

AgrAbility e·Note

August 2020

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

The U.S. House of Representatives included AgrAbility in its agricultural appropriations bill at level funding for FY 2021. The Senate has yet to finalize its agricultural appropriations bill.

The AgrAbility Virtual State Fair (VSF) is coming October 1! Current participants include 17 funded SRAPs, 2 affiliates, and the NAP. Look for coming details about how to promote the VSF, and [check the current schedule plus more information here](#).



Due to continuing issues surrounding COVID-19 and guidance against gathering in large groups, the AgrAbility NTW scheduled to begin on Nov. 30 is being cancelled. Unfortunately, the Madison Concourse Hotel is not able to guarantee that it will be able to host a group of AgrAbility's size in November/December. Dane County is still under a mandate for groups to be under 10 people and hotel staff do not feel that that will be changing much in the near future, as their infection count is still rising.

The NAP hopes to plan some smaller regional events and some virtual events over the next 12 months. If anyone is interested in hosting an in-person regional event or virtual event in conjunction with NAP, please contact Tess tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org.



AgrAbility/LIFE Project webinar: "Roots of the Soil: Strategies and Resources for Succession Planning," Wednesday, August 26, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. ET. [More](#)

Congratulations to Esmeralda Mandujano of California AgrAbility for being selected the SRAP representative to the [NAP Advisory Team](#) for 2020-21. The Advisory Team provides feedback on our activities and gives suggestions for

future program direction.

The NAP welcomes Jeanette Lombardo, new executive director of collaborating NAP partner the [Farmer Veteran Coalition](#). She replaces Michael O'Gorman who founded the organization in 2007 and who

remains FVC's chief agricultural officer.

The NAP now has eight Virtual New Staff Training presentations available at www.agrability.org/extranet/staff-resources. The most recent addition was "Outreach to Veterans" by Cindy Chastain.



Toolbox Spotlight



The [WeWALK Smart Cane](#) detects obstacles above chest level with an ultrasonic sensor and vibrates when these objects are near. It alerts users if there are low hanging trees, traffic signs, poles and other obstacles. It has mobile applications for both iOS and Android, and users can save favorite places and get turn-by-turn and clockwise navigation through the cane while the phone is in a pocket.

State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

Alaska CES received a grant from AARP to develop adaptive growing areas where environmental modifications can be displayed for planting and harvesting of food. This demonstration area will be built using universal design principals. [More](#)

California

California AgrAbility staff joined Migrant Clinician's Network for "UPDATES: Working in the times of COVID-19. Protecting vulnerable workers and their families," a webinar held in Spanish for promotores. [More](#)

California AgrAbility staff members have been participating in weekly meetings with the Yolo Promotores Network to join efforts in providing community members with direct connections to support them through this evolving pandemic. [More](#)

California AgrAbility staff joined the "Promoting Mental Well-being for People of Color within the Realms of Environmental Health and Safety" webinar from the Blacks in Safety Excellence (BISE) common interest group in the American Society of Safety Professionals. [More](#)



California AgrAbility is staying informed on the effects of the pandemic on agricultural communities in order to collaborate with other boots-on-the-ground organizations and effectively conduct outreach during these times. The COVID-19 Farmworker Study provided preliminary results from the California surveys. [More](#)

Colorado

Last month, Colorado AgrAbility reported on its IT challenges. Staff would also like to point out that their two farm site assessors are just a bit still in the dinosaur age. [More](#)

So, the effect of these experiences over the past few weeks has resulted in changing how staff deliver education. [More](#)

Colorado AgrAbility encourages everyone to remember that serious challenges are really just new opportunities to improve who we are and what we do.

Georgia

On July 28, Georgia AgrAbility hosted a webinar featuring Dr. Therese Willkomm called "New Fabrication tools, materials, and techniques for making AT solutions in minutes." Dr. Willkomm always has new and innovative items to show the participants!

Indiana

The world is slowly opening up. AgrAbility continues to take part in the Purdue Extension ag & natural resources updates to stay updated on the intricacies of working on and off of campus. [More](#)

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services has reopened its offices and resumed issuing authorizations to initiate farm modification assessments. [More](#)

AgrAbility conducted three farm accessibility assessment visits with a second-career farmer who had a stroke, a lady farmer with a neurological condition, and a Marine veteran expanding his farming operation.

