

AgrAbility e•Note

May 2020

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

AgrAbility NTW Version 2.0

Plans for the re-scheduled AgrAbility National Training Workshop are well under way! Contracts have been re-negotiated, speakers re-scheduled, and participants looking forward to a gathering kicking off on November 30th. [More](#)



Put 2-1-1 in Your Toolbox! Stress over things that are out of our control is nothing new to farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers. To say that today's conditions have added to that stress is an understatement. [More](#)

Carla Wilhite is assembling a working group to develop a National AgrAbility curriculum that can be shared as an open source to educate rehabilitation professionals (OT, PT, speech, nursing, case managers, VR) about the rehabilitation needs of farmers and ranchers with health conditions. If you're interested, contact Carla at CWilhite@salud.unm.edu.

The AgrAbility webinar, "Disability and Agriculture Outside the U.S. – an International Panel Discussion," is now archived with the presentation materials at www.agrability.org/online-training/archived/webinar-series/.



The archive of the AgrAbility all-staff meeting of May 15 is available at www.agrability.org/extranet/staff-resources along with presentation materials from AgrAbility in Georgia on virtual farm visits.

Toolbox Spotlight



With the [Towed Single-Bale Mover](#), one can reportedly load, transport, and unload a big round bale from the seat of his/her tractor, pickup, or UTV - all via hand-held controller. Both the Tumblebug and the 2EZ Bale Mover accomplish this task but do so differently.

State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

April brought an increase in virtual engagements as in so many other states due to COVID-19. AK AgrAbility PI Art Nash and Project Director DeShana York teamed up to provide two "Gardening for Life: Adding Accessibility" series, April 7-9 and April 27-29. [More](#)

With snow melting and spring in the air (FINALLY) ATLA also featured accessible gardening in their most recent [electronic newsletter](#).

California

With the COVID-19 pandemic gravely impacting farmers, AgriSafe has hosted weekly think tanks to disseminate resources and ideas rapidly to help farmers. [More](#)



AgrAbility staff have been busy providing face coverings for farmers and farmworkers. With the pandemic, Cheree Schiele, from Extension's Master Food Preservers, started making face coverings for local and regional hospitals. [More](#)

Staff also participated in the "AgrAbility's Smart Technology for Agriculture and the Home" webinar. [More](#)

Georgia

Georgia AgrAbility staff members Mason Dean and Kyle Haney presented at the April 15 AgrAbility all-staff meeting. They were able to inform all state projects about initiatives and ways that the Georgia AgrAbility Project has been working with farmers virtually. Virtual capabilities have included Zoom meetings, FaceTime, and Google Duo. This has been a time for staff members to grow and learn with technology as they take on new ways of connecting with their farmers.

During the past month, Georgia AgrAbility staff have been designing and fabricating solutions for clients. Staff have completed a fold-away side bar for a Polaris Ranger that will allow a farmer to transfer from his wheelchair into the seat of a Polaris Ranger. The side bar can then be locked back in place in a matter of seconds.



Staff are also working on building an adjustable height table for another farmer. This food safe table will be used as a work surface to inoculate mushrooms and can be adjusted from a seated position to a standing position to accommodate the farmer's disabilities.

Illinois

Illinois AgrAbility is developing and refining a new ADA-compatible website that will provide a more user-friendly experience and easy access to resources for clients and potential clients. Illinois AgrAbility is also collaborating with other state programs in researching potential client management systems to use in the future.

Indiana

This has been a strange time of working remotely with travel restrictions. Not being able to meet with clients face-to-face while trying to develop a relationship is difficult. A phone call is not the same. [More](#)

Indiana AgrAbility's rural rehabilitation specialist took part in a Joining Community Forces Indiana zoom meeting. [More](#)

Steve Swain, Indiana rural rehabilitation specialist and Purdue Extension specialist, has participated in the weekly Purdue Extension Ag and Natural Resources Covid-19 Response zoom calls. [More](#)

Webinars and email traffic have increased and have presented the opportunity to expand knowledge and learn from others how to manage and work in this "new normal."

Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility staff were invited to participate in four regional Vocational Rehabilitation staff and community service provider conference calls to discuss how they are providing services to consumers during the coronavirus stay-at-home orders. [More](#)

Karin Rasmussen, AT staff in Western Kansas, has utilized the Kansas Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) to assist a farmer in communicating with his seed buyers and other suppliers using an iPad. [More](#)



KAP AT staff is participating in a free online course from the AT Industry Association through their [Learning Catalog](#).

KAP Coordinator Tawnie Larson has spent time with [Connect Extension](#) to utilize their content related to rural stress management and participated in the Impact Collaborative Virtual Summit. Larson encourages other AgrAbility staff to participate in this valuable tool available to Extension personnel.

