

AgrAbility e·Note

March 2021

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

Thank you to all our presenters and participants in the NTW virtual sessions! Average attendance for the first six sessions has been 75. Presentations have all been recorded and are available on the NAP website [HERE](#). The next session is "Communicating with Farmers Under Stress" with Susan Harris, Glennis McClure, and Ryan Evans on Tuesday, March 16 at 1:00 p.m. ET. [More](#)



The NAP would like to try to plan an in-person Regional Workshop or two, possibly for late spring or summer 2021. Anyone interested in hosting a Regional Workshop in conjunction with Goodwill and NAP, please contact Tess tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org. [More](#)

NAP is pleased to welcome back Steve Swain for some part-time assistance. He will also be handling vocational rehabilitation cases for the Indiana AgrAbility Project. He can still be reached at swainsj@purdue.edu.

Two worksite assessment recordings - both featuring Abbie Spackman from AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians - have been added to the Virtual New Staff Training section of www.agrability.org/extranet/staff-resources.



The archive of the February 24 all-staff meeting is available at www.agrability.org/extranet/staff-resources.

The AgrAbility/North Central FRSAN webinar, "Stressors and Resources for Farm/Ranch Families with Disabilities," featuring Bob Fetsch and Carey Portell, has been archived at www.agrability.org/online-training/archived/webinar-series.

Paul Jones recorded a podcast on AgrAbility and accessible gardening for "ADA Live!" a broadcast produced by the Southeast ADA Center. It is scheduled to be aired on April 7 at 1:00 p.m. on www.adalive.org.

Measuring 24 inches long and weighing 5 pounds, the [RotoShovel Cordless Handheld Shovel-Auger](#) can be used for many different gardening and landscaping tasks, including planting vegetable crops, bulbs, annual flowers, even small trees and shrubs, digging postholes for fencing/mailboxes/signs, etc. With a press of the thumb trigger, its 12-volt battery-powered auger reportedly digs holes up to 3 inches in diameter and 7 inches deep in a matter of seconds; and its attached, removable shovel blade scoops out the soil as the holes are dug.



State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

Alaska

The Alaska AgrAbility team, as a panel, gave an hour-long presentation on accessible gardening at the Alaska Botanical Garden's Virtual Spring Garden Conference. [More](#)

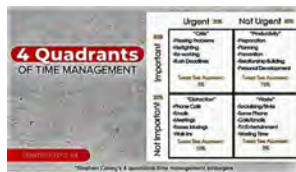
DeShana York is part of the planning team for an upcoming (March 20) Alaska Women in Agriculture virtual event. This event is the first of its kind and is themed "Strong Then, Strong Now" and designed to take a look at Alaska agriculture through a multi-generational lens of then, now, and into the future. [More](#)



Last month, Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA) staff gave a presentation to Providence Nurse Networking Group. In addition, ATLA is hosting an "Older Person's Action Group Networking Meeting."

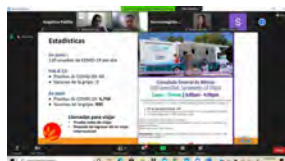
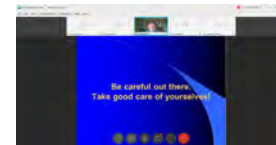
California

California AgrAbility staff attended the Monthly RISE Collaborative via Zoom. Staff presented on their activities and their upcoming event to educate promoters on vaccinations, especially for rural communities. [More](#)



Staff attended the third session of the AgrAbility National Training Workshop, "21 Tools and Strategies to Working Smarter not Harder," led by Kelly Gagnon with Grit HQ. Kelly provided a time management tool called the Four Quadrants of Time Management. [More](#)

California AgrAbility attended the "Stressors and Resources for Farm/Ranch Families with Disabilities" NAP & FRSAN webinar presented by North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center. Panelists included Carey Portell a farmer from Saint James, MO, and Dr. Robert Fetsch with Colorado Agrability. [More](#)



California AgrAbility staff hosted the Encuentro de Promotores: Vacunación para COVID-19 event presented by Puentes Network. Yolo County Agricultural Program Coordinator Esmeralda Garza briefly spoke about services offered by the county for those who would like to register for the COVID-19 vaccine, who are ill with COVID-19 and may need assistance, or who may need a safe place to quarantine. [More](#)

Colorado

The Colorado AgrAbility Project is always looking for funds to assist clients. This month, staff had an opportunity to apply for some grant money from the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. If successful, the grant will fund some modest acquisitions of assistive technology for veteran farmers as well as dollars for CSU-sponsored veterans-to-farmers ag education.

