, Indiana. [More](#)



The 2020 Fort Wayne Farm Show was held in the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum on January 14-16. AgrAbility was one of 1,100 exhibitors covering three exhibit halls in the facility. [More](#)

Dr. Robin Adams, Purdue professor of engineering education, invited Steve Swain, Indiana AgrAbility rural rehabilitation specialist, to participate as a diverse subject matter expert for a "safety" engagement session with engineering students. [More](#)

Kansas



Kansas AgrAbility AT Ag Specialists Karin Rasmussen and Lesa Clubine presented AgrAbility during a recent Farm Financial Skills for Kansas Women in Agriculture hosted by K-State Research and Extension. [More](#)

KAP staff teamed up with the students from the Kansas State University Biological and Agricultural Engineering (BAE) Department at the Topeka Farm Show. KAP used their spinning wheel to encourage attendees to

participate in a game of trivia, which provided the staff an opportunity to share KAP and other fun agriculture-related topics. [More](#)



Maine

NEW! [The Maine AgrAbility Blog: Gotta Lotta Livin' To Do!](#) A blog series that deals with issues surrounding aging, farming, and quality of life. Staff will be adding new blog posts twice a month. Check it out!

Maine AgrAbility Project Director Richard Brzozowski recently finalized the following University of Maine Cooperative Extension publications which can be useful for career exploration and skill building: [More](#)



Another publication just finished is [Preparing for Agricultural Worksite Assessments](#). This was adapted from the AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians program. The goal is to better prepare farmers and service providers for an on-site AgrAbility visit .

Maine AgrAbility staff and advisory council members shared the three-day schedule providing coverage at the AgrAbility booth at the Annual Agricultural Trades show in Augusta January 14-16. [More](#)



On January 15, Ellen Gibson presented information about AgrAbility and universal design as part of the Beginning Farmers Resource Network and Maine's session, "Increasing your Scale and Efficiency with Mechanization".

On January 18, Richard Brzozowski exhibited Maine AgrAbility information at the Downeast Agriculture Conference: Land-Sea Connections. About 80 people attended the day-long conference in Machias, Maine.



On January 22, Kelley Spencer of Maine Assistive Technology Solutions shared AgrAbility information at the annual meeting for the Maine Landscape and Nursery Association and the Maine Arborist Association.

Mental health resources compiled through AgrAbility efforts were shared as part of the January 2020 Farm and Food System Newsletter. [More](#)

Michigan

January was a time for Michigan AgrAbility staff to "catch their breath" after a busy 2019 and to perform needed administrative tasks.

Staff did not just "sit at the computer" ... Michigan AgrAbility's own Ned Stoller presented "Low-Tech Assistive Technology for Farmers Worldwide" at the 2020 AgrAbility Virtual National Training Workshop. [More](#)

Missouri

The University of Missouri Extension Missouri AgrAbility program in collaboration with Lincoln University Cooperative Extension (LUCE) Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program (ISFOP) were busy throughout the month of January!

Using the Jesup Wagon mobile teaching method, Karen Funkenbusch and Debi Kelly, both of MU Extension, and Nahshon Bishop, Susan Jaster, and David Middleton of LUCE ISFOP, brought modern agricultural tools and research-based information to the Annual

Great Plains Growers Conference (GPGC) January 8 - January 10 in St. Joseph, Missouri. [More](#)

In addition, the following AgrAbility topics and hands-on demonstrations were provided to participants: [More](#)

Karen Funkenbusch presented about Missouri AgrAbility and Missouri's Show-Me Strong Farm Families mental health resources for Missouri's Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Grant Program (BFRDP) in Union, Missouri, on January 28.

Jim Shepard and David Middleton, both of LUCE ISFOP, traveled to the Bootheel of rural Missouri to educate Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, Tennessee, and Mississippi farmers at the Ag Expo in Poplar Bluff, Missouri, January 3 - February 1, 2020. [More](#)



Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association of Missouri executive director, discussed the Missouri AgrAbility Project during the Missouri Association of Rehabilitation Facilities January 2020 meeting in Jefferson City with executives and program staff of various rehabilitation programs across Missouri.



University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy (UMKC SOP), a Missouri AgrAbility collaborator, provided point-of-care health screenings and education at the Great Plains Growers Conference held at Missouri Western State University on January 10. [More](#)

Nebraska

The Nebraska AgrAbility team has been busy this past month (seriously, where did the time go?). Between farm expos, client visits, and preparing for the upcoming expos and advisory board meeting, time has just flown.

Staff attended the two-day York Ag Expo. Good connections were made and discussions were held with many farmers and ranchers about the program.