Kansas



Kansas AgrAbility staff are making a variety of videos and collecting photos in preparation for Kansas's Virtual State Fair day in October...sponsored by NAP and several SRAPs. [More](#)

Michigan

Don Bender is 80 years old and has muscular dystrophy, a hobby horse farm, and a shop like no other! Don wears a weighted backpack to help maintain good posture. He built this stand-up walker for an AgrAbility client... [More](#)



Thank you, Alpha Gamma Rho from Michigan State University, for donating \$22,000 to Michigan AgrAbility. Words cannot express the impact this has on farmers around Michigan who are working every day in spite of the injuries and illnesses they endure.

An exciting event is happening in Michigan Sept. 8-18! Maggie Seymour will run from the Mackinaw Bridge to the Michigan/Ohio state line to raise funds for veterans entering farming. [More](#)



Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility completed four face-to-face onsite farmstead assessments and developed requested resources for Missouri farmers and ranchers with disabilities and farm families this month.

Missouri AgrAbility staff also are preparing online virtual conferences that will take place in September, October, and November. Additional information forthcoming.

Lincoln University's Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program (ISFOP), in collaboration with the University of Missouri, has been busy throughout the month of July.

Missouri AgrAbility level II assessments have begun to take place in a virtual manner. ISFOP staff with members of University of Missouri Extension Missouri AgrAbility program are using cell phones and tablets to video conference Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Rehab Services for the Blind vocational counselors while on-farm.

Additionally, field staff are outfitted with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as facemasks, face-shields, gloves, and hand sanitizer to ensure their safety and the safety of their Missouri farmers.



The Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) produced a Brain Injury Recovery Step-by-Step brochure featuring the Missouri AgrAbility Project as a community life resource. [More](#)

The Missouri AgrAbility Project was highlighted by Maureen Cunningham, BIA-MO executive director, when she met with Webster Groves-Kirkwood social workers. [More](#)

Nebraska

Nebraska AgrAbility staff met via Zoom with a client to discuss how he could change his operation to meet the challenges posed by his disability.

Staff continue to attend weekly webinars to continue professional development in agriculture, safety, marketing & media, and mental health in Nebraska.

A staff member trained in the MSU [Communicating with Farmers under Stress](#) curriculum offered the second webinar (rather than a live workshop) on July 15 that was attended by 105 participants. [More](#)

Staff is still meeting regularly and is working on ideas for the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair!

North Carolina

During the month of July, NC AgrAbility at NCA&T continued striving to provide services to clients in these unprecedented times. [More](#)

NC AgrAbility has been connecting farmers to resources related to financial literacy, CARES Act funding for those affected by COVID 19, and farm school for veteran farmers.

Staff have been actively participating with the NC Department of Health and Human Services Latinx group to help create awareness among the Latino population about the importance of complying with sanitation protocols and getting tested when someone you have been in contact with tests positive for COVID.

NC AgrAbility Partnership continues providing resources to farmers through the NCA&T Cooperative Extension programs, NC AgrAbility website, and its Facebook page.

Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility staff had several opportunities for virtual outreach and education in July. Program Director Dee Jepsen, Disability Services Coordinator Laura Akgerman, and two student colleagues presented Fitness for Farm Life for the ISASH 2020 virtual conference. [More](#)



Rural Rehabilitation Coordinator Rachel Jarman and Ohio AgrAbility farmer Kane Lewis were both virtual guest speakers for Easterseals Northern Ohio's Farm Week. Kane demonstrated some of his assistive technology and equipment and told the group about the accident that caused his disability. [More](#)

The Ohio AgrAbility team is working hard to prepare for Virtual Farm Science Review in September and looks forward to developing new resources and presentations to share with Ohio farmers and all of the SRAPs.

Pennsylvania

The month of July was all about continuing on with some farm visits and working on projects that will continue to help AgrAbility PA thrive in the coming year with the coronavirus restrictions and precautions remaining in the state of Pennsylvania. [More](#)

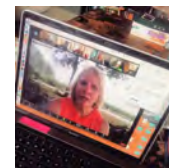
One of the hallmark agricultural events in Pennsylvania - Penn State University's Ag Progress Days - has gone from an event that draws 50,000 people to a VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE! Participants will follow along this year for four days of live webinars, on-demand video resources, an exhibitor marketplace, and more, August 9-12.

