

AgrAbility e•Note

November 2020

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

AgrAbility Virtual Regional Workshop

Register now for the AgrAbility Virtual Regional Workshop, based in New York, on December 1, 3, and 4, from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. EST. This virtual event will focus on AgrAbility, farm stress, and mental health.

Speakers from the NAP and AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians will discuss AgrAbility issues, while speakers from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, NY FarmNet, and NYCAHM will address the issues of farm stress and mental health. You can [REGISTER HERE](#) or click [HERE](#) for more information.



If you think that you might be interested in hosting a regional workshop in conjunction with Goodwill and NAP, please contact Tess: tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org.

National AgrAbility Project staff members are pleased to be included as funded partners on two NIFA Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network grants: the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center and the Western Region Agricultural Stress Assistance Program. NAP's main responsibility for the North Central center is to conduct quarterly webinars, while for the Western center, NAP is slated to provide a regional workshop per year and one NTW in that region, among other activities.

Upcoming webinar: "An Overview of the USDA/NIFA Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) with Focus on the North Central Region." Monday, November 30, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. ET. [More](#)



Thank you to everyone who participated in the inaugural AgrAbility Virtual State Fair! During the fair itself, we reached more than 29,000 unique individuals on Facebook and had over 76,000 Tweet impressions. The fair pages continue to receive traffic and feedback. The Marketing and Media Community of Interest will plan to discuss the possibility of continuing the VSF in the future.

Current and former NAP staff members collaborated on an article concerning AgrAbility demographics recently published in the *Journal of Agromedicine*. Robert J. Fetsch, Robert

E. Petrea, Paul J. Jones, William E. Field & Robert A. Aherin (2020) A 25-Year Overview of AgrAbility Demographics, Journal of Agromedicine, DOI: 10.1080/1059924X.2020.1837318. There are a limited number of e-copies available without charge. Please contact jonesp@purdue.edu if you are interested in one.

Toolbox Spotlight

The [Three-Wheeled Manual Wheelbarrow Retrofit Kit](#) is designed to allow one to convert any wooden-handled, one-wheeled barrow into a three-wheeler. The pre-assembled kit includes brake, two wheels, undercarriage, handle, all required hardware, and retrofit instructions. A three-wheeled barrow is designed to eliminate tip-over and having to lift in order to move, and it reportedly pushes and dumps easily and minimizes the chances of back strain.



State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

The Alaska team was happy to join the other states in participating in the AgrAbility virtual fair.



The first Alaska eNewsletter was distributed statewide digitally and through social media to assist with outreach, and a new mailing list was created to expand project interest. See the [AK AgrAbility website](#) for further information or to join the mailing list.

Alaska AgrAbility conducted outreach virtually to the Aging and Disability Resource Center and the Mat-Su Agency Partnership in the Matanuska Valley. Staff also gave informational virtual presentations to occupational therapy students and an ALS Support Group.

Lightning talks were delivered at the 2020 Alaska Food Festival & Conference November 6-7... Two talks from AgrAbility were: AgrAbility: Improving Quality of Life for Farmers, Ranchers and other Rural Residents with Disabilities (Tori Gingras, DeShana York, Art Nash) and Occupational Therapy-Intersection Between Healthcare/Agriculture (Erin Main & DeShana York) [More](#)

Unfortunately, COVID-19 cases have begun to dramatically increase in the state. During this time, ATLA (Assistive Technology of Alaska) is meeting with individuals virtually on platforms such as Zoom. [More](#)

California

California AgrAbility staff participated in the inaugural AgrAbility Virtual State Fair. California promoted the event with its network and during presentations staff had throughout the month. [More](#)

California AgrAbility staff presented virtually for the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) and their partner agencies at their Annual Disability Employment Awareness Month Celebration. The event opened with remarks from the California State Conservationist highlighting the importance of integrating individuals living with a disability into our workforces. [More](#)

California AgrAbility staff presented at the Migrant Education Parent Meeting. An AgrAbility program overview was presented followed by local program highlights. [More](#)



Colorado

Substantial effort was expended in October by the SRAPs in working with Paul Jones at the NAP to produce a Virtual State Fair featuring one SRAP each day in October through the 29th and a wrap-up segment on the 30th with photos of each state project. [More](#)

Please don't miss Dr. Lorann Stallones' presentation "Biological Factors Associated with Farm/Ranch Stress and Suicide Risk." This one-hour online webinar is for professionals working with agricultural families. [More](#)

Georgia



Commissioner Gary W. Black visited one of Georgia AgrAbility's farmers, Todd Haagen. Their interview was to kick off Georgia's day at the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair and to share the good work of AgrAbility. [Click here to watch.](#)

Georgia AgrAbility took over the National AgrAbility's Facebook page for its Virtual State Fair day on October 21. It was highly successful. [More](#)

Normally at this time of year, GA AgrAbility has a large presence at the Sunbelt Expo. Due to COVID, the show was cancelled. Instead staff hosted a virtual Expo to spotlight various vendors that are normally with them At the Expo. [More](#)

The Institute on Human Development and Disability, in which many of the Georgia AgrAbility staff work, co-hosted the award-winning *Hearts of Glass* documentary for the university community. [More](#)

Staff presented in Pike County on Farm Machinery Extrication. There was a great turnout!