A staff member attended the Northeast Nebraska Farm & Ag Expo. Staff hope to represent Nebraska AgrAbility at this event again next year.

Staff members attended the Virtual National Training Workshop in January.

AgrAbility was promoted at several workshops and programs given by Extension staff in January. It is now standard practice to give each participant a brochure and do a one-minute pitch for the program at whatever program is happening. Often this results in further questions and interest in the AgrAbility program.

North Carolina



On January 27 - 28, North Carolina AgrAbility participated at the Peach Growers Society workshop and annual meeting at Moore County Cooperative Extension. NC AgrAbility is working closely with this group in evaluating ergonomic risk factors and determining how to prevent injuries while pruning and training orchards.

On January 30, NC AgrAbility participated as a presenter at the 2020 NC AgriShop Series at the Union County Cooperative Extension. The event was attended by around 25 farmers who learned about managing disabilities in agriculture.



Ohio



Ohio AgrAbility has recently partnered with the OSU College of Nursing and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities to form the Caregiver Support Network to present a planned series of workshops and webinars for caregivers, advocates, and service providers. To make the workshops easily accessible to people across Ohio, OH AgrAbility is hosting the workshop at several local sites across Ohio. [More](#)

Ohio AgrAbility (OAP) has long enjoyed a good working relationship with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), the state vocational rehabilitation agency, but even good relationships can be improved and strengthened through teamwork. [More](#)

Pennsylvania

AgrAbility PA staff kicked off 2020 by exhibiting at two of the state's largest agricultural events of the year in the month of January: Keystone Farm Show and 104th Pennsylvania Farm Show. [More](#)

Project Assistant Abbie Spackman showcased AgrAbility PA at Keystone Farm Show. This three-day event is the largest commercial farm equipment and service provider show in the state! [More](#)



Kendra Martin, marketing & outreach coordinator, collaborated with presenters at the PA Farm Show's "So You Wanna Be A Farmer" exhibit, which included resources for veterans in agriculture from Rodale Institute, Farmer Veteran Coalition, PA Veteran Farming Project, USDA/NRCS, Delaware Valley University, Steve A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, Saint Joseph's University, Kitchen Table

Consultants, and PA Dept. of Agriculture. [More](#)

"IG Takeover." AgrAbility PA and the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) swapped Instagram accounts for a week. This provided both groups with an opportunity to raise awareness and share examples of the partnership. Visit [@AgrAbilityPA](#) or [@Pennsylvaniaatf](#) on Instagram to view the posts and great pictures!!

Tennessee

Cold winter months bring lots of networking opportunities at conferences. Tennessee AgrAbility Project (TNAP) exhibited at the 10th annual TN Veterans Business Association Expo. [More](#)

TNAP exhibited at the annual Tennessee Cattleman's Conference.

TN has partnered with KY Department of Agriculture and with TN Association of Rescue Squads (TARS) to help farmers and emergency management staff build networks and trainings across state. TNAP exhibited at the East TN Grain Conference and hosted Brian Robinson, the TARS state training coordinator, who presented on grain and equipment safety. [More](#)



Five TN farmers and graduates of TN New Farmer Academy and two TNAP clients attended the educational Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG) conference in Little Rock, Arkansas, along with two staff.

Thank you, National AgrAbility, for the educational Virtual National Training Workshop on

disability in agriculture, and the six webinars in three days: ATV Safety, Cultural Humility, Low-Tech AT, USDA AgVets and Stress Assistance Programs, Collaboration with AT Act Projects, and Outreach to Socially Disadvantaged Groups.

At the upcoming February 20-22 Pick TN Conference, Finis Stribling, TNAP staff with the TN New Farmer Academy, will be highlighting partners and program briefs from TN State University Extension, University of Tennessee Extension, TN AgrAbility, TN Department of Agriculture/Homegrown by Heroes/Pick TN Products, and USDA agency programs available for new and beginning farms in Tennessee.

The Pick TN Conference is the next major step in formally creating the TN state chapter of the Farmer Veteran Coalition. The chapter organizing committee will present the proposed board members and officers for the chapter and discuss planned programs for the next two years of the chapter.

Utah

Rhonda Miller and Randall Bagley presented at the Utah State Horticultural Association annual convention in Spanish Fork, UT, on January 23. Over 80 fruit growers and horticulturists attended the convention.

On January 29, AgrAbility of Utah presented to University of Utah's occupational therapy students during their weekly brown bag luncheon. Eighteen students attended the presentation.