AgrAbility PA continues its efforts of building its library of resources and educational handouts specifically for farmers with disabilities and long-term health conditions in the state of Pennsylvania. Take a look at this resource on [assistive technology for dairy farmers](#).

Tennessee

The Milan No Till Field Day was held virtually in 2020 due to COVID-19. So, for the first time, all activities were on-line instead of onsite. [More](#)

COVID-19 brought about many changes in the teaching world. Instead of an in-class presentation, TNAP presented virtually to 80 Tennessee State University and UT health science OT students. [More](#)



On July 26, TN AgrAbility celebrated and promoted the Americans with Disabilities Act 30th anniversary. Staff were reminded that it is a living document, not an artifact. [More](#)

Tennessee AgrAbility is helping military veterans if they choose to go into agriculture. See a video on its work [here](#).

Thank you to the Farmer Veteran Coalition for awarding fellowship funds to help beginning farmers. There were six Tennessee awardees: [More](#)

Farmer Veteran Coalition shared the following:

"There are a whole lot of big smiles this weekend on the faces of farmer veterans as Tractor Supply Co. awards are landing in the mailboxes of our 2020 grantees! [More](#)

Thank you, Michael O'Gorman, retiring executive director of Farmer Veteran Coalition, for ALL you have done for veterans and farmers and for being a friend of AgrAbility. Welcome

Texas

Texas AgrAbility and BattleGround to Breaking Ground finished hosting a virtual agriculture business workshop series on July 7. It was a series shared from June 23 through July 7, and each webinar was recorded and has been posted as a part of a virtual workshop module.

BattleGround to Breaking Ground applications were due July 13 for the selection of Cohort 8. Applications have been scored, and new participants have been accepted and will begin their participation in the program towards the end of August.

Utah

AgrAbility of Utah did two online AgrAbility trainings for vocational rehabilitation districts during their monthly staff meetings. The first one was for the Provo VR district on July 21 and included 22 counselors and staff. The second training was for the Southern Utah VR district on July 28 and included 17 counselors and staff.

AgrAbility of Utah attended the Cache Interagency Council monthly meeting on July 27 and gave a brief presentation about AgrAbility. The Cache Interagency Council is an association of service programs and nonprofits in Cache Valley. They meet monthly for presentations and networking.

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia staff are working on a farm financial stress assessment tool, a best practices resource for managing farm financial health and wellbeing, and a resource titled "Managing Farm Financial Stress for a Healthy Farm and a Healthy Farm Family" in collaboration with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Farm Safety, Health, & Wellness Initiative.

AgrAbility Virginia is supporting the development of a farm emergency planning resource developed in partnership with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Farm Safety, Health, & Wellness Initiative. Staff anticipate its publication in August.

The newly formed AgrAbility Virginia Advisory Group held its first meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, August 4. During the meeting, members were introduced to each other and AgrAbility Virginia's programming. Meet the advisory group on AgrAbility Virginia's new website [here](#).

In coordination with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Farm Safety, Health, & Wellness Initiative, staff are in the beginning stages of organizing a farmer veteran listening session. AgrAbility Virginia field coordinator and veteran James T. (Tony) Edwards is taking the lead on this event.

AgrAbility Virginia is now on Twitter! Find and follow them [@AgrAbilityVA](#)

AgrAbility Virginia's new brochure is printed and available on their website for download. [Click here](#) to view it.

AgrAbility Virginia will be participating in the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair and is brainstorming for content.

Staff have been reviewing the NAP new staff training videos.

Washington

Washington State AgrAbility Program (WSAP) hosted its third webinar July 14 facilitated by Curt Johnson, assistive technology specialist with Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP). Ten people participated from across the state.

WSAP staff is working on the home assessment forms and protocol for their potential clients with roll-out next month!

Staff will be participating in the Virtual State Fair and are brainstorming ideas for content.

WSAP continues to work on building its lending library based around specific injury sectors and will have the additions on their website.

Staff are working with the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop their relationship and outreach to five incubator farms. VA promoted the July WSAP webinar and WSAP presented a webinar about AgrAbility through the VA network on August 7.