Georgia

AgrAbility staff presented to the University of Georgia agriculture and natural resource agents about AgrAbility at their quarterly meetings held during the beginning of February. [More](#)

Georgia AgrAbility has been using software called Asana for client management since 2015. Asana is a free project management software that can easily be converted for use in case management. [More](#)

Dr. Glen Rains hosted, moderated, and presented for UGA's Tifton Campus Safety Week on a variety of topics. [More](#)

Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility staff were all-hands-on-deck for the 2021 Women Managing the Farm Virtual Conference. KAP AT ag specialists Karin Rasmussen and Cassie Ramon presented "Taking Care of ALL the Generations on the Farm"... [More](#)

Women Managing the Farm is an annual conference that provides KAP staff the chance to meet women farmers, ranchers, and producers from across the state. The KS AgrAbility team strategically planned how to create a virtual booth with materials that would draw attendees and allow staff to chat and continue to develop relationships. [More](#)

Maine

University of Maine Cooperative Extension and Maine AgrAbility were recently awarded an Extension Risk Management Education Grant to support their Boots-2-Bushels (B2B) program. [More](#)

Be sure to join Maine AgrAbility on March 23 at 1:00 p.m. EDT for the webinar, "Farming Smarter with Assistive Technology." [More](#)

Be sure to check out Maine AgrAbility's most recent news and blog posts: [More](#)

Michigan

Bavarian Inn of Frankenmuth Adopts AgrAbility for 2021! The Bavarian Inn of Frankenmuth, MI, announced last month that they chose Michigan AgrAbility as their charity for the entire year! Wow! [More](#)

The 2021 MI Ag Ideas to Grow With Conference was held virtually on February 15-19. [More](#)

Subscribe to Michigan AgrAbility on YouTube! There you can find the latest video on the [DIY beehive lifter](#).



Michigan AgrAbility staff continue their educational outreach efforts by posting assistive technology ideas to make farming jobs easier for our



Look for a new Michigan AgrAbility publication coming soon that addresses employing workers with limitations. The publication will feature a story of Brian Combs who worked on a crop farm handling field and shop duties for 30 years. [More](#)



Missouri

For social media, Missouri AgrAbility focused its efforts on endorsing the Missouri chapter of Heroes to Hives, promoting webinars relevant to its clients, and promoting Grain Bin Safety Week. [More](#)

Vox magazine featured MU Extension's Heroes to Hives state chapter, funded by Missouri AgrAbility and Missouri's Beginning Farmers and Ranchers programs. The article, Veterans find new mission in beekeeping, can be read by [clicking here](#).

Missouri AgrAbility staff and professional consultants provided face-to-face, fee-for-service Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehab Services for the Blind, and Missouri AgrAbility onsite farmstead assessments for client farmers with disabilities. [More](#)

University of Missouri Extension would like to welcome Elizabeth Picking, field specialist in livestock and Elisabeth Gooch, student professional to the Missouri AgrAbility team. Check out their bios in "Staff Changes and Recognitions" below.

Lincoln University's Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program (ISFOP) in collaboration with the University of Missouri has been busy throughout the month of February! [More](#)

Two new staff members have joined ISFOP in the Southwest Region (SWR) and have been trained on the Missouri AgrAbility Project (MAP). [More](#)

AgrAbility is featured as a resource in the Brain Injury Recovery Step by Step brochure. Distribution of this print, braille, and electronic resource is being coordinated with rehabilitation hospitals and community-based providers across Missouri that serve AgrAbility customers. [More](#)

Nebraska



Tim Sullivan from Farm Rescue Foundation presented Rod Peterson from Nebraska AgrAbility a \$1,000 check for the AgrAbility Assistive Technology Fund. [More](#)

Staff is working with a young gentleman who suffered a spinal cord injury. He is so excited to be able to take care of his cattle again. It has been rewarding to search for and find the assistive technology that he needs to be independent and successful.

The Nebraska AgrAbility Advisory Board met in February to share ideas, brainstorm marketing verbiage, and catch up with all activity from 2020. There was some great dialogue among the 24 board members.



North Carolina

On February 22, NC AgrAbility participated as a presenter at the AgriShop Series workshop. Betty presented "Ergonomics in Farming" to a group of 38 farmers.

NC AgrAbility partners meet monthly to discuss the status of their clients and find ways to help smooth the process when needed.

NC AgrAbility actively participates with the NC Farmworker Health Program as a board member - this month assisting with the Rural Health Clinics proposal review for funding on February 11.