AgrAbility of Utah staff members Connor Dyreng, Michael Porter, and Randall Bagley set up a display table at the FUSION Conference and Ag Expo in St. George, UT, January 30-31. The FUSION Ag trade show is the largest agricultural show in Utah and was attended by more than 400 participants.

AgrAbility of Utah presented to the staff of Red Rock Center for Independence on January 30 in St. George, UT. The Red Rock Center for Independence is one of six independent living centers in the state of Utah and has five satellite locations. Red Rock Center for Independence covers nine counties in southwestern Utah.

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia participated in several professional development trainings at the 2020 Virginia Cooperative Extension In-Service Winter Conference from January 28 to 30 in Roanoke.

The AgrAbility Virginia team conducted outreach to farmers at the Virginia Forage and Grassland Council (VFGC) 2020 Winter Forage Conferences held on January 21, Wytheville; January 22, Chatham; and January 24, Weyers Cave.

AgrAbility Virginia offered invaluable support to the completion of the second phase of the Affordable Flexible Robotics to Aid Farmers with Mobility Limitations project through the active participants' recruitment for the farmers' focus interviews conducted across the state with the objective to gather farmers' perceptions on the wearable robotic technology under development at Virginia Tech.

AgrAbility Virginia continues its active partnership with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Farm Safety, Health, and Wellness Initiative with webinars, resource development, and trainings with an emphasis on youth safety and mental health for the farming community.

Washington

The first-year Washington State AgrAbility Project (WSAP) is currently in the process of hiring a coordinator to conduct educational trainings and worksite assessments, including for the Latinx farming community.

WSAP recently hosted a table at the Country Living Expo in Stanwood, WA, with over 1,100 attendees. On display were dozens of assistive technology devices that will form the basis of multiple physical and behavioral health Lending Library Kits to be distributed statewide.

[More](#)



WSAP was also presented at the Western Washington Seed Workshop held at the Washington State University Mt. Vernon Research and Extension Center with farmers, seed companies, and other agencies present. Eighty-nine percent of attendees reported hearing about AgrAbility for the first time.

Washington State AgrAbility Project team members are headed to Madison in March and looking forward to connecting with other programs.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin AgrAbility has a busy February ahead. The staff is planning to attend the WI Farmers Union Conference, WI Corn and Soy Expo, and the MOSES Conference. They are also busy planning WI AgrAbility's annual summit and looking for new ways to reach out to socially disadvantaged farmers.

WI AgrAbility recently created a new mobile-friendly website template. See www.agrability.bse.wisc.edu. Staff members have also recently updated their state brochure.

Staff Changes and Recognition

Maine

Maine AgrAbility said farewell and good luck to Marie DeFranca in January. As part of Marie's six-month temporary position with us, she was vital in seeing through the completion of the pre-ETS summer work experience and actively helping youth explore work opportunities. Marie's knowledge of working with youth with disabilities and her willingness to help make connections for this part of the project was appreciated.

Missouri



The Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) welcomes Will Matus as its new program associate. Matus will provide information about the Missouri AgrAbility Project to potential AgrAbility clients through education, direct support, and marketing activities.

National AgrAbility Project

Ed Sheldon joined the national AgrAbility staff in September 2019. His primary roles include working with socially disadvantaged and veteran farmer projects, program evaluation, and extension emergency and disaster preparedness efforts. Ed previously worked with the Breaking New Ground

Resource Center as a graduate student in the early 1990's examining the viability of alternative farm-based enterprises for farmers and ranchers with disabilities. Since that time, he has served as an agricultural extension educator in two Indiana counties, worked with the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, and owned and operated a landscape contracting company for over 15 years.



North Carolina

Please join NC AgrAbility in welcoming our new graduate assistant Hagan Kiser. Hagan is an occupational therapy doctoral (OTD) student who is completing her doctoral experiential component (DEC) with North Carolina AgrAbility.

She obtained her undergraduate degree at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in community and therapeutic recreation in 2017 and decided to further her education at Mary Baldwin University where she will graduate with her OTD degree in May of 2020. She brings an abundance of knowledge in ergonomics, environmental modifications, assistive technology, returning to work, and much more that will benefit the NC AgrAbility team and the clients that we serve.