WSAP staff have been attending several webinars hosted by other states and using NAP links for new staff training.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin staff recently held a virtual meeting with the WI NRCS. It focused on Wisconsin AgrAbility history, information on enrolling in the AgrAbility program, assistive technology examples, and a client testimonial.

Staff have also been working with The Hmong Institute based out of Madison to enroll any of their members eligible for AgrAbility and to share with them information about FSA programs as well.

WI AgrAbility continues to share information virtually as much as it can with existing and potential clients.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa



AgrAbility for Africa, Sonoran UCEDD (University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities -the University of Arizona), and Arizona Sonora Border Projects for Inclusion (ARSOBO) in the past weeks have been involved in talks to address disability rehabilitation care gaps that are entrenched within the African health care system that have resulted in chronic failure to support rehabilitation care and access to assistive technology for people with disabilities. [More](#)

The AgrAbility for Africa staff teamed up with Ned Stoller, an assistive technology professional with the Michigan AgrAbility Project, to design and donate a Bi-Crawler to Agnes Nabawanuka in Uganda. [More](#)



In efforts to advance the organization's mission to connect people with disabilities to life-changing resources, staff are seeking to catalyze significant advances in strengthening health systems by developing partnerships that will design, implement, and evaluate models of care that link implementation research and workforce training directly to the delivery of integrated primary healthcare in Uganda and

Staff Changes and Recognition

Illinois

Salah Fuad Issa joined the University of Illinois faculty in January 2020 as an assistant professor for agricultural & industrial safety and health. He works with IL AgrAbility Program Director Dr. Josie Rudolphi and helps support the program's activities.

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [Continuing the legacy: Farmers face land succession challenges](#) (National AgrAbility Project)
 - [AgrAbility Assistive Technology for Working Farmers Online Workshop](#) (Washington State AgrAbility Project)
 - [Maine AgrAbility offers farmers guidance on hiring workers with disabilities](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
 - [Veterans Training Support Center](#) (Washington State AgrAbility Project)
-

Other News

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

- [Funding supports socially disadvantaged, veteran farmers](#) The deadline for applications is August 26, 2020. See the [request for applications](#) for full details.
 - [USDA Boosts Food Assistance for Tribes During Pandemic](#)
 - [USDA Extends Deadlines, Defers Interest Accrual Due to COVID-19](#)
 - [CDC: Minorities affected more in meatpacking outbreaks](#)
 - [A New and Free Online Farm Stress Management Course](#)
 - ["Harvest Corps"](#) - read this email to Steve Swain (NAP) concerning the Harvest Corps program that links college students and unemployed hospitality professionals with farms experiencing labor deficits
 - [Agricultural Women's Community & Leadership Survey](#)
 - [Surge in child ATV injuries likely linked to pandemic, experts say](#)
 - [FAO launches COVID-19 Response & Recovery Programme](#)
 - [USDA Meals to You partnership delivers millions of meals](#)
 - [Third round of Farmers to Families Food Box purchases](#)
 - [Encouraging Adoption of Protective Behaviors to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19: Strategies for Behavior Change](#)
 - [New research brief: COVID-19 and disability in rural areas](#)
 - [USDA Launches New Farmers.gov Features to Help Farmers Hire Workers](#)
 - [Farmer returns prosthetic leg that skydiver lost during jump](#)
 - [Making strides to prevent drugs from taking young lives](#)
 - [Gardens nourish body and soul during pandemic, say therapists](#)
-

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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August 2020

National AgrAbility Project

Many state fairs, in addition to other public awareness venues, have been canceled due to the pandemic. Therefore, our AgrAbility Marketing & Media Community of Interest has discussed a variety of virtual options for continuing to promote the AgrAbility mission.

The **AgrAbility Virtual State Fair** is a social media event that is scheduled to start October 1 and last until October 30. Each weekday will highlight a different AgrAbility project, and the weekends will focus on special topics, yet to be scheduled, such as veterans and caregivers.