NC AgrAbility presented on February 17 at the NC Agromedicine Institute Board of Partners meeting.

Betty is collaborating with a minority group of farmers in eastern North Carolina where Black Americans, Native Americans, veterans, and women in farming meet every other Thursday evening. The Inter-Agency Outreach Concepts and Guidelines with Beginning Farmers and Ranchers shares experiences and resources among participants.

NC AgrAbility is constantly providing access to training for staff and collaborators by participating in the AgriSafe Network and AgrAbility webinars.

NC AgrAbility has been providing onsite visits to its NC farmers with disabilities.

Ohio



Ohio AgrAbility hosted two Caregiver Support Network webinars on February 17: "Respite and Caregiver needs: Creating your respite action plan," and "Sharing respite experiences and resources: Where do I start?" [More](#)

Ohio AgrAbility staff are planning two or three more webinars for 2021 and are working with professionals across Ohio to select topics and identify speakers. [More](#)

Pennsylvania

After a snowy February in Pennsylvania, the staff is looking forward to S-P-R-I-N-G! Farm assessments, virtual presentations, and outreach efforts continue as staff work to find new ways to engage and raise awareness of AgrAbility PA despite cancellation of the typical in-person events that would have filled the calendars this time of year.

The PA Veteran Farming Project - connecting military veterans, Guard, and Reserve members to resources for farming and agribusiness in Pennsylvania - held its annual winter conference virtually this year in February, and AgrAbility PA was highlighted as one of their key partners. [More](#)



An article on AgrAbility PA and veterans appeared in U.S. Dept of Veteran Affairs' [The Rural Connection](#) quarterly newsletter - Winter 2021. The article includes links to key stakeholders, including NAP, and featured Farmer Veteran Cathie Dibert and her work with AgrAbility PA. The story appears on page 9 of the newsletter.

Staff have been involved in a number of NAP-related activities and virtual events and presentations. Abbie led a NTW unconferencing session focused on worksite assessments on February 9. [More](#)

Staff provided an AgrAbility PA presentation to the Lebanon County Council of Human Services Agencies on February 12. [More](#)



Tennessee



"[Plant for a Change](#)" is a new business that "cultivates native habitats and sustains greener neighborhoods and is proudly Tennessee's first for-profit plant business co-owned and co-managed alongside individuals with and without intellectual disabilities." [More](#)

TN AgrAbility Project promoted [National Grain Bin Safety Week](#), February 21-27, to increase awareness about dangers related to grain bins.

TN AgrAbility Project was contacted by the TN Grain Conference committee for someone to speak on farm equipment. [More](#)

Texas

Texas AgrAbility staff shared resources and financial assistance programs to all clients affected by Winter Storm Uri.



Texas AgrAbility staff is working with occupational doctoral student and intern Meghan Skidmore to deliver educational modules for rural practitioners. [More](#)



The February edition of the Texas AgrAbility newsletter was disseminated. Featured stories included winter storm assistance programs, grant opportunities, and a fence line feeder. Check out the February newsletter [HERE](#).

Staff member Makenzie Thomas joined Georgia AgrAbility for a webinar on Asana for client case management tracking.

Staff members Cheryl Grenwelge and Makenzie Thomas met with Alaska AgrAbility staff to share practices for delivering services in a large state. Information on virtual assessment protocol and client case management was shared.

A referral form was developed for centers for independent living and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) migrant and Hispanic farmworker program. [More](#)

Utah

On February 22, AgrAbility of Utah staff provided training to the staff of Options for Independence, a non-residential center for independent living that provides assistance to people with disabilities in the three most northern counties of Utah.

AgrAbility of Utah staff attended the Cache Interagency Council's online meeting on February 22 and explained AgrAbility to the 30 participants. The Cache Interagency Council's mission is to unite non-profits and community service organizations in sharing ideas, upcoming events, and ongoing services, thus producing a spirit of unity and cooperation among the participating organizations.

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia is currently working with 12 farmer clients at various levels of engagement and need, including a mixed vegetable farmer in Fluvanna County who has rheumatoid arthritis.

The webinar "Injury Prevention for Farmers" on February 16th was very successful with about 30 attendees. [More](#)

Staff compiled a 45-minute informational video for the Mid-Atlantic Strawberry School regarding AgrAbility programming, on-farm safety, and agritourism safety.

Program evaluation efforts are underway with nine completed surveys so far. Qualitative interviews will begin soon.

The AgrAbility Virginia advisory group met in early February and staff gathered excellent feedback and suggestions from the team of farmers and ag health providers.