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [For success, maintain farmer health like you would farm equipment](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [Colorado AgrAbility Winter Workshops](#) (Colorado AgrAbility Project)
- [MyFarm – 1.22.20 – AgrAbility Program](#) (National AgrAbility Project, Indiana AgrAbility Project)
- [AgrAbility in Africa 2020 Schedule-at-a-Glance](#) (AgrAbility for Africa)
- [2020 AgrAbility Virtual National Training Workshop \(1/28-1/30\)](#) (Alaska AgrAbility Project, National AgrAbility Project)
- [Support Ohio AgrAbility](#) (Ohio AgrAbility Project)

Other News

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

- The Kansas Department of Agriculture recently launched a web resource for Kansans in the Ag Industry, Kansas Ag Stress Resources <https://www.kansasagstress.org/>
- [First tribe in U.S. sends heirloom seeds to global seed vault](#)
- [Farm Bureau establishes 2020 priorities](#)
- [Retail sales of organic produce continues growth](#)
- [Walnut Creek animal rescue ARF has a new program to pair veterans with dogs for free](#)
- [Risk management programs for hemp producers](#)

- [Custom work can improve farm income](#)
- [Impact mill shows weed control promise](#)
- [Sea-can garden aimed to ease Arctic food insecurity](#)
- [New podcast will tell the stories of corn growers](#)
- [ARS ecologists address a burning question](#)

UpcomingEvents

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

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

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February 2020

Alaska

Springtime in Alaska and it's 20 below! Even though there has been extreme cold weather in the great state of Alaska this January, it has not stopped the AgrAbility team from pressing forward with many outreach events and engagements. For many CES personnel, January-March are very busy seasons with conferences, meetings, and other events, in preparation for the coming summer. About this time of year, Alaska is gaining daylight (they now have up to 8+ hours a day now in the northern latitudes) and longing for the long winter to start to fade.

AgrAbility in Alaska is beginning to gain further name recognition and awareness. In January the following events had AgrAbility representation:

- Jan 21-23: Alaska Public Health Association Conference-Alaska Health Summit 2020 (Anchorage) - Booth participation. Theme for this year's summit: "Creating Healthy Alaskans: For Science, For Action, For Equity." Engagement with public health professionals from around the state.
<https://www.alaskapublichealth.org/2020-health-summit-presentations/>
- Jan 21-23: Alaska Young Fisherman's Summit (Juneau)-Partner engagement with materials distributed to introduce the project to a different sector of clientele. <https://alaskaseagrant.org/event/2020-alaska-young-fishermens-summit/>
- Jan 25: WSU-AK AgrAbility Women in Agriculture (co-sponsored event at Anchorage site). Theme of this virtual engagement this year was "Healthy Farms" and was all about mental health and stress management. AgrAbility materials were distributed and awareness of the project given to participants in Anchorage. This event was also broadcast to four other Western states (WA, ID, MT, & HI) and five other sites in Alaska outside of Anchorage (Fairbanks, Home, Palmer, Soldotna & Kodiak).
<http://womeninag.wsu.edu/>
- Jan 30-Feb 1: Alaska Peony Growers Association (APGA) 2020 Winter Conference (Fairbanks)-Booth participation. Outreach to one of Alaska's growing agricultural industry group.
<https://www.alaskapeonyconference.com/>

Submitted by DeShana York

February 2020

California

California AgrAbility presented at the 2020 AgrAbility Virtual National Training Workshop. Dr. Farzaneh Khorsandi presented on AgrAbility and agricultural all-terrain vehicle safety. She highlighted the importance of crush prevention devices and personal protective equipment. Esmeralda Mandujano gave a presentation titled "Applications of Cultural Humility in Everyday AgrAbility." Mandujano explored the differences between cultural competence and cultural humility. She explained how humility takes competence one step further to better understand and relate to the consumer and enable representatives to become better providers. An agricultural worker case was studied to exemplify how AgrAbility staff and agency representatives can practice cultural humility.



California AgrAbility staff attended the Center for Occupational Health and Safety (COEH) Builds Bridges Conference. Attendees explored in depth the ergonomic and occupation safety hazards of warehouses. There are 150,000 warehouse workers in California. This is an industry that is quickly growing and includes production agriculture. David Hornung, senior safety engineer at Cal/OSHA, used an Amazon facility as the prime example to illustrate the various hazards that lead to workplace injuries. Attendees also heard from Sumi Hoshiko from the California Department of Public Health, Kathleen Navarro from NIOSH, and other speakers, on the long-term effects of the fires that have affected Californians throughout the years. Staff had a chance to network with other health and safety agencies and professionals.



California AgrAbility staff did outreach at the Zenith Ag Safety and Compliance Summit in Fresno. The summit brought together over 300 farmworkers, farm supervisors, and farm owners, to learn about agricultural health and safety topics and technologies. Sessions included ATV/RTV/UTV safety, lessons learned from accidents on the farm, active shooter response, distracted driving, and pesticide training, among others. Other agencies tabled included Zenith, Boretti Business Safety Solutions, Dawg Pound Tires, WIC, Jorgensen Co, and the California Highway Patrol.