Indiana

Indiana AgrAbility, Indiana Farmer Veteran Coalition, and the Indiana AgVets Project sponsored a Veteran Farmer Workshop and Indiana AgVet Update at Purdue's Beck Agriculture Center on October 22. The workshop provided all of the sponsoring programs the opportunity to update the attending veterans on their services plus presentations from Natural Resources Conservation Service, Purdue Extension Services, SARE, Life Essentials, and time to network and share a meal. [More](#)

Steve Swain, Indiana AgrAbility assistive technology specialist, attended the monthly Joining Community Forces of Indiana zoom call. Over 40 veteran service organizations were on the call to present their programs and any upcoming events for veterans. [More](#)

Steve Swain attended the zoom meeting of the Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services Home Modification Workgroup, which includes farm assessors as well as home modification assessors. The meeting updated assessors on policy and procedure changes and clarifications and documents to assist assessors and VR counselors with the

modification process. [More](#)

Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility staff and supporters had a great time participating in the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair! KAP would like to thank everyone that participated, liked, and shared social media posts, and helped spread awareness of AgrAbility. [More](#)

Kansas AgrAbility Coordinator Tawnie Larson is a member of the K-State Research and Extension Stress & Resiliency Team that was formed partially from the Spring 2020 eXtension Impact Collaborative Innovation and as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. [More](#)

Maine

Maine AgrAbility had a great time hosting its day at the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair on October 20th. Thanks to the National AgrAbility team for coordinating this event! [More](#)

Kelley Spencer presented the session "Accommodating for Memory Issues after Brain Injury" at the Brain Injury Association of America - Maine Chapter 11th Annual Conference on Defining Moments in Brain Injury, which took place virtually October 13-14.

Staff were also asked to conduct a virtual presentation of "AgrAbility 101" for the department of Labor and Department Health & Human Services on October 22. This was one part of a month-long celebration and educational events slated for Disability Awareness month. [More](#)



As part of the preparation for Boots to Bushels programming for 2021, staff planted garlic in raised beds at Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC). There are a total of four super-raised beds, and staff are excited to make these demonstration beds and learning spaces as part of the hands-on course for veterans and people with limitations in 2021. [More](#)

Maine AgrAbility routinely shares news posts and articles. [More](#)

Michigan

Each year, Michigan AgrAbility provides an incentive to clients to complete the Michigan AgrAbility Annual Survey - a \$100 gift card. [More](#)

Thank you, Doug VerHoeven, for hosting the virtual farm tour for Michigan rehabilitation counselors. You showed how it's possible to successfully farm from a wheelchair! [More](#)



Michigan AgrAbility wants to thank the Michigan farmers who provided monetary support to the Hopkins Area Volunteer Fire Department to purchase grain bin rescue equipment and receive training on grain bin rescue. [More](#)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 5th Annual Michigan Hidden Talent Workshop was held virtually on October 29th featuring national autism advocate Dr. Temple Grandin as the keynote speaker. [More](#)

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility (MAP) and Michigan State University introduced



Missouri as the first state chapter of Heroes to Hives, a program supporting veterans who want to learn beekeeping, at the Brain Injury Association of Missouri Annual Statewide Professional Development Conference. [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility continues to facilitate face-to-face, fee-for-service, onsite farmstead assessments on behalf of Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehab Services for the Blind, and Vocational Rehabilitation for Veterans.

Missouri AgrAbility was also invited to participate in the Missouri Veterans Suicide Prevention Committee to address Missouri Governor Parson's proclamation prioritizing suicide prevention among veterans and all citizens. [More](#)

Lincoln University's Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program (LU ISFOP) in collaboration with the University of Missouri held an educational booth in Springfield, Missouri, at the Ozarks Fall Farm Fest. [More](#)



The Brain Injury Association of Missouri Annual Statewide Professional Development Conference featured the Missouri AgrAbility Project as the military veterans track sponsor for attendees to become aware of MAP and learn about services through a PowerPoint presentation and virtual exhibit booth.

Survivors of brain injury and their family members became aware of the Missouri AgrAbility Project during the BIA-MO Survivor & Family Educational Session on October 10 through the Missouri AgrAbility Project military veterans track sponsorship recognition and event outreach.