Here is the current schedule for the event:

10/1/2020	Intro to AgrAbility
10/2/2020	NAP
10/3/2020	Weekend
10/4/2020	Weekend
10/5/2020	NC
10/6/2020	IA
10/7/2020	MO
10/8/2020	AK
10/9/2020	NE
10/10/2020	Weekend
10/11/2020	Weekend
10/12/2020	OH
10/13/2020	CA
10/14/2020	UT
10/15/2020	WI
10/16/2020	VA
10/17/2020	Weekend
10/18/2020	Weekend
10/19/2020	PA
10/20/2020	ME
10/21/2020	GA
10/22/2020	KS
10/23/2020	WA
10/24/2020	Weekend
10/25/2020	Weekend
10/26/2020	IN
10/27/2020	MI
10/28/2020	TN
10/29/2020	CO

10/30/2020 Wrap-Up

Contact jonesp@purdue.edu for more information.

Submitted by Paul Jones

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August 2020

Alaska

Alaska CES received a grant from AARP to develop adaptive growing areas where environmental modifications can be displayed for planting and harvesting of food. This demonstration area will be built using universal design principals. The site will be used to instruct learners how to pick sites with the least hindrances for ambulation and mobility difficulties, how to use landscaping and sloping to avoid outside stairs, and the planning and dimension sizing for wheelchair-friendly growing boxes, etc. Considerations will be given to shade, rest stops, and safety communication concerns. There will also be instruction on how to build accessible cold frames, hoop tunnels, and trellises that allow for residents to plant, weed, water, and harvest their produce. There will be an emphasis on modification of tools and existing structures. This particular grant-funded project will be located in the Matanuska Valley at the University of Alaska Experimental Farm. Collaboration with the AgrAbility project will take place to educate the general public and market AgrAbility to agricultural workers.

Submitted by DeShana York

August 2020

California

California AgrAbility staff joined Migrant Clinician's Network for "UPDATES: Working in the times of COVID-19. Protecting vulnerable workers and their families," a webinar held in Spanish for promotores. Dr. Eva Galvez spoke on disparities in the Hispanic communities where many are essential workers. She also spoke on the differences between cleaning and disinfecting and the importance of having an action plan should someone in the family fall ill. The webinar closed with an overview of the vulnerabilities of agricultural producers and workers: living conditions, transportation of work crews, food access, stress, anxiety, and lack of mental health resources.

California AgrAbility staff members have been participating in weekly meetings with the Yolo Promotores Network to join efforts in providing community members with direct connections to support them through this evolving pandemic. The working group is currently planning a webinar for Spanish speaking promotores on the topic of COVID-19. AgrAbility staff have connected farmworkers to their local public health offices, community clinics, and testing sites. Staff have advocated for accommodations at worksites for farmworkers at field and processing sites. They have also distributed to farmers and farmworkers COVID-19 toolkits to inform them about safety precautions.



California AgrAbility staff joined the "Promoting Mental Well-being for People of Color within the Realms of Environmental Health and Safety" webinar from the Blacks in Safety Excellence (BISE) common interest group in the American Society of Safety Professionals. The webinar gave an overview of concepts of mental illness and psychological safety, risk factors contributing to mental illness, including those in the workplace, and factors and components that should be considered in promoting psychological safety in the workplace. Psychosocial factors and hazards can be implemented into the "Plan, Do, Check, Assess Cycle." Psychological hazards are known to have a powerful impact on organizations and individuals, and include lack of psychological support, lack of physical safety, psychological demands and other chronic stressors. These highlight the importance of partnering with mental health providers and resources to keep employees safe.

California AgrAbility is staying informed on the effects of the pandemic on agricultural communities in order to collaborate with other boots-on-the-ground organizations and effectively conduct outreach during these times. The *COVID-19 Farmworker Study* provided preliminary results from the California surveys. Highlights included data showing that Monterey county farmworkers are three times more likely to become infected when compared to workers of any other industry. Due to the collapse of the foodservice demand, farm work is becoming more competitive. Families have lost 50% of their incomes as one parent has to stay home with the children due to school closures, and the increase in food prices has impacted the farmworker food basket. This study includes a wide array of farmworker advocacy groups, many of which collaborate with California AgrAbility. It is these collaborators which support reaching farmworkers in different areas of the state during the cancellation of typical in-person outreach efforts.