Submitted by Sara Wat

February 2020

Georgia

Georgia AgrAbility staff attended the 2020 Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference in Savannah, Georgia, January 10-12. The event is the largest educational conference and trade show in the southeastern United States that unites growers, vendors, and suppliers. Georgia AgrAbility was an exhibitor at this conference and had the chance to network with producers and organizations from all over southern part of the United States. Georgia AgrAbility staff member Kristen McHugh was also able to meet and speak with Gary Black, Georgia's agriculture commissioner.



Submitted by Rebecca Brightwell

February 2020

Illinois

AgrAbility of Illinois and University of Illinois Extension will be hosting the Illinois Ag Mental Health Summit at the Illinois Farm Bureau on March 4 in Bloomington, IL. Attendees are invited to gather from 10AM-2PM to discuss and share available mental health resources and services for farmers and the agricultural community.

"The mental health of farmers has become a major focus among health professionals, UI Extension, and agribusiness. In Illinois, there are several organizations working to create resources and many other organizations who need resources, but often, the two are unaware of each other. The goal of The Summit is to really inventory and showcase the resources and services in the state and connect the organizations creating resources with the organizations that need resources," explains Dr. Josie Rudolphi, co-director of the Illinois AgrAbility program.

The Illinois Ag Mental Health Summit seeks to identify and showcase the mental health and stress management resources available to farmers in Illinois. During this one-day meeting, participants will have the opportunity to network with others in the ag mental health space and explore opportunities to increase resource dissemination.

At the end of the day organizers hope to have a catalog of materials - websites, hotlines, webinars, literature, programming, events - that they can distribute around the state.

Submitted by Megan Crowhurst

February 2020

Indiana

Steve Swain, Indiana AgrAbility rural rehabilitation specialist, staffed an exhibit at the 2020 Illiana Vegetable Growers Symposium at Teibel's Restaurant in Schererville, Indiana. The exhibit included AgrAbility publications, INPREPared information, and Indiana AgVet applications. Each exhibitor was given an opportunity to give an overview of their programs and services to the attendees. There were several individuals who showed interest or knew of someone who would be interested in one of the programs, especially the Indiana AgVet program.



The 2020 Fort Wayne Farm Show was held in the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum on January 14-16. AgrAbility was one of 1,100 exhibitors covering three exhibit halls in the facility. The AgrAbility display included AgrAbility publications, the Life Essentials tractor and lift, INPREPared materials, and Indiana AgVet applications and information. Staff at the display related they talked to more people, including past clients and AT product venders, this year than in years past.

Dr. Robin Adams, Purdue professor of engineering education, invited Steve Swain, Indiana AgrAbility rural rehabilitation specialist, to participate as a diverse subject matter expert for a "safety" engagement session with engineering students. The students were to interact with the subject matter experts concerning possible capstone projects and ask any safety questions or concerns related to the project. Mr. Swain's group of five students were considering a type of exoskeleton for individuals with mobility impairments. Discussion was lively and everyone came away with different perspectives on life, living with a disability, and possible safety concerns with assistive technology.

Submitted by Steve Swain

February 2020

Kansas



Kansas AgrAbility AT Ag Specialists Karin Rasmussen and Lesa Clubine presented AgrAbility during a recent Farm Financial Skills for Kansas Women in Agriculture hosted by K-State Research and Extension. Through the relationships the ag specialists have with their area Extension agents, they were able to make the connection and share information about limited vision, arthritis, and adjustments that can be made

while working at a computer.

KAP staff teamed up with the students from the Kansas State University Biological and Agricultural Engineering (BAE) Department at the Topeka Farm Show. KAP used their spinning wheel to encourage attendees to participate in a game of trivia, which provided the staff an opportunity to share KAP and other fun agriculture-related topics. The BAE students brought their award winning 1/4-scale tractor, which created a buzz in the booth and attracted a younger crowd. The partnership between KAP and the tractor team was a first, with more events planned in the future.



Submitted by Tawnie Larson

February 2020

Maine

Maine AgrAbility Project Director Richard Brzozowski recently finalized the following University of Maine Cooperative Extension publications which can be useful for career exploration and skill building:

- Farmer Skill and Knowledge Checklist for Calf Care and Calf-Rearing [#1047](#)
- The Benefits and Drawbacks of Farm Work Experience in Maine [#1063](#)



Maine AgrAbility staff and advisory council members shared the three-day schedule providing coverage at the AgrAbility booth at the Annual Agricultural Trades show in Augusta January 14-16. The exhibit theme was "What stresses you out on the farm?" with an interactive display and resources. Staff also shared new stickers with tractor and equipment



operators to help reduce the risk of errors in refueling their equipment.