In the next week, one of the KAP AT ag specialists is going to use satellite images to conduct an initial virtual walk of a farmstead with the farmer. [More](#)

Maine



Maine AgrAbility's Boots to Bushels (B2B) class continued via Zoom this month. The transition to the Zoom platform was smooth, having had several inclement weather days resulting in Zoom use since B2B started in January 2020. [More](#)

Staff are working with Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) to be part of its re-imagined Level 1 OT field-work experience for spring 2020. [More](#)

Maine AgrAbility has been meeting weekly via Zoom to keep a forward momentum as well as to support morale with a few laughs. Staff are developing new webinar presentations, reaching out to clients, and supporting network partners to develop relevant resources for Maine farmers.

Michigan

Thank you Sigma Alpha! Sigma Alpha is the ag sorority, sister sorority to Alpha Gamma Rho, that does the beef preview show. They have an annual 5K Duck Race and a raffle. Unfortunately, the 5K had to be cancelled due to COVID-19, but they did have the raffle with some pretty cool gifts, including a Yeti cooler. [More](#)

Meet [Jeremy Huffman](#)! Jeremy was a sergeant in the Marine Corps. He has a lower back impairment and bending over for extended periods of time is painful. [More](#)

Michigan AgrAbility wants to thank all the workers in the agricultural sector for keeping America fed. Staff want these workers to stay healthy and safe! [More](#)

Missouri

This month Missouri AgrAbility team members reviewed their standard operation procedures (SOPs) and updated their Protocol Service Delivery Manuals. During these unprecedented times, Missouri also continued to provide direct assistance and services to meet the needs of farmers, ranchers, and farm families.



Missouri team members also worked on developing a statewide social media campaign about mental health awareness and suicide prevention targeted to rural, agricultural communities. [More](#)

Coming off a busy month of March with Brain Injury Awareness Month, Missouri AgrAbility focused their social media efforts on promoting MU Extension rural health which includes mental health and suicide prevention, agriculture safety and wellness resources, online programs and webinars, and COVID-19 safety tips.

Kelly Cochran, PharmD, BCPS, a Missouri AgrAbility partner, shared about collaborations with Missouri AgrAbility Project while serving on a panel for the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Pharmacy Rural Track Pharmacy program in Rockford, IL. [More](#)

Lincoln University's Cooperative Extension (LUCE) Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program (ISFOP) in collaboration with the University of Missouri worked throughout the month of April to implement new protocols allowing for on-farm assessments with clientele digitally via technology such as Apple Facetime, ZOOM, Facebook live, and Skype. [More](#)

The Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) support group in Columbia, MO, that serves potential Missouri AgrAbility clients with brain injury has meetings being offered via videoconferencing. This opportunity reduces the effects of isolation for all attendees.

MO AgrAbility partners MU Extension and the MO Beginning Farmers Program offered weekly online town hall meetings for networking with and educating farmers. This education opportunity was featured on the BIA-MO website home page and calendar.

Nebraska

The Nebraska AgrAbility loaner lift was quickly placed into service with long-time AgrAbility client Ruth Griess after an unfortunate accident badly damaged her Life Essentials tractor access lift. [More](#)



Online programs titled "Our Stress and Communicating with Those who are Stressing" for all FSA Nebraska districts, as well as an ATV Aware online program for the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District employees, were provided for hundreds of participants. [More](#)

In the works is a Nebraska AgrAbility farm safety coloring book!

Staff have been busy reaching out to clients, checking in on them and talking to them about resources available during the COVID-19 crisis, like Extension's coping resources at ruralwellness.unl.edu.



New Mexico

New Mexico AgrAbility received a donation from Grow Your Food, a Canadian company promoting food growing. [More](#)

AgrAbility partner University of New Mexico-Occupational Therapy Graduate Program has received a \$25,000 NIH pilot grant to study quality of life and perceptions of daily life of rural New Mexicans during the COVID-19 health emergency. [More](#)

North Carolina

During the COVID19 pandemic, NC AgrAbility Partnership has been working on providing resources to farmers through the NCA&T Cooperative Extension webpage, NC AgrAbility website, and its Facebook page. [More](#)

NC AgrAbility doctoral student Hagan Kiser from Mary Baldwin University prepared a poster about AgrAbility and Occupational Therapy. [View it here](#).

Ohio



Ohio AgrAbility staff are developing and presenting webinars on Ohio AgrAbility, assistive technology, and farming and gardening with arthritis to their farmers, stakeholders, and the Ohio agricultural and Ohio State University communities. [More](#)

OAP's rural rehabilitation coordinators have been working with farmers remotely, writing assessments for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (the state voc rehab agency), consulting with vendors on appropriate equipment and facility upgrades, and checking in on OAP's farmers - who are happy with the good spring weather, and are busy planting and tending their livestock.