Program Coordinator Garland Mason tested the Facebook live feature for AgrAbility Virginia on February 10. [More](#)

AgrAbility Virginia is working on translating materials into Spanish and will soon have printed versions of a brochure in Spanish available.

AgrAbility Virginia and North Carolina AgrAbility are beginning a multistate marketing collaboration. The first project will be a regional "On the Farm Radio" advertisement campaign. Details are being worked out over the next few weeks.

Washington

Washington State AgrAbility Program (WSAP) offered an AgrAbility and veterans workshop through the Washington State Department of Veteran's Affairs on February 19 where five people participated from across the state. Connections have been made with all six incubator farms within the state for follow-up conversations and on-farm demonstrations to be done in the spring.

WSAP hosted a virtual workshop titled "Aching Hands and Stomped on Feet" on February 23 facilitated by Curt Johnson, assistive technology specialist with Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP). Nine people participated from across the state.

WSAP, In conjunction with Curt Johnson, delivered a presentation on preventing injuries to Viva farms participants.

WSAP staff had the privilege of an on-farm visit with a disabled young woman who shared her success with equipment modification and provided demonstrations and allowed for video and sharing to assist WSAP program.

WSAP is working with DVR and WA Labor & Industries to produce "Pathway to Services," a tool for injured farmers to help navigate the web of existing state resources and determine eligibility.

WSAP staff is working with local Master Gardeners to update their adaptive gardening tool display at the Discovery Gardens.

Wisconsin

AgrAbility of WI staff will be hosting their Virtual Summit in April. They will have three different topics on three different days of the week. Once speakers are confirmed, they will be

sharing additional information. Staff are looking forward to warmer days in the future and the farmers being able to get in the fields.



International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa



Stanford University's Mechanical Engineering Design Group held a virtual assistive technology fair February 25, and the AgrAbility for Africa staff were invited to attend the lecture hosted by David L. Jaffe, an instructor at Stanford University, titled "Perspectives in Assistive Technology." [More](#)

In the quest to expand their outreach and growth, and in response to the current coronavirus travel restrictions and the increased cases of farmer exploitation due to undiagnosed medical conditions, AgrAbility for Africa staff are enhancing their communication and education strategies. [More](#)

StaffChanges and Recognition

Missouri

Melody Boling, ACSW, LCSW, recently joined the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) as project director to help implement Missouri AgrAbility marketing and networking activities. Ms. Boling grew up in rural Missouri and has more than 20 years of experience with disabilities and community resources.



The University of Missouri Extension would also like to welcome Elizabeth Picking and Elisabeth Gooch to Missouri AgrAbility.



Elizabeth Picking, a field specialist in livestock with University of Missouri Extension, has joined the MO AgrAbility team. Elizabeth serves farmers and ranchers in southcentral Missouri. Before she started her position with MU Extension in 2018, she completed her bachelor's degree in animal science and her master's degree in physiology of reproduction from Texas A&M University. [More](#)

Elisabeth Gooch is a junior at the University of Missouri-Columbia studying agriculture education leadership and communication with an emphasis in food science and wants to further her education in a master's in food science upon graduation in the fall of 2021. She grew up in the small rural town of Mexico, Missouri. Elisabeth is joining the University of Missouri AgrAbility project team to assist with social media outreach and data collection. [More](#)



Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [Veterans find new mission in beekeeping](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [AgrAbility PA: Assisting Veterans in Agriculture with a Disability or Health Condition](#) (AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians, National AgrAbility Project)
- [Stay safe on the farm this planting season](#) [Illinois AgrAbility Unlimited (Affiliate)]

OtherNews

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

- [Statement by Katharine Ferguson, USDA Chief of Staff, on the Emergency Relief for Farmers of Color Act](#)
- [Commodity Classic launches podcast on farm stress, mental health](#)
- [New study examines importance and unique characteristics of US female farmers](#)
- [Robots don't just help farmers' mental health - cows like them, too](#) "Farmers using automated milking systems reported having better mental health than their peers"
- [Lofgren, Newhouse introduce Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2021](#)
- [Don't let secondary injuries keep you on the sidelines](#)
- [Celebrate National Farmworker Awareness Week](#)
- [Study shows cactus pear as drought-tolerant crop for sustainable fuel and food](#)

UpcomingEvents

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

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

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March 2021

National AgrAbility Project

AgrAbility NTW Virtual Sessions

The NTW virtual sessions have been successful!! Six sessions have been held so far with an average of 75 attending . They have all been recorded and are available on the NAP website [HERE](#), or they can be found by going to "Online Training," then "Archived Webinars," and then "NEW! 2021 AgrAbility National Training Workshop Virtual Sessions." The next session is "Communicating with Farmers Under Stress" with Susan Harris, Glennis McClure and Ryan Evans on Tuesday March 16 at 1:00 p.m. ET. For those who haven't registered yet, a schedule for the first four months and a registration link is available on the NTW tab of the NAP website [HERE](#). Those who have already registered will use the same Zoom link for any session that they would like to attend.