Submitted by Sara Wat

August 2020

Colorado

Last month, Colorado AgrAbility reported on its IT challenges. Staff would also like to point out that their two farm site assessors are just a bit still in the dinosaur age. All of the newer IT tools are not intuitive for them, so they really have to make an effort to adopt and use them. Colorado is a very rural state. Staff can put 600-700 miles a day on the work vehicle to see just one client. That forces them to think out-of-the-box in order to spend that time wisely. COVID has challenged them to be creative and think in directions never even broached before. A serious problem in Colorado for delivery of service is lack of bandwidth and internet connectivity. Staff have been required to research those issues before deciding on how to deliver their service recommendations. Offering to send materials by email won't work for many clients. Recommending telehealth for stress reduction, etc., will not work in many spots of the state. Having a high level quadriplegic client be able to access a pasture by getting him up into a combine in a bed lift and assuming he/she can use a cell phone to access help if a problem occurs in the lift is not realistic when they may be one hundred miles from cell service. CO AgrAbility needs to think about satellite phones.

So, the effect of these experiences over the past few weeks has resulted in changing how staff deliver education. They have always delivered 5-8 Winter Workshops by setting up a location in a given area of the state and traveling to it and delivering an in-person four-hour presentation. To make proper use of time, staff tried to also cobble site visits around their travels. It usually worked OK but not always. For the 2020/2021 workshops, staff are going virtual. Staff will, as before, contact Extension agents in the remote corners of the Colorado plains and mountains and ask them to host a workshop in a location that they know will get internet reception for PowerPoint presentations and live internet-based delivery of the training. It will then be archived on YouTube so that staff can share the links by phone or snail mail so that folks can view it at a location in their community or a neighboring one.

Submitted by Jim Craig

August 2020

Indiana

The world is slowly opening up. AgrAbility continues to take part in the Purdue Extension ag & natural resources updates to stay updated on the intricacies of working on and off of campus. It has been interesting to observe from afar the virtual county fairs. It has also been interesting to observe the differences between rural communities and metropolitan communities in their perspectives of the Covid-19 virus.

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services has reopened its offices and resumed issuing authorizations to initiate farm modification assessments. AgrAbility has conducted a farm accessibility assessment and a home lift assessment and continues to complete earlier assessments related to the delivery of products and modifications.

Submitted by Steve Swain

August 2020

Kansas



Kansas AgrAbility staff are making a variety of videos and collecting photos in preparation for Kansas's Virtual State Fair day in October...sponsored by NAP and several SRAPs. KAP staff have had fun figuring out how to add the sound of corn pouring during an introduction for a bin level indicator, figuring out glare and noise levels in a field, and selecting products to highlight that might draw the attention of underserved farmers and ranchers and their families. A surprising opportunity arose when

a farmer familiar with KAP volunteered to help with a video. Loren is a farmer with a small operation that includes an extensive small vegetable operation and woodlands as well as grain. He volunteered to demonstrate the LogOx tool on video because he thinks KAP is a great program and he can show his grandkids that he's famous on the KAP YouTube channel. Loren's also a guy who knows everyone and carries KAP brochures in his truck to share with folks at the donut shop and farmers markets. Watch for his video in October!

Submitted by Sheila Simmons

August 2020

Michigan



Don Bender is 80 years old and has muscular dystrophy, a hobby horse farm, and a shop like no other! Don wears a weighted backpack to help maintain good posture. He built this stand-up walker for an AgrAbility client and makes/custom-fits them for people for a very reasonable price. If you are in need of this kind of assistive technology, contact Michigan AgrAbility, and they will connect you with Don!



An exciting event is happening in Michigan Sept. 8-18! Maggie Seymour will run from the Mackinaw Bridge to the Michigan/Ohio state line to raise funds for veterans entering farming. The funds will be used to benefit veterans through the Farmer Veteran Coalition of Michigan. More route details and events along the way will be shared as the details are verified. To help benefit the cause, those who wish to give can donate through [Maggie's GoFundMe account](#) for the event.



Submitted by Deb Chester

August 2020

Missouri



The Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) produced a Brain Injury Recovery Step-by-Step brochure featuring the Missouri AgrAbility Project as a community life resource. The intent of this resource is to provide individuals an overview of brain injury recovery stages based on the functioning level of the person injured. Distribution will be through medical, rehabilitation, veterans services, vocational, independent living, and other community-based service providers.

The Missouri AgrAbility Project was highlighted by Maureen Cunningham, BIA-MO executive director, when she met with Webster Groves-Kirkwood social workers. A highlighted topic was the upcoming BIA-MO conference on October 1 and 2 with the Missouri AgrAbility Project as the military veteran farmers track sponsor. In addition, a session on "Heroes to Hives" will be presented by Missouri AgrAbility specialists, beginning veteran farmers, and Travis Harper, MU Extension agronomy specialist.