Mental health resources compiled through AgrAbility efforts were shared as part of the January 2020 Farm and Food System Newsletter. This is a monthly publication covering a variety of topics, resources, and events for Maine farmers. <https://extension.umaine.edu/agrability/2020/01/27/resources-for-managing-farm-stress/>

Submitted by Lani Carlson

February 2020

Michigan

January was a time for Michigan AgrAbility staff to "catch their breath" after a busy 2019 and to perform needed administrative tasks.

Staff did not just "sit at the computer" ... Michigan AgrAbility's own Ned Stoller presented "Low-Tech Assistive Technology for Farmers Worldwide" at the 2020 AgrAbility Virtual National Training Workshop. Several "low tech" assistive technology options were highlighted on the Michigan AgrAbility Facebook page, and

the two winners of the \$100 gift cards for returning their 2017 and 2018 case closing surveys were selected. Staff have sent the gift cards to the winners. Next month (hopefully) their identities will be revealed!

Submitted by Deb Chester

February 2020

Missouri

The University of Missouri Extension Missouri AgrAbility program in collaboration with Lincoln University Cooperative Extension (LUCE) Innovative Small Farmers' Outreach Program (ISFOP) were busy throughout the month of January!

Using the Jesup Wagon mobile teaching method, Karen Funkenbusch and Debi Kelly, both of MU Extension, and Nahshon Bishop, Susan Jaster, and David Middleton of LUCE ISFOP, brought modern agricultural tools and research-based information to the Annual Great Plains Growers Conference (GPGC) January 8 - January 10 in St. Joseph, Missouri. The GPGC was a great regional conference for Midwest commercial fruit, vegetable, cut flower, and honeybee producers. Research-based information was provided from both vegetable research specialists and local growers to help farms grow and thrive. Some of the topics offered in 2020 at the GPGC included:

- Food Safety Grower Training (FSMA)
- Industrial Hemp 101
- Honeybees & Beekeeping
- Drip Irrigation Systems from Design to Production
- Cultivating Your Legally Resilient Farm
- Business Management
- Business Financing
- Tree Fruits
- Small Fruits
- Organic Farming?
- Conventional Vegetable Production
- Greenhouse & Hydroponic Production
- Invasive Species
- Vegetable Integrated Pest Management
- Cut Flower Production

In addition, the following AgrAbility topics and hands-on demonstrations were provided to participants:

- What is AgrAbility and how can it help you?
- Ergonomic hand tools every small farmer should own to prevent injury
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) you should own before you spray pesticides on farm
- Mental health and suicide prevention resources
- Missouri-specific info packets for socially disadvantaged farmers that include how to tap into one-on-one technical assistance from USDA Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Rural Development personnel, as well as how to receive customized, on-the-farm assistance from professional Missouri AgrAbility staff members

Submitted by Karen Funkenbusch

Jim Shepard and David Middleton, both of LUCE ISFOP, traveled to the Bootheel of rural Missouri to educate Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, Tennessee, and Mississippi farmers at the Ag Expo in Poplar Bluff, Missouri, January 3 - February 1, 2020. Governor Mike Parson





welcomed everyone to the Ag Expo and talked Friday afternoon with members of Poplar Bluff High School's FFA Club. Nearly 120 booths and outdoor exhibits featured agricultural information and resources. Entertainment, seminars, a petting farm, and milking, baking, and agricultural photography contests were also included. The following AgrAbility topics and hands-on demonstrations were provided:

- What is AgrAbility and how can it help you?
- Ergonomic hand tools every small farmer should own to prevent injury
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) you should own before you spray pesticides on farm
- Mental health and suicide prevention resources
- Missouri-specific info packets for socially disadvantaged farmers that include how to tap into one-on-one technical assistance from USDA Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Rural Development personnel, as well as how to receive customized, on-the-farm assistance from professional Missouri AgrAbility staff members

Submitted by Nahshon Bishop

University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy (UMKC SOP), a Missouri AgrAbility collaborator, provided point-of-care health screenings and education at the Great Plains Growers Conference held at Missouri Western State University on January 10. Sadly, due to inclement weather, the conference was cancelled for January 11. Seven student pharmacists and three pharmacists from the Kansas City and Columbia campuses traveled to St. Joseph, Missouri, to perform rural wellness screenings and provide educational materials to conference attendees from across Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska. Fifteen individuals were educated about farm safety and health, and Pharm to Farm. [Missouri AgrAbility flyers](#) were distributed, including materials regarding healthy sleep habits, falls prevention, hearing protection, and stroke prevention. Wellness screenings were performed for 24 individuals at a value of over \$1,400. The screenings performed included diabetes risk assessments, blood glucose readings, and blood pressure readings. Following the results, seven individuals were referred for follow-up. Heart health education and medication list wallet cards were also provided to those receiving screenings. In addition, UMKC SOP's College of Psychiatric and Neuropathic Pharmacists (CPNP) student chapter provided mental health screenings for depression and anxiety to 20 individuals, connecting them with resources and referrals as needed.