For any questions, please contact Tess tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org.

AgrAbility Regional Workshop

The NAP is looking forward and would like to try to plan an in-person Regional Workshop or two, possibly for late spring or summer 2021. Staff realize that, depending on what is happening with the Covid-19 virus at that time, everyone may have to adjust, but hopefully, smaller, in-person events will be possible by then. Anyone interested in hosting a Regional Workshop, in conjunction with Goodwill and NAP, please contact Tess tmckeel@goodwillfingerlakes.org or JoBeth jbrath@goodwillfingerlakes.org.

Submitted by Goodwill of the Finger Lakes

March 2021

Alaska

The Alaska AgrAbility team, as a panel, gave an hour-long presentation on accessible gardening at the Alaska Botanical Garden's Virtual Spring Garden Conference. Approximately 100 people attended and there was some engaging discussion amongst participants. This session has resulted in planning to determine feasibility to bringing further awareness to the AK AgrAbility project through having some demonstration areas at the garden, which is located in Anchorage.

DeShana York is part of the planning team for an upcoming (March 20) Alaska Women in Agriculture virtual event. This event is the first of its kind and is themed "Strong Then, Strong Now" and designed to take a look at Alaska Agriculture through a multi-generational lens of then, now, and into the future. With an increased awareness of food insecurity in Alaska due to the pandemic, there has been an overwhelming interest in this event. Registration was closed last week due to numbers topping 300. The event is free, and t-shirts are being distributed to commemorate the event through gracious sponsorships. The t-shirts are imprinted with "47%" on them. On average, 35 percent of farmers in the US are women, but in Alaska, women account for almost half at 47 percent, leading the nation! AK AgrAbility is honored to be part of this event and the team is excited about the amount of outreach that this amazing event will generate.



Submitted by DeShana York

March 2021

California

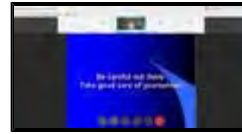
California AgrAbility staff attended the Monthly RISE Collaborative via Zoom. Staff presented on their activities and their upcoming event to educate promotores on vaccinations, especially for rural communities. Attendees included representatives from the International Rescue Committee, Empower Yolo, District 4 Board of Supervisors, and Esparto Community Medical Centers. RISE presented a new promotora on their team who will be doing outreach at vaccination clinics held at farms. The International Rescue Committee is an organization that serves victims of human trafficking and the organization has added a representative to focus on farmworker communities.



Staff attended the third session of the AgrAbility National Training Workshop, "21 Tools and Strategies to Working Smarter not Harder," led by Kelly Gagnon with Grit HQ. Kelly provided a time management tool called the Four Quadrants of Time Management. This is an organizational tool that helps professionals restructure their days so that they are spending

more time on important projects and less time on projects or tasks that are neither important nor urgent. Kelly also provided guidance on other time management strategies such as the Pomodoro Method, time blocking, and batch work. She emphasized the importance of minimizing distractions by establishing routines. Lastly, Kelly spoke about establishing a project management system as a sort of virtual to-do list that would allow all team members to track progress and projects could be assigned appropriately.

California AgrAbility attended the "Stressors and Resources for Farm/Ranch Families with Disabilities" NAP & FR SAN webinar presented by North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center. Panelists included Carey Portell a farmer from Saint James, MO, and Dr. Robert Fetsch with Colorado Agrability.



Carey is a farmer living with a disability and has used farming as a means of recovery. Through the help of family, her physical therapist, and Missouri AgrAbility, she has been able to learn techniques that have allowed her to return to farming. Dr. Fetsch followed with a presentation on the top stressors farm and ranch families face. He emphasized the factors that contribute to stress among farmers and ranchers and their families. Moreover, Dr. Fetsch explained that suicide rates among white male farmers and ranchers are among some of the highest compared to other professions.