Eight prospective AgrAbility clients become aware of Missouri AgrAbility Project services with information added to the Brain Injury Association of America's *Moderate to Severe Brain Injury Caregivers Guide* booklet.

Nebraska

Work was focused on the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair in October as well as the new videos on the [Nebraska AgrAbility YouTube page](#). The most popular is the client show-and-tell with assistive technology.

It is in the very early stages, but the Center for Rural Affairs (CFRA) received a grant to work with Farmer Veterans. They have reached out to Nebraska AgrAbility to help educate these farmers on safe work practices and technologies that are available to them.

Another client was referred to AgrAbility through Nebraska VR. This client's disabilities make it difficult for him to climb in and out of equipment. The report is back in VR's hands, and the client and AgrAbility are hoping they can financially assist him with this.

North Carolina



On October 5, NC AgrAbility hosted the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair on Facebook and Twitter. NC AgrAbility shared some of the success stories of their farmers, events hosted by partners, and other resources and activities in the state. [More](#)

October was a very active month for NC AgrAbility, which has been working in collaboration with the NAP and The LIFE Project in the planning of the 1890 Land Grant Institution Virtual Workshop.

On October 9, NC AgrAbility, a Rowan County Extension agent, and other Extension associates at NCA&T farm joined in providing a high tunnel tour to a farmer and her family to help her determine the best option for her and the possible needs for accommodations

in the installation of a new high tunnel on her farm.

NC AgrAbility is participating in the NAP Evaluation Committee and the McGill Quality of Life survey.

On October 21, NC AgrAbility presented at the AgVet Meet and Greet, an informational event facilitated by the Veteran Employment Base Camp and Organic Garden for the students participating at their AGVET Training Program. [More](#)

Ohio

Kane Lewis, a 19-year-old farmer, was just getting started in his farming career when a hunting accident left him paralyzed from the chest down. Unsure of how he would continue to farm, his therapist at Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center suggested he contact Ohio AgrAbility to see if he was a candidate for services. [More](#)



Ohio AgrAbility farmers and staff were the cover story for the November edition of Ohio Cooperative *Living* magazine. "Staying in the Game" featured two Ohio farmers, Jeff Austin and Kane Lewis, and gave a brief overview of how Ohio AgrAbility helped them to continue farming and working.

Ohio AgrAbility staff enjoyed participating in the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair. The opportunity to learn more about other SRAPs' activities, clients, partners, and programs was invaluable and made for great social media posts and shares. [More](#)

Pennsylvania

AgrAbility PA staff met with farmer Garvin Schaffer to discuss his success with braided funding to secure assistive technology. Garvin worked with Pennsylvania's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and received several AT items to help with equipment access and operation. [More](#)



AgrAbility PA thoroughly enjoyed their time at the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair! Thanks to Paul Jones (NAP) for his leadership in coordinating and corralling the various components that made up this collaborative online event! [More](#)

AgrAbility PA held its annual advisory board meeting in early October with more than 20 attendees tuning in via Zoom. The board members were engaged and excited to connect with AgrAbility PA staff on a range of topics. [More](#)

Tennessee

First Place at the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair goes to National AgrAbility for the idea to host the first Virtual State Fair! Big thank you to Paul Jones for his patience in answering questions from non-tech-savvy coworkers. [More](#)



Jason Barber is a legally blind TN farmer who has a desire to give back to other farmers. Jason has been talking with OrCam from Israel to improve their product to help farmers with visual impairments. [More](#)

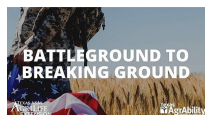
Tennessee AgrAbility was featured at the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair and staff want to highlight a farmer who is a part of the program and continues to work hard on the farm. Meet Frank Beard from Rutherford



Texas

Texas AgrAbility staff conducted two virtual trainings for occupational therapy student groups at St. Augustine University for Health Sciences and University of Texas San Antonio. The trainings included information about Texas AgrAbility and case studies of clients and assistive technology for farms and ranches.

Migrant and Hispanic Farmworker Coordinator Ellie Gandara-Castillo conducted a virtual training with Texas International Produce Association personnel. She highlighted services provided to migrant and Hispanic farmers and farmworkers.



Applications are open for cohort 9 of the BattleGround to Breaking Ground program. More information and links to apply can be found here: <https://txagrability.tamu.edu/bgbg/training/>

Texas AgrAbility client Damon Cleaton of 4E farms in Kempner, Texas, received a plastic mulch and irrigation layer. He stated, "I laid 1000 feet of irrigation and plastic in 30 minutes. That used to take me a week by hand."



Texas AgrAbility collaborated with Ohio AgrAbility on an article for AgMag, a Texas-based agriculture magazine. The article highlights the work of AgrAbility and client success stories. The article is set to be released in November.