Submitted by Maureen Cunningham

August 2020

Nebraska

A staff member trained in the MSU *Communicating with Farmers under Stress* curriculum offered the second webinar (rather than a live workshop) on July 15 that was attended by 105 participants. Another will be offered September 2. This program is for ag professionals to help them identify signs of stress in producers, use techniques for approaching someone in distress, and learn where to access resources that are helpful for someone experiencing stress. Register at: go.unl.edu/stress20

Submitted by Susan Harris

August 2020

North Carolina

During the month of July, NC AgrAbility at NCA&T continued striving to provide services to clients in these unprecedented times. Having virtual meetings with farmers is still a challenge, and efforts to find a virtual platform to facilitate these types of meetings are ongoing. Some of the main concerns are lack of good internet connection and the use of the appropriate technology. However, NC AgrAbility has been authorized by NCA&T to continue doing on-site farm visits for next month.

Submitted by Beatriz (Betty) Rodriguez

August 2020

Ohio

Ohio AgrAbility staff had several opportunities for virtual outreach and education in July. Program Director Dee Jepsen, Disability Services Coordinator Laura Akgerman, and two student colleagues presented Fitness for Farm Life for the ISASH 2020 virtual conference. The team created an overview of the program, which was recorded and made available to ISASH conference attendees. Dee and Laura joined other health and wellness presenters to discuss the program, answer questions, and share resources.



Rural Rehabilitation Coordinator Rachel Jarman and Ohio AgrAbility farmer Kane Lewis were both virtual guest speakers for Easterseals Northern Ohio's Farm Week. Kane demonstrated some of his assistive technology and equipment and told the group about the accident that caused his disability. Rachel shared information about Ohio AgrAbility and gave the group a tour of her farm, introducing the attendees to the chickens and lambs she and her husband raise for market.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

August 2020

Pennsylvania

The month of July was all about continuing on with some farm visits and working on projects that will continue to help AgrAbility PA thrive in the coming year with the coronavirus restrictions and precautions remaining in the state of Pennsylvania. With several in-person outreach events being canceled in the next quarter, AgrAbility PA staff members continue to press forward with digital and virtual outreach activities, increasing outreach to ag media and finding new ways to collaborate with key partners and stakeholders to reach farmers.

Submitted by Kendra Martin

August 2020

Tennessee

The Milan No Till Field Day was held virtually in 2020 due to COVID-19. So, for the first time, all activities were on-line instead of onsite. "The comments received have been overwhelmingly positive." (Blake Brown, director of the Ag Research & Education Center of Milan.) TN AgrAbility tour's featured five segments generated 571 views. Click the links here to view the entire [Milan No Till Field Day](#) and the [TN AgrAbility tour](#).

COVID-19 brought about many changes in the teaching world. Instead of an in-class presentation, TNAP presented virtually to 80 Tennessee State University and UT health science OT students. Four TSU students chose TNAP for their class summer project. They met with TNAP staff and decided they wanted the challenge of working on the TN AgrAbility intake form. They made their presentation during the month of July and the TNAP staff believes it is a form that they will use in the future.



On July 26, TN AgrAbility celebrated and promoted the Americans with Disabilities Act 30th anniversary. Staff were reminded that it is a living document, not an artifact. Thirty years after it was signed, the work to help people with disabilities live fully-included lives continues. Staff are proud of AgrAbility's role in helping farmers with disabilities continue farming and living in the spirit of the ADA. They will continue to do what they can to achieve this goal so that everyone in the community can thrive. Together, we all make a difference.