California AgrAbility staff hosted the Encuentro de Promotores: Vacunación para COVID-19 event presented by Puentes Network. Yolo County Agricultural Program Coordinator Esmeralda Garza briefly spoke about services offered by the county for those who would like to register for the COVID-19 vaccine, who are ill with COVID-19 and may need assistance, or

who may need a safe place to quarantine. Oscar Velasco, coordinator for the Ventanilla de Salud program in the Mexican consulate, briefly discussed the partnership with Elica Health Centers and the UC Davis Orale project to administer COVID-19 tests and flu vaccinations. Jaime Lopez of Winters Healthcare gave detailed information about the COVID-19 vaccine, including how it works and who can receive it, followed by a question and answer session. The meeting closed with

testimonials about the vaccine from promotores in attendance.

Submitted by Sara Wat

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March 2021

Georgia

AgrAbility staff presented to the University of Georgia agriculture and natural resource agents about AgrAbility at their quarterly meetings held during the beginning of February. Staff was able to present to over 100 agents from the northeast, southeast, and southwest areas. New referrals have already resulted from the presentations.

Georgia AgrAbility has been using software called Asana for client management since 2015. Asana is a free project management software that can easily be converted for use in case management. On February 24th, staff shared with other SRAPS about the benefits of Asana and gave participants an in-depth look at Georgia AgrAbility's Asana. During the meeting, staff also demonstrated the basic steps that other states can take to build their own Asana case management system. If others are interested in learning about Asana or have questions, email staff at farmagain@uga.edu.

Dr. Glen Rains hosted, moderated, and presented for UGA's Tifton Campus Safety Week on a variety of topics. Held annually, safety week covers a variety of topics ranging from pesticide safety and chemical safety to emergency preparedness and equipment safety. Sessions held throughout the week had attendance ranging from 30-80 or more per session. After sessions, attendees could take quizzes to qualify for various credits for professional certifications. These sessions were meant to ensure workplace safety for faculty and staff working at the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences campus in Tifton.

Submitted by Georgia AgrAbility

March 2021

Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility staff were all-hands-on-deck for the 2021 Women Managing the Farm Virtual Conference. KAP AT ag specialists Karin Rasmussen and Cassie Ramon presented "Taking Care of ALL the Generations on the Farm" and staffed the KAP Virtual Exhibit along with Lesa Clubine, AT ag specialist, Sheila Simmons, evaluation and training specialist, and Tawnie Larson, project coordinator. Larson also served on the executive committee of the conference as publicity chair.

Karin and Cassie demonstrated how home automation can have simple, inexpensive, and efficient uses in the home and on the farm. Some of the items they discussed included cameras, smart plugs, light bulbs, door locks and sensors, weather alert systems, and gate openers.

Karin has worked in assistive technology for people of all ages for over 20 years. She grew up on a family farm with row crops, orchards, and livestock, so she is well-versed on how to use timers and lighting to keep livestock warm, employing cameras during calf-watch, and keeping an eye on the Western Kansas weather. She was able to easily demonstrate how to convert some of the manual systems to smart technology by using apps to monitor temperatures, activity, and more.

Cassie Ramon loves finding simple technology solutions for unique situations. She learned drip irrigation on her dad's Christmas tree farm and has over ten years of experience in AT and working with farmers and ranchers. Cassie's grandmother lives with Cassie's family in a busy household that also includes a preschooler. Her real-life demonstrations of how her family uses cameras, microphones, door locks, and alarms that help keep grandma safe are invaluable.

The PowerPoint presentation can be found at [Taking Care of ALL the Generations on the Farm](#).

Women Managing the Farm is an annual conference that provides KAP staff the chance to meet women farmers, ranchers, and producers from across the state. The KS AgrAbility team strategically planned how to create a virtual booth with materials that would draw attendees and allow staff to chat and continue to develop relationships. KAP staff utilized existing materials that addressed topics of interest to women growers and seasonal topics. Arthritis, diabetes management, secondary injury prevention, and working in the elements continued to be popular. Attendees were able to download a new handout on products and techniques to stay active and safe on the farm and the presentation handout for "Taking Care of ALL the Generations on the Farm" that demonstrated how to meet the needs of all generations at home and on the farm/ranch site with smart technology.

KAP staff took shifts to watch the virtual hall as attendees "popped" up beside the KAP booth and then reached out to start a friendly virtual chat. Attendees moved quickly so staff realized it was a smart move to have some rapid-fire chat openers prepared to drop and paste so they did not lose the opportunity to reach the visitors. Most attendees downloaded materials and chatted virtually while only one was willing to open their camera and hop on a "live chat" where folks could see each other and even demonstrate a solution.