Submitted by Kelly Cochran

February 2020

Ohio



Ohio AgrAbility has recently partnered with the OSU College of Nursing and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities to form the Caregiver Support Network to present a planned series of workshops and webinars for caregivers, advocates, and service providers. To make the workshops easily accessible to people across Ohio, OH AgrAbility is hosting the workshop at several local sites across Ohio. Each local site will connect to the workshop electronically and have on-site facilitators to lead conversations about each topic. The facilitators at each site are a mix of Extension

educators, staff from the Dept. of Developmental Disabilities, and staff and volunteers from various advocacy organizations. The first workshop is February 22, 2020.

Ohio AgrAbility (OAP) has long enjoyed a good working relationship with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), the state vocational rehabilitation agency, but even good relationships can be improved and strengthened through teamwork. Rachel Jarman began working for Ohio AgrAbility in June 2019 and quickly began developing a rapport with farmers, OOD counselors, and vendors. Building rapport and connections is especially important, since she is one of the two OAP rural rehabilitation coordinators (RRCs) and is responsible for writing assessments that request funding from OOD to purchase modifications and equipment to keep Ohio AgrAbility farmers safely working on the farm. In November, Rachel was assigned a new client, a farmer who was recovering from a health crisis that left him with permanent damage to his inner ear, which impacted his balance and strength. He was struggling to adapt to his disability and was unsure if he could continue farming and was skeptical about working with OOD. Rachel asked Jessie, an OOD counselor she has a good rapport with, if they could work together to better serve the farmer to learn firsthand how to communicate agricultural work, equipment, and assistive technology, to a non-agricultural OOD counselor, and to better understand what information and explanations OOD needs in an effective assessment.

Rachel and Jessie went to the initial farm visit together, explained the vocational rehabilitation/OOD process, and outlined their roles as the vocational rehabilitation expert (Jessie) and the agriculture expert (Rachel). They returned to the farm for Rachel to gather information for writing the assessment and for Jessie to ask for further explanations about agricultural work and equipment. The farmer expressed his appreciation for their work and their transparency about the vocational rehabilitation and assessment process. This collaboration was very successful for Rachel, Jessie, and the farmer. The farmer could see that they were both interested in his work and were committed to providing him with the best service and assessment possible. It was efficient and thorough, and the client has been well-served. Rachel said that the farmer has gained confidence about his ability to continue working and seemed to be adjusting to his disability better than when she first met him.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

February 2020

Pennsylvania

AgrAbility PA staff kicked off 2020 by exhibiting at two of the state's largest agricultural events of the year in the month of January: Keystone Farm Show and 104th Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Staff members answered questions, shared resources, and provided hands-on demonstrations. This time of year offers several key opportunities to connect with farmers or agricultural workers who work in or want to return to work in agriculture but who have a disability, functional limitation, or long-term health condition.

Project Assistant Abbie Spackman showcased AgrAbility PA at Keystone Farm Show. This three-day event is the largest commercial farm equipment and service provider show in the state! Over 50 attendees visited the AgrAbility booth. Hands-on activities focused on gripping and visibility; this included measuring grip strength, grip-eeze gloves, tool grip modifications, and backup cameras.



Kendra Martin, marketing & outreach coordinator, collaborated with presenters at the PA Farm Show's "So You Wanna Be A Farmer" exhibit, which included resources for veterans in agriculture from Rodale Institute, Farmer Veteran Coalition, PA Veteran Farming Project, USDA/NRCS, Delaware Valley University, Steve A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, Saint Joseph's University, Kitchen Table Consultants, and PA Dept. of

Agriculture. This day at the PA Farm Show was dedicated to veterans, active military, and their families. A collaborative, digital resource for veterans interested in agriculture from these organizations was created: <https://bit.ly/31muGk9>

Submitted by Abbie Spackman

February 2020

Tennessee

Cold winter months bring lots of networking opportunities at conferences. Tennessee AgrAbility Project (TNAP) exhibited at the 10th annual TN Veterans Business Association Expo. Great expo for spreading the word about TNAP and their partner Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN for veterans who want to farm. Staff promoted AgrAbility services, upcoming beginning farmer education, and the next [TN New Farmer Academy](#) classes starting in March 2020.