Pennsylvania

AgrAbility PA staff have been busier than ever and are moving full speed ahead with client assistance, project planning, educational opportunities, and outreach opportunities. [More](#)

Andrew Snook's social media post went far and wide during the month of April - more than 90 shares, 100+ likes, and more than 13k impressions on Facebook alone! It also did very well on Instagram and Twitter. [More](#)

AgrAbility PA staff have been participating in a variety of educational and professional development opportunities. It is a great time to learn new things or dive deeper into a topic of interest. [More](#)



Tennessee



TN AgrAbility began working from home March 24, and although the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 has changed the way staff are working, TNAP remains committed to their farmers and thinking outside the box to communicate and teach. [More](#)

TNAP began updating promotional material. Staff ask that SRAPs please share their state brochures, photos of their displays, and best marketing materials with AgrAbility@tennessee.edu. Thanks in advance.

TNAP has been participating in a weekly [AgriSafe Network: COVID-19 Ag Task Force Response](#) webinar. They have a collection of resources, references, and websites relating to COVID19 Response:

TNAP staff promoted National Grain Safety week and webinars with the #StandUP4GrainSafety campaign on social media.

TNAP is part of a grain bin safety and rescue/farm safety team and is supported by the TN Department of Agriculture. [More](#)

Recommendation of 2 informative webinars:

- Thanks , Purdue Farm Stress Team, for the "[Communicating with Farmers under Stress](#)" webinar". [More](#)
- "[Stress and Safety: Decrease One, Increase the Other](#)". Did you know there is a direct link between stress and safety on the farm? Dr. Deborah Reed, ag nurse, hosted a webinar that may help during this crazy time! [More](#)

Texas

Texas AgrAbility updated the yearly project brief outlining goals achieved in 2019. The brief can be [viewed here](#).

Texas AgrAbility and BattleGround to Breaking Ground have had to cancel in-person introduction to agriculture business workshops through June, but have planned for a virtual workshop. The virtual workshop will incorporate presentations, communities of interest, and resource sharing.

An "Intro to Agriculture Business" virtual workshop webinar series is planned for June 23 - July 7, 2020. The following sessions will be presented at the virtual workshop: [More](#)

Utah

The past month has been challenging but AgrAbility of Utah staff is contacting clients by phone and email to check their status and see how they are doing. [More](#)

Virginia

Dr. Deborah B. Reed, PhD, FAAOHN, FAAN, RN, agricultural health nurse, and farm family member, presented a webinar that illustrated the relationships between stress, injury, and overall health among farmers. [More](#)

Garland Mason, AgrAbility coordinator, and Dr. Kim Niewolny created a Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) publication titled "[Lawncare Safety for the Whole Family During COVID-19](#)" which offers safety tips and links to several VCE publications on related topics. [More](#)





with resources for families and practitioners have been posted online. [Click here](#) and select “Farm Safety, Health, & Wellness Case Studies” to find the resource guide and case studies for download. Infographics are being generated and are available on Facebook or Instagram.

Washington

Washington State AgrAbility Program (WSAP) hosted its first webinar April 7th facilitated by Curt Johnson, assistive technology specialist with Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP). Sixteen people participated from across the state.

WSAP staff is working on building a lending library based around specific injury sectors. However, distribution is postponed due to Covid-19.

WSAP staff is working on building Washington's home assessment portfolio and gathering forms, materials, and information for program participants.

WSAP is focusing on behavioral health and safety by participating in several webinars, including the most recent from MSU and Purdue on communicating with farmers under stress.

Wisconsin

Greetings from Wisconsin, where the spring weather is helping get the farmers into the fields. AgrAbility of Wisconsin staff is working on setting up a webinar for anyone interested in learning more about FSA programs. The date is yet to be decided. Depending on the first webinar's success, staff plan to continue with different topics that would have originally been presented at the annual in-person summit.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa

The staff of AgrAbility for Africa linked up with Mrs. Carolyn Maholo of CBR Africa Network (CAN) to enhance the organization's publicity and awareness campaign for the AgrAbility in Africa project. [More](#)



AgrAbility for Africa staff in partnership with Scientific Animations without Borders (SAWBO) are working on increasing awareness and safety information about COVID -19 to rural farmers in Uganda through localizing COVID-19 safety information. This [sample animation video](#) is produced with a voice-over by Ms. Emily Ayen, reigning "Miss Karamoja" (center in photo), into the Karamojong language, [More](#)

StaffChanges and Recognition

Georgia

Kristen McHugh will be leaving AgrAbility to join UGA's Peanut Innovation Lab. The lab works with developing countries on improving peanut production and use, raising nutrition awareness, and increasing food safety practices. Join us in wishing Kristen well in her new venture.