Utah

AgrAbility of Utah provided online training for two Vocational Rehabilitation districts in the state. The first was Oct. 1 for the Ogden district and was attended by 14 counselors and staff. The second was Oct. 7 for the Davis district and was attended by 18 counselors and staff.

AgrAbility of Utah enjoyed participating in the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair on Oct. 14. Thanks to everyone who helped make it a very successful and fun event.

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia is actively working with seven farmer clients at various levels of engagement and need. Partner organization Virginia State University is working to help one client in central Virginia install a fence for his cows.

AgrAbility Virginia participated in the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair, contributing 14 posts on October 16 specific to the SRAP's work as well as content for October 11 highlighting the importance of farmer mental health. Included in the content was a website scavenger hunt and a contest for a basket of Virginia-grown-and-produced items. The winner received her prize in Idaho the following week.

AgrAbility Virginia Field Coordinator Jeremy Daubert exhibited for AgrAbility Virginia at the Shenandoah Valley Produce Auction annual meeting where there were about 50 people in attendance.

AgrAbility Virginia staff are reviewing past program evaluation strategies for their 2020 program evaluation plan.

Washington

Washington State AgrAbility Project (WSAP) is working with Skagit DVR and WA Labor & Industries to produce a Pathway to Services, a tool for injured farmers to help navigate the web for existing state resources and to determine eligibility.

WSAP participated in the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair for Washington's showcase day on October 23. As part of the VSF, staff produced a promotion video about Washington AgrAbility that will be used in-person as well as virtually. Staff also shared and participated in posts throughout the month to promote NAP, SRAPs, and a diversity of programs.

WSAP staff continues to work on building their lending library based on specific injury sectors and are continuing to update the website with the lending library resources.

WSAP is dedicated to accessibility and is in the process of translating the website into Spanish so that resources are available to more of Washington's farmers and farmworkers.

WSAP partners are laying the groundwork for winter programming and workshops with a focus on financial management, farm resiliency, and 5-minute AT solutions for farm workers.

Wisconsin

AgrAbility of Wisconsin had a successful day participating in the AgrAbility Virtual State Fair.

Staff were getting ready to host their annual advisory council meeting November 11. It was a more condensed virtual meeting this year.

AgrAbility of Wisconsin's fall print newsletter went out in late October. If interested in obtaining a copy or getting on Wisconsin's mailing list, please email agrability@wisc.edu.

Staff are continuing to reach their clients through social media, quarterly newsletters, and virtual presentations.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa

Promoting psychological resilience and well-being is more important than ever before in rural African communities faced with the COVID-19 pandemic that has exacerbated the problems faced by rural farmers with disabilities: [More](#)



Scientific reasoning applied to farming has proven to increase farm productivity and soil health. It is the basis of the AgrAbility for Africa team's active integration of science into their implementation of support services when working with farmers to improve their farm yields and overall farm profits. [More](#)

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [Maine AgrAbility coordinator Carlson recognized by national association](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [Staying in the game](#) (Ohio AgrAbility)
- [AgrAbility program to host virtual state fair](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [Fall agritourism operations: Safety and accessibility are key this season](#) (Ohio AgrAbility)
- [Assistive Technology](#) (Nebraska AgrAbility)
- [First state chapter of Heroes to Hives beekeeping program begins at MU](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [Surmounting Social Isolation & Loneliness: Mindfulness Meditation - Military Families Learning Network](#) (AgrAbility Virginia)
- [Funding Opportunity - AgrAbility - Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities](#) (AgrAbility)
- [Free hotline offers counseling, referrals for Missourians in crisis](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [AgrAbility/Life Project 1890 Land Grant Institution Virtual Workshop](#) (North Carolina AgrAbility)
- [Missouri AgrAbility Project Partnership – Pixels of Production Video Series](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [Military veterans: Grow with agriculture](#) (National AgrAbility Project)
- [Battleground to Breaking Ground Program now taking applications](#) (Texas AgrAbility)
- [The power of rural health in Ohio](#) (Ohio AgrAbility)

OtherNews

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

- [Harvest time on the highways](#)
- [Honoring veterans every day at Farmer Veteran Coalition](#)
- [I picked apples with a crew of migrant farm workers](#)
- [America's Farmers Grow Ag Leaders kicks off](#)
- [Consumer support of farmers grows as a result of COVID-19 challenges](#)
- [Farming and parenting a tough juggling act](#)
- [Disabled veteran can manage livestock thanks to Farm Credit grant](#)
- [How NMPF pulled off a virtual cheese contest](#)
- [A walk on the wild side becomes more than just exercise](#)
- [Urban gardens growing strong amid COVID pandemic](#)

UpcomingEvents

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

Problems? Contact Chuck Baldwin, National AgrAbility Project, baldwi19@purdue.edu
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