Thank you to the Farmer Veteran Coalition for awarding fellowship funds to help beginning farmers. There were six Tennessee awardees:

- Kevin Benderman who raises mixed livestock was awarded \$4,565 to use for a Featherman PRO XL Set-Up with Roto-Dunker
- Keith Bridges owns Knox Goats and received \$ 5,000 for fencing from Premier 1
- Richard Hanson grows vegetables, lambs, and bees, and was awarded \$2,915 for a paper pot transplanter
- Jason Pohly, a diversified farmer, was awarded \$2,500 for Dexter cattle
- In addition, James Artman and Anna Ashton each received the Tractor Supply Company's \$1,000 gift card. Jim Artman is founder of Appalachian Grit in Knoxville, TN, and the East TN rep of the Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN

Farmer Veteran Coalition shared the following:

"There are a whole lot of big smiles this weekend on the faces of farmer veterans as Tractor Supply Co. awards are landing in the mailboxes of our 2020 grantees! This time of year is always a big thrill for us. Congrats to the 50 nationwide fantastic, most deserving recipients who each received \$1,000 gift cards, including James Artman of Appalachian Grit. 'Our entire Team is so excited for great things to come with your shopping excursions and grant purchases. Huge shout-out to Tractor Supply Co for continuing to be an incredible partner on this grant in recognition of our armed forces.'" To learn more about Jim's journey and how Appalachian Grit can change the landscape of your life for good, visit [his website](#).

August 2020

AgrAbility for Africa

AgrAbility for Africa, Sonoran UCEDD (University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities -the University of Arizona), and Arizona Sonora Border Projects for Inclusion (ARSOBO) in the past weeks have been involved in talks to address disability rehabilitation care gaps that are entrenched within the African health care system that have resulted in chronic failure to support rehabilitation care and access to assistive technology for people with disabilities.

Discussions have been centered around evaluating current systems of care, and they inform the development of a comprehensive care model to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities as a way of strengthening systems. The partnership is looking at replicating the patient engagement model of ARSOBO across Africa - providing assistive technology devices made by individuals who use them, starting out in Uganda. Under the arrangement, local capacity will be developed by training local AgrAbility for Africa clients under transitional employment support, to produce wheelchairs, prosthetics, and hearing equipment that benefits their entire community. Later evaluations will have the purpose of scaling-up interventions that achieve measurable and significant health improvements in other parts of Africa.

Further, the partnership is exploring ways to increase early childhood intervention programs to address developmental disabilities. Among them is the Africa disability digital platform meant to connect families that have children with disabilities to life-changing resources, experts, and professionals around the world, enabling the entire world community to become more responsive to Africa's disability agenda and to needs in the different corners of Africa.

In reaffirming its commitment to the disability agenda in Africa, ARSOBO will be donating three Rough Rider wheelchairs to AgrAbility for Africa, and staff are in the processing of identifying the beneficiaries according to the ARSOBO user-centered assistive technology development design process to assess their needs before the wheelchairs arrive.



The AgrAbility for Africa staff teamed up with Ned Stoller, an assistive technology professional with the Michigan AgrAbility Project, to design and donate a Bi-Crawler to Agnes Nabawanuka in Uganda. The BiCrawler is an assistive technology device that helps people who cannot crawl or use their legs to work along the ground in fields, gardens, and flower beds. People in developing countries can sit on the platform to access latrines. It is made by welding bicycle wheels to a rebar frame with a wood platform. [Click here](#) for the BiCrawler Use

demonstration.

In efforts to advance the organization's mission to connect people with disabilities to life-changing resources, staff are seeking to catalyze significant advances in strengthening health systems by developing partnerships that will design, implement, and evaluate models of care that link implementation research and workforce training directly to the delivery of integrated primary healthcare in Uganda and other parts of Africa. The goal is to enhance the quality of rehabilitation care and support to individuals with disabilities while at the same time increasing local community knowledge and skills around evidence-based

strategies for patient engagement and activation as a means of strengthening disability services and care in Africa under the community-based rehabilitation care model.

Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

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August 2020

Upcoming Events

- 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>
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- Name** Seven Secrets of Effective Farmers
- Dates** September 3, 2020; 11:00a.m.-12:00p.m. CDT
- City, State** Online webinar
- Contact Info/Web link** <https://7secrets.questionpro.com/>
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- Name** Farm Science Review
- Dates** September 22-24, 2020
- City, State** Virtual event online
- Contact Info/Web link** <https://fsr.osu.edu/>
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- Name** Virtual AgTech NEXT Summit
- Dates** Each Tuesday from 1:00-2:00 p.m. Eastern Time beginning Tuesday September 22 and going through Tuesday November 10 (with a break on Tuesday, November 3, for election day); seven sessions total.
- City, State** Virtual - online
- Contact Info/Web link** <https://webcast.center/agtechnext/main.php>