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [MU Clinic begins offering teleservices for COVID-19 stress](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
 - [Maine AgrAbility webinar focuses on farmer stress, resilience](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
 - [Program assists agricultural workers with disabilities](#) (Alaska AgrAbility Project)
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Other News

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

- [USDA launches Coronavirus Food Assistance Program](#)
 - [USDA unveils tool to help rural communities](#)
 - [Record enrollment in USDA safety-net programs](#)
 - [FFA members do to learn, live to serve](#)
 - [Time to plant – with or without COVID-19](#)
 - [Farmers ready to meet food bank needs](#)
 - [National guide to finding local food](#)
 - [FSU Research: Repurposing straw lets farmers grow more food with less water and fertilizer](#)
 - [Advice from a cash crop farmer on planting green](#)
 - [A century later, victory gardens connect Americans](#)
 - [Pork Board develops educational content](#)
 - [Ireland Is Repaying a Famine-Era Generosity by Donating Millions to Native Americans Fighting COVID-19](#)
 - [A Minnesota farmer's perspective on stress](#)
 - [Woman creates look-alike dolls for kids with disabilities](#)
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Upcoming Events

[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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May 2020

National AgrAbility Project

Put 2-1-1 in Your Toolbox!

Stress over things that are out of our control is nothing new to farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers. To say that today's conditions have added to that stress is an understatement.

A resilient group, farmers are seen re-creating themselves; marketing products directly to their consumers; addressing community needs differently; all while battling systems and challenges that are limiting the opportunity to get products to market.

The AgrAbility team is no stranger to creatively addressing their client's needs, and they have come up with some unique service delivery methods while everyone works to remain connected.

At times like these, each person should polish up the tools in their box and be prepared to refer individuals to the help they might need.

The [AgrAbility website](#) links to several resources in many categories. Take a few minutes to see what is available, and be prepared with referrals for clients.

When staff, or the client doesn't know what resources are available, they should dial 2-1-1. Each 2-1-1 center is equipped with a database of community resources that range from food pantries to substance abuse support. Services are always confidential, and calls can be made by a provider to access resources for a client, or by the client themselves. Some centers are 24/7 and offer tele-counseling for those in crisis. At Goodwill of the Finger Lakes, staff have seen an increase in calls of almost 400% during this pandemic, meeting the needs of individuals who are struggling with mental health challenges, meeting basic needs, or navigating systems like unemployment.

Great numbers to have on hand in addition to 2-1-1:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800.273.TALK (8255) also available through online chat at <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>
- Crisis Text Line: text "connect" to 741741

AgrAbility NTW Version 2.0

Plans for the re-scheduled AgrAbility National Training Workshop are well under way! Contracts have been re-negotiated, speakers re-scheduled, and participants looking forward to a gathering kicking off on November 30th.

As all of this fell during times of turmoil and change in workspaces, work methods, and processes, staff are working diligently to get refunds processed, books balanced, and new registration up and running! Look for news on all of that during the first week of June!

Thank you to everyone for your patience as we work through all of the details and contracts and get our event online this fall. Fingers crossed that we will be in a much healthier spot by then!

Submitted by Goodwill of the Finger Lakes

May 2020

Alaska

April brought an increase in virtual engagements as in so many other states due to COVID-19. AK AgrAbility PI Art Nash and Project Director DeShana York teamed up to provide two Gardening for Life: Adding Accessibility series, April 7-9 and April 27-29. [Adaptive growing areas](#), modified growing systems, and tool modifications were covered each of the three days via ZOOM. In addition, [Assistive Technology](#) of Alaska added a series of educational "coffee chats" for AgrAbility clients and ATLA clients at large. These educational "chats" introduced topical areas of interest and provided time for clients to have a Q&A exchange around assistive technology or concepts during the Alaska "hunker down" period. Topics discussed included vision and hearing solutions, aging in place options, and independent living resources. ATLA also offered a series of four live webinars including information on solutions for remote work and learning, and managing focus and attention during these uncertain times.

Submitted by DeShana York

May 2020

California

With the COVID-19 pandemic gravely impacting farmers, AgriSafe has hosted weekly think tanks to disseminate resources and ideas rapidly to help farmers. Staff has been participating in these weekly webinars to stay informed on how to support farmers and farmworkers in California. One of the sessions highlighted the impact on rural communities. According to the National Rural Health Association, there have been nine rural hospitals that have closed so far. It is important to acknowledge this deficit and bring a telehealth infrastructure for individuals in this community to receive care. Companies such as Apple and Google have also created apps to help with contact tracing to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. These new virtual channels are vital for the health and safety of agricultural workers.



AgrAbility staff have been busy providing face coverings for farmers and farmworkers. With the pandemic, Cheree Schiele, from Extension's Master Food Preservers, started making face coverings for local and regional hospitals. When Schiele connected with staff, she realized the great need for farmworkers to have personal protective equipment as well. Many farmworkers continue to work while living with a pre-existing condition that puts them in the high-risk category. Coming from a farming background, Schiele was compelled to help the essential workers who harvest crops to feed

America. Schiele quickly pulled her friends Diana Sumrow and Sally Emslander in on the project. Together they donated over 150 face coverings to AgrAbility. Staff was able to mail and drop off the face coverings to program participants, the local farming community, and clinics.