The staff used the conference app to download a list of visitors to the exhibit and overall gained 6-10 good leads. Staff followed up with visitors by email and an offer

to receive a goodie bag through the mail. Overall, staff thought the combination of the presentation and virtual booth was a success and they look forward to participating in more virtual events until in-person events are open.

Submitted by Tawnie Larson

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March 2021

Maine

University of Maine Cooperative Extension and Maine AgrAbility were recently awarded an Extension Risk Management Education Grant to support their Boots-2-Bushels (B2B) program. B2B is a comprehensive nine-month market gardening education and training program for military veterans, their family members, and farmers with disabilities in Maine. The program includes ten weeks of subject matter instruction and six months of hands-on production. The B2B program uses the "Five Fs" framework (Farming, Family, Finances, Future, Fitness) to address production, marketing, financial, and human sources of agricultural risk, and creates a near-peer cohort that fosters unit cohesion in an empathetic, therapeutic environment. The 18-month ERME grant will provide support for hands-on field work at a demonstration farm in 2021 and 2022, intensive individual follow-up in both years, and instruction and fieldwork in 2022.

Be sure to join Maine AgrAbility March 23 at 1:00 p.m. EDT for the webinar, "Farming Smarter with Assistive Technology." This presentation will discuss the use of common assistive technologies within the farm setting. This webinar will focus on how AT can be expanded for use in a farm setting, enabling a farmer to work smarter. A variety of assistive technology will be presented, discussing potential impacts on a farmer's physical and mental health and on their farm business productivity.

Participants will learn:

- Ways assistive technology can help farmers work smarter and increase productivity
- Where farmers can see and borrow some assistive technology devices
- How to pay for assistive technology.

Register here: [MaineCite Trainings](#)

Be sure to check out Maine AgrAbility's most recent news and blog posts:

- [Forging Partnerships in Support of LogAbility](#)
- [Safety Precautions When Working in the Woods, Part I: Using Chainsaws](#)
- [Small Bites: Using Data to Plan for Labor for Next Season](#)
- [Small Bites: Can a Household Budget Clarify your Farm Goals?](#)

Submitted by Lani Carlson

March 2021

Michigan

Bavarian Inn of Frankenmuth Adopts AgrAbility for 2021!

The Bavarian Inn of Frankenmuth, MI, announced last month that they chose Michigan AgrAbility as their charity for the entire year! Wow! The Michigan AgrAbility team was completely surprised by the news! They are so excited to be working with Bavarian Inn; their history and reputation in their community and far beyond draws people from beyond Michigan to enjoy the food and hospitality in Michigan's own sample of Bavaria. When you visit the restaurant, look for donation canisters marked for AgrAbility. Stay tuned for Bavarian Inn events throughout the year where Michigan AgrAbility will be involved to promote the organization and their work and raise funds to help more farmers!



The 2021 MI Ag Ideas to Grow With Conference was held virtually on February 15-19. This unique event combined past Michigan State University Extension events such as Ag Action Day, Branch County Farmers Day, and Southwest Michigan Horticulture Days, into one cumulative week-long program encompassing many aspects of the agricultural industry. The program provided outstanding educational information to the public on such topics as agriculture, food safety, and home gardening.



Michigan AgrAbility staff continue their educational outreach efforts by posting assistive technology ideas to make farming jobs easier for our Facebook visitors. Examples include: 1) A Trailing Small-Bale Accumulator for a Conventional Baler (see e-Note main page), 2) Telescoping Gardening Tools, and 3) Wheelchair Handrim Gripping Covers.



Look for a new Michigan AgrAbility publication coming soon that addresses employing workers with limitations. The publication will feature a story of Brian Combs who worked on a crop farm handling field and shop duties for 30 years. Degenerative disc disease and subsequent surgeries eventually led to him losing his job. Surgeries and rehabilitation dragged on for months. But eventually, Brian was physically ready and mentally determined to re-enter the job force. However, finding an employer that could use his skills while accommodating a few lingering physical challenges took time and a lot of patience. Ceres of Coldwater eventually hired Brian because of the skills he brought to the table. They were willing to make a few adjustments in order to bring aboard a skilled and loyal employee. Both employee and employer are happy to have a successful working relationship!



Submitted by Joanna Kica

March 2021

Missouri

For social media, Missouri AgrAbility focused its efforts on endorsing the Missouri chapter of Heroes to Hives, promoting webinars relevant to its clients, and promoting Grain Bin Safety Week. Additionally, staff are gearing up and working with their partners to participate in Brain Injury Awareness Month (March) and Mental Health Awareness Month (May).