TN has partnered with KY Department of Agriculture and with TN Association of Rescue Squads (TARS) to help farmers and emergency management staff build networks and trainings across state. TNAP exhibited at the East TN Grain Conference and hosted Brian Robinson, the TARS state training coordinator, who presented on grain and equipment safety. Remember to always think safety first. TNAP is leading the efforts with Extension for trainings across the state. Even though farm safety is not the first priority topic of AgrAbility, in these trainings with emergency personnel who may be the first to see agricultural producers who might have physical challenges, the goal is for them to remember the AgrAbility program and refer customers to TNAP.



Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility

February 2020

Washington



WSAP recently hosted a table at the Country Living Expo in Stanwood, WA, with over 1,100 attendees. On display were dozens of assistive technology devices that will form the basis of multiple physical and behavioral health Lending Library Kits to be distributed statewide. Assistive technology specialist Curt Johnson with program partner Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP) taught a class titled "Simple Tools and Modifications for Farmers and Gardeners".



Submitted by Washington AgrAbility Project

February 2020

Upcoming Events

Name 1st Annual Lakota Food Summit
Dates February 18-20, 2020
City, State Rapid City, South Dakota
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1st-annual-lakota-food-summit-tickets-80293145961>

Name 2020 Midwest Women in Agriculture Conference
Dates February 19-20, 2020
City, State Muncie, Indiana
Contact Info/Web link [Click here for website](#)

Name 15th Alaska Sustainable Agriculture Conference
Dates February 20-22, 2020
City, State Anchorage, Alaska
Contact Info/Web link <https://uaf.edu/ces/agriculture/sare/conference/>

Name 2020 Pick TN Conference
Dates February 20-22, 2020
City, State Franklin, Tennessee
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.picktnconference.com/>

Name Western Washington Berry Workshop
Dates February 21, 2020
City, State Mount Vernon, Washington
Contact Info/Web link <https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/event/38th-annual-western-washington-potato-workshop/>

Name 59th Annual Western Farm Show
Dates February 21-23, 2020
City, State Kansas City, Missouri
Contact Info/Web link <http://westernfarmshow.com/>

link

Name Caregiver Support Network: Resilience Building and Resource Sharing
Dates February 22, 2020
City, State Columbus, Ohio
Contact Info/Web link <https://agrability.osu.edu/caregiver-support-network>
Laura Akgerman, Akgerman.4@osu.edu; 614-292-0622

Name Commodity Classic
Dates February 27-29, 2020
City, State San Antonio, Texas
Contact Info/Web link <https://commodityclassic.com/>

Name North American Raspberry and Blackberry Conference
Dates March 3-6, 2020
City, State St. Louis, Missouri
Contact Info/Web link <https://fruitgrowersnews.com/news/north-american-raspberry-blackberry-conference-set-for-st-louis-missouri/>

Name Illinois Ag Mental Health Summit
Dates March 4, 2020
City, State Bloomington, Illinois
Contact Info/Web link hello@agrabilityunlimited.org

Name 2020 Indiana Small Farm Conference
Dates March 5-7, 2020
City, State Danville, Indiana
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.purdue.edu/dffs/smallfarms/>

Name Organic Growers School - Spring Conference
Dates March 6-8, 2020
City, State Mars Hill, North Carolina
Contact Info/Web link <https://organicgrowersschool.org/conferences/spring/>

Name Carroll County Grain Rescue Class
Dates March 7, 2020
City, State Huntingdon, Tennessee
Contact Joetta T. White

Info/Web Jwhit102@utk.edu
link 731-855-7656

Name Western Washington Berry Workshop
Dates March 13, 2020
City, State Mount Vernon, Washington
Contact [https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/event/western-washington-berry-](https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/event/western-washington-berry-workshop-4/)
Info/Web [workshop-4/](https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/event/western-washington-berry-workshop-4/)
link

Name Veteran Farmers Conference : Boots to Roots
Dates March 17-18, 2020
City, State Colonial Heights, Virginia
Contact [https://www.ext.vsu.edu/events/2020/03/17/veteran-farmers-](https://www.ext.vsu.edu/events/2020/03/17/veteran-farmers-conference)
Info/Web [conference](https://www.ext.vsu.edu/events/2020/03/17/veteran-farmers-conference)
link