Staff also participated in the "AgrAbility's Smart Technology for Agriculture and the Home" webinar. Different smart assistive tools such as smart thermostats, smart lighting, smart televisions, door locks, and more were discussed in an AgrAbility applied context. Each item would be able to assist an individual living with a disability to live more independently. For example, an individual living with a spinal cord injury or stroke may have difficulty regulating body temperature. With a smart thermostat, individuals can adjust the temperature from their phone, enabling them to live more comfortably. There are many smart devices for the farm as well. Drones are common, as farmers can check the farm without having to be present in the field.

Submitted by Sara Wat

May 2020

Indiana

This has been a strange time of working remotely with travel restrictions. Not being able to meet with clients face-to-face while trying to develop a relationship is difficult. A phone call is not the same. Calls have been made to VR and pre-VR clients and continuing AgrAbility clients concerning their access to services. VR has put a hold on starting new farm accessibility cases until the governor lifts the restrictions - thus, a time of finalizing cases.

Indiana AgrAbility's rural rehabilitation specialist took part in a Joining Community Forces Indiana zoom meeting. This meeting was an update on over 30 community and military service organizations across Indiana who provide a multitude of services to military veterans. This was a larger than normal meeting due to the restrictions to meeting face-to-face.

Steve Swain, Indiana rural rehabilitation specialist and Purdue Extension specialist, has participated in the weekly Ag and Natural Resources Covid-19 Response zoom calls. These calls are for educators in Indiana to share what is occurring in their areas and to hear what agencies such as the Indiana State Board of Animal Health have been experiencing or anticipating. This includes the responses to the closing of the packing plants.

Submitted by Steve Swain

May 2020

Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility staff were invited to participate in four regional Vocational Rehabilitation staff and community service provider conference calls to discuss how they are providing services to consumers during the Corona Virus stay-at-home orders. KAP staff reported they used a combination of telephone, email, text, video chat and Zoom meetings to discuss assessment findings and recommendations, work on identifying funding solutions, and collect intake information with new referrals. Product information has been mailed and staff have shared information on products and strategies via email. A few customers have had links to KAP or YouTube video for product information. Staff offered to provide new VR counselor trainings using Zoom in lieu of face-to-face events and it is possible that an upcoming regional training may become a Zoom meeting with face-to-face follow-up later.

Karin Rasmussen, AT staff in Western Kansas, has utilized the Kansas Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) to assist a farmer in communicating with his seed buyers and other suppliers using an iPad. TAP provides specialized devices, including telephones, to those that have trouble hearing, seeing, speaking remembering, walking, or holding a telephone.



KAP Coordinator, Tawnie Larson, has spent time with [Connect Extension](#) to utilize their content related to rural stress management and participated in the Impact Collaborative Virtual Summit. Larson encourages other AgrAbility staff to participate in this valuable tool available to extension personnel.

In the next week, one of the AT Ag Specialists is going to use satellite images to conduct an initial virtual walk of a farmstead with the farmer. KAP has used satellite imaging before to get an advance look at outbuildings and terrain to help with possible considerations, but this is the first time KAP will include the farmer in the process. This farmer appears to be a good fit for this solution.

Submitted by Tawnie Larson

May 2020

Maine



Maine AgrAbility's [Boots to Bushels](#) (B2B) class continued via Zoom this month. The transition to the Zoom platform was smooth, having had several inclement weather days resulting in Zoom use since B2B started in January 2020. This last class included an interview with Bangor Daily News asking about the programs impact, especially during this public health crisis.

- *"I'm using this as a therapy. Watching a seed, supporting it, watching it grow. There's nothing better than that. I'm enjoying every moment of it."* B2B participant.
- *"Food is great way to ingrain yourself into a community and support that community." Farming is a form of "security to support myself and community, no matter what happens, farming a is cornerstone for any community to grow around."* B2B participant.

To donate to the continuation of this program, please visit: our.umaine.edu/agrability

Staff are working with Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) to be part of their re-imagined Level 1 OT Field work experience for Spring 2020. Several of Maine AgrAbility's OT partners are participating in the Virtual Fieldwork 1 student experience scheduled in May. They will be presenting information and having virtual Q&A with students about AgrAbility, home health, home modifications, adaptive driving, and assistive technology.

Submitted by Lani Carlson

May 2020

Michigan

Thank you Sigma Alpha! Sigma Alpha is the ag sorority, sister sorority to Alpha Gamma Rho, that does the beef preview show. They have an annual 5K Duck Race and a raffle. Unfortunately, the 5K had to be cancelled due to COVID-19, but they did have the raffle with some pretty cool gifts including a Yeti cooler. Michigan AgrAbility was the recipient of the fundraiser - and with all of the problems posed, this awesome group of women were still able to raise over \$3000 on the raffle plus a \$500 contribution from The Andersons!



Meet [Jeremy Huffman](#)! Jeremy was a Sergeant in the Marine Corps. Jeremy has a lower back impairment and bending over for extended periods of time is painful. Jeremy has been helped by Michigan AgrAbility's Ned Stoller in his agricultural operation. To assist Jeremy with planting in his greenhouse, a device that was designed by car mechanics is being put to good use supporting Jeremy's lower back when he bends and reaches to place plants in pots. See [Jeremy's video here](#).

Michigan AgrAbility wants to thank all the workers in the agricultural sector for keeping America fed. Staff want these workers to stay healthy and safe! The State of Michigan is still in lockdown and practicing social distancing due to COVID-19. Michigan AgrAbility is committed to sharing resources to assist the agricultural community in navigating this pandemic so that they can continue to take care of their families and employees, farm, and process the food so the rest of the country can eat. Michigan and federal guidance, as well as National AgrAbility resource internet links, have been shared on the [Michigan AgrAbility website](#).

Submitted by Deb Chester

May 2020

Missouri



Missouri team members also worked on developing a statewide social media campaign about mental health awareness and suicide prevention targeted to rural, agricultural communities. Missouri's "Together We Can" movement and national efforts to raise awareness about mental health launched April 30, 2020. The news release is online [here](#), and it includes a link to the toolkit, viewable by [clicking here](#).

Submitted by: Karen Funkenbusch and Tevin Uthlaut

Kelly Cochran, PharmD, BCPS, a Missouri AgrAbility partner, shared about collaborations with Missouri AgrAbility Project while serving on a panel for the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Pharmacy Rural Track Pharmacy program in Rockford, IL. In addition, she shared about Missouri AgrAbility Project and University of Missouri Extension collaborations when teaching injury health professions students at University of Iowa and pharmacy students at University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy, for the respective Rural Health & Agricultural Medicine courses. Pharm to Farm & MO AgrAbility were also mentioned in the MO Pharmacist - March 2020 magazine in an article, "[Mentoring Tomorrow's Rural Pharmacists](#)" written by Stacy Downs.

Submitted by Kelly Cochran

Lincoln University's Cooperative Extension (LUCE) Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program (ISFOP) in collaboration with the University of Missouri worked throughout the month of April to implement new protocols allowing for on-farm assessments with clientele digitally via technology such as Apple Facetime, ZOOM, Facebook live, and Skype. These changes to protocol are in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic and will provide MO AgrAbility staff and clients the safety and flexibility necessary for continued collaboration during national, state, or regional shelter-in-place orders.

Submitted by Shon Bishop

May 2020

Nebraska

The Nebraska AgrAbility loaner lift was quickly placed into service with long time AgrAbility client Ruth Griess after an unfortunate accident badly damaged her Life Essentials tractor access lift. Staff engineer John Davis had to replace a gearbox on the loaner lift shipped from Life Essentials before it could be used. Ruth is now back on the field cultivator doing field preparation ahead of the planter. The quick weekend repair job got Ruth back in the field again!



Online programs entitled "Our Stress and Communicating with Those who are Stressing" for all FSA Nebraska districts, as well as an ATV Aware online program for the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District employees, were provided for hundreds of participants. AgrAbility was mentioned, described, and recommended for these key staff members who work with

farmers and ranchers on a regular basis. It was an excellent opportunity to make many ag professionals aware of AgrAbility.

Submitted by Susan Harris-Broomfield

May 2020

New Mexico

New Mexico AgrAbility received a donation from Grow Your Food, a Canadian company promoting food growing. The project received four seeding squares which can assist children, people with intellectual disabilities, and elderly people with cognitive decline to appropriately plant and space seeds in a one-foot square. The plastic template helps create a Square Foot Garden.

AgrAbility partner University of New Mexico-Occupational Therapy Graduate Program has received a \$25,000 NIH pilot grant to study quality of life and perceptions of daily life of rural New Mexicans during the COVID-19 health emergency, including farmers and ranchers as compared to urban/suburban dwelling people. The work is to commence immediately, and the study has received an IRB exempt status.

Submitted by Carla Wilhite

May 2020

North Carolina

During the COVID19 pandemic, NC AgrAbility Partnership has been working on providing resources to farmers through the NCA&T Cooperative Extension webpage, NC AgrAbility website, and their Facebook page. The following are some of the resources developed:

- [The Seven Sun-Safe Tips for Farmers and Gardeners](#)
- [Safety Tips for your Farm and Garden](#)
- [The Many Benefits of Agriculture](#)

Submitted by Beatriz (Betty) Rodriguez

May 2020

Ohio



Ohio AgrAbility staff are developing and presenting webinars on Ohio AgrAbility, assistive technology, and farming and gardening with arthritis to their farmers, stakeholders, and the Ohio agricultural and Ohio State University communities. During five April webinars, OAP staff presented to more than 1500 people, many of whom were being introduced to OAP for the first time. OAP staff presented three webinars for OSU Extension Ag Madness: "Making your Events, Festivals and Agritourism Accessible to the Public"; "Assistive Technology to Keep you Farming"; and "Farming and Gardening with Arthritis and Other Physical Limitations".

OAP staff also collaborated with OSU's College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to present "Gardening with Physical Limitations", and with OSU Extension Master Gardener volunteers for "Gardening as we Age". Both presentations received enthusiastic comments from attendees and increased awareness and interest in OAP.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

May 2020

Pennsylvania

AgrAbility PA staff have been busier than ever and are moving full speed ahead with client assistance, project planning, educational opportunities, and outreach opportunities. Thank goodness for platforms like Zoom and Go To Meeting that have helped the staff remain engaged. Communication with farmers and ag workers has been steady and is going well.

Andrew Snook's social media post went far and wide during the month of April - more than 90 shares, 100+ likes, and more than 13k impressions on Facebook alone! It also did very well on Instagram and Twitter. The time is RIGHT to post, share, or strengthen efforts on social media. Many are relying on it in different ways during this time of crisis. Read [Andrew's story here](#).



AgrAbility PA staff have been participating in a variety of educational and professional development opportunities. It is a great time to learn new things or dive deeper into a topic of interest. Staff members participated in a panel discussion on "Developing Relationships within the Plain Community;" a virtual PSU Extension training conference; and webinars centered around various topics regarding agriculture and COVID-19.

Submitted by Kendra Martin

May 2020

Tennessee



TN AgrAbility began working from home March 24, and although the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 has changed the way staff are working, TNAP remains committed to their farmers and thinking outside the box to communicate and teach. Staff have been conducting several ZOOM meetings, attending webinars, cleaning inboxes, and enjoying family time.

TNAP is part of a Grain Bin Safety and Rescue/Farm Safety team and is supported by the TN Department of Agriculture. Word is spreading about the training and counties are signing up. Plans are to host up to six grain bin safety and rescue training across the state and promote the services of AgrAbility.

Recommendation of 2 informative webinars:

Thanks , Purdue Farm Stress Team, for the "[Communicating with Farmers under Stress](#)" webinar. "We know there is a lot of stress and uncertainty in our lives right now and the agriculture community is no different. If you work with individuals in the agriculture community or interact with farmers and are wondering what is happening in Agriculture industry that is so stressful or you find yourself wondering how you can help those under severe stress; consider joining us for the online presentations of Communicating with Farmers Under Stress!" The staff learned stress triggers, how to identify signs of stress, and reviewed helpful techniques for responding to individuals in severe stress. The program was geared for those who work with producers in their professional capacities or those who want to learn about the signs of stress. It dealt with how to communicate with individuals under stress, how to respond to individuals experiencing a severe stress crisis, and what is happening in the agriculture industry that is causing stress to producers. Watch it on Facebook by [clicking here](#).

"[Stress and Safety: Decrease One, Increase the Other](#)". Did you know there is a direct link between stress and safety on the farm? Dr. Deborah Reed, Ag Nurse, hosted a webinar that may help during this crazy time! She focused particularly on how Covid-19 may be affecting safety on the farm. This meeting was recorded, and the link can be sent to those interested in receiving it. Plus, a past webinar from 2019 that is relevant to the current situation can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project (TNAP)

May 2020

Texas

An "Intro to Agriculture Business" virtual workshop webinar series is planned for June 23, 2020 - July 7, 2020. The following sessions will be presented at the virtual workshop

- June 23, 2020 - Navigating the Obstacle Course of Farming & Ranching: A Producers Perspective
- June 25, 2020 - Resources for Farmers and Ranchers
- June 30, 2020 - Intro to Farm & Ranch Business Planning
- July 2, 2020 - Community of Interest: Planning for Your Farm or Ranch
- July 7, 2020 - Training Programs for Veterans & Other Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

Registration links and more information can be found at <https://txagrability.tamu.edu/workshops/>.

Submitted by Makenzie McLaurin Thomas

May 2020

Utah

The past month has been challenging but AgrAbility of Utah staff is contacting clients by phone and email to check their status and see how they are doing. Staff is working with Vocational Rehabilitation to help provide assistive technology for several clients. Weekly check-in calls have helped the team stay connected and run the program effectively. Updating and organizing records has been a recent activity. AgrAbility of Utah is grateful for the NAP and their weekly emails and constant support.

Submitted by Randall Bagley

May 2020

Virginia

Dr. Deborah B. Reed, PhD, FAAOHN, FAAN, RN, agricultural health nurse, and farm family member, presented a webinar that illustrated the relationships between stress, injury, and overall health among farmers. The webinar was held on April 20 and was titled "Stress and Safety: Decrease one, Increase the other." A recording is available on the [Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program website](#).

Garland Mason, AgrAbility coordinator, and Dr. Kim Niewolny created a Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) publication titled "[Lawncare Safety for the Whole Family During COVID-19](#)" which offers safety tips and links to several VCE publications on related topics. This publication is available on the [AgrAbility Virginia website](#). Staff also generated six infographics to share tips from the VCE publications referenced, and published them on Facebook and Instagram.



Submitted by Virginia AgrAbility Project

May 2020

AgrAbility for Africa

The staff of AgrAbility for Africa linked up with Mrs. Carolyn Maholo of CBR Africa Network (CAN)- to enhance the organization's publicity and awareness campaign for the AgrAbility in Africa project. CBR Africa Network (CAN) is an organization that works to promote information sharing on CBR/disability activities in Africa. AgrAbility for Africa intends to use the CBR Africa Network's platform and connections to enhance its awareness campaign of the organization's vocational rehabilitation support programs and services to farmers faced with disabilities across Africa

AgrAbility for Africa staff in partnership with Scientific Animations without Borders (SAWBO) are working on increasing awareness and safety information about COVID -19 to rural farmers in Uganda through localizing COVID-19 safety information. This sample animation video is reproduced with a voice-over by Ms. Emily Ayen, reigning "Miss Karamoja" (center in photo), into the Karamojong language, a dialect spoken in Northern Uganda. To watch the video, [click here](#).



The video has been converted into a mobile file format for easy distribution because of the mobile phone penetration in rural regions of Africa; the mobile format increases its accessibility by the agro-pastoral herders, whose outward appearance resembles that of the Maasai pastoralists.



Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

May 2020

Upcoming Events

- Name** AgrAbility National Training Workshop - **NEW DATES SET**
Dates **November 30-December 3, 2020**
City, State Madison, Wisconsin
Contact Info/Web link <http://www.agrability.org/agrability-national-training-workshop/>
- Name** Small Acreage Big Opportunity - program for landowners with small properties will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Dates May 16, 2020
City, State Webinar online
Contact Info/Web link Program will explore wildlife-related opportunities for small-acreage landowners
<https://agrilitoday.tamu.edu/2020/04/22/small-acreage-big-opportunity-webinar-set-may-16/>
- Name** Fitness for Farm Life: Health, wellness and pain management
Dates May 19, 2020, 7:00-7:30 p.m. ET
City, State Webinar online
Contact Info/Web link Registration is not required; just log in to join:
<https://go.osu.edu/farmfitness> Zoom Online Meeting
Contact: Laura Cherry Akgerman / 614-292-0622
- Name** Stress, Resilience, and Resources: Responding to the Impacts of Covid-19 on Farms
Dates May 20, 2020
City, State Webinar - online from Maine AgrAbility
Contact Info/Web link For further information and to register, [click here](#).
- Name** Coffee Chat with ATLA (for Alaskans)
Dates May 21 & 28; June 4, 11, & 18, 2020, from 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
AK Time
City, State Online
Contact Info/Web link [Save your seat for any Coffee Chat from April 30th - May 21st.](#)
[Save your seat for any Coffee Chat from May 28th - June 18th.](#)

Name Solutions for Isolated Seniors
Dates May 28, 2020, from 2:00-3:00 p.m. **AK Time**
City, State Webinar online
Contact Info/Web link https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_BWlK9eolRFGoLlv5TS3hTA

Name Dr. Therese Willkomm, Assistive Technology for Upper Extremities
Dates May 28, 2020, from 3:00-4:30 p.m.
City, State Webinar online
Contact Info/Web link <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4718900903471158284>

NAME 2020 West Tennessee New Farmer Academy: (Scholarships for beginning farmers with disabilities and veterans)
Dates 7-month certificate program April 23 – October 22, 2020
City, State Memphis, Tennessee
Contact Info/Web link <http://www.tnstate.edu/extension/NFA.aspx>

Name Seven Secrets of Effective Farmers
Dates June 4, August 6, September 3, 2020; 11:00a.m.-12:00p.m. CDT
City, State Online webinar
Contact Info/Web link <https://7secrets.questionpro.com/>

Name TN AgrAbility Project/UT Gardens Veterans Horticultural Therapy Workshop
Dates June 13, 2020
City, State Memphis, Tennessee
Contact Info/Web link <https://utgardens.wildapricot.org/event-3761992> or, for a PDF flyer on the event, [click here](#).

Name Dr. Therese Willkomm, Assistive Technology for Lower Extremities
Dates June 23, 2020, from 3:00-4:30 p.m.
City, State Webinar online
Contact Info/Web link <https://tinyurl.com/y8ph9cts>

Name Midwest Poultry Federation (MPF) Convention
Dates July 9-11, 2020
City, State Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Contact
Info/Web
link** <http://midwestpoultry.com/>

Name Dr. Therese Willkomm, Assistive Technology Tools

Dates July 28, 2020, from 3:00-4:30 p.m.

City, State Webinar online

**Contact
Info/Web
link** <https://tinyurl.com/yapcv99w>