Missouri AgrAbility staff and professional consultants provided face-to-face, fee-for-service Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehab Services for the Blind, and Missouri AgrAbility onsite farmstead assessments for client farmers with disabilities. This objective aligns with the USDA NIFA priority of providing direct assistance to farmers with disabilities and their families with individualized, customized, on-the-farm services that increase the likelihood that AgrAbility customers and their farm operations experience success.

Submitted by: University of Missouri Extension, Tevin Uthlaut, Karen Funkenbusch, Willard Downs, and Elizabeth Picking

Lincoln University's Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program (ISFOP) in collaboration with the University of Missouri has been busy throughout the month of February! Mr. Nahshon Bishop, Mrs. Susan Jaster and Mr. David Middleton are working on a presentation for the AgrAbility NTW. Their NAP virtual conference presentation will take place April 20 and will cover:

- Safe livestock handling practices
- Designing safe livestock handling infrastructure
- Hands-on Jesup Wagon 2.0 demonstration

Two new staff members have joined ISFOP in the Southwest Region (SWR) and have been trained on the Missouri AgrAbility Project (MAP). Training included:

- Overview of program
- Overview of Missouri partners
- On-farm site visits

Submitted by: Nahshon Bishop

AgrAbility is featured as a resource in the Brain Injury Recovery Step by Step brochure. Distribution of this print, braille, and electronic resource is being coordinated with rehabilitation hospitals and community-based providers across Missouri that serve AgrAbility customers. Melody Boling also recently joined the Brain Injury Association of Missouri Inc. to assist with implementing Mo AgrAbility marketing and networking activities. You can also check out her bio in Staff Changes and Recognitions.

Submitted by: Maureen Cunningham

Staff Changes and Recognition

Melody Boling, ACSW, LCSW, recently joined the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) as project director to help implement Missouri AgrAbility marketing and networking activities.

Ms. Boling grew up in rural Missouri and has more than 20 years of experience with disabilities and community resources.



The University of Missouri Extension would also like to welcome Elizabeth Picking and Elisabeth Gooch to Missouri AgrAbility.



Elizabeth Picking, a field specialist in livestock with University of Missouri Extension, has joined the MO AgrAbility team. Elizabeth serves farmers and ranchers in southcentral Missouri. Before she started her position with MU Extension in 2018, she completed her bachelor's degree in animal science and her master's degree in physiology of reproduction from Texas A&M University. Since joining MU Extension, Elizabeth has focused her educational programming on beef, sheep, goat, and horse production and management.

Elizabeth is also involved in annual conferences such as the Spring Forage Conference, Pearls of Production-Women in Ag conference, and livestock and forage conferences. Elizabeth enjoys teaching artificial insemination schools and horse workshops and partnering with the Southcentral Missouri Cattlemen's Association. Elizabeth has completed the Michigan State University farm stress train-the-trainer course and is excited to use those tools to help livestock producers manage stress and mental illness. Elizabeth looks forward to contributing to the MO AgrAbility team in developing educational content for farmers. When she is not working, Elizabeth and her husband enjoy their small farm with Quarter and Paint cowhorses, chickens, and a large garden.

Elisabeth Gooch is a junior at the University of Missouri-Columbia studying agriculture education leadership and communication with an emphasis in food science and wants to further her education in a master's in food science upon graduation in the fall of 2021. She grew up in the small rural town of Mexico, Missouri. Elisabeth is joining the University of Missouri AgrAbility project team to assist with social media outreach and data collection. She is most excited to learn more and help advocate for Brain Injury Awareness Month and Mental Health Awareness Month. In the future, she hopes to be able to work with a diverse group of children, youth, and adults, to better educate them in the areas of food and overall health and wellbeing.



March 2021

Nebraska



Tim Sullivan from Farm Rescue Foundation presented Rod Peterson from Nebraska AgrAbility a \$1,000 check for the AgrAbility Assistive Technology Fund. Farm Rescue helps farm families who are recovering from injury, illness, or natural disaster in a seven-state upper Midwest region. Nebraska AgrAbility was selected as a recipient of the Farm Rescue Small Grants Program for their work with farmers and ranchers with

disabilities.

Submitted by Susan Harris

March 2021

Ohio



Ohio AgrAbility hosted two Caregiver Support Network webinars February 17: "Respite and Caregiver needs: Creating your respite action plan," and "Sharing respite experiences and resources: Where do I start?" Both webinars were very well attended, and the discussions yielded a great many resources, which were collected and turned into a handout (available on the [Ohio AgrAbility website](#)).

Ohio AgrAbility staff are planning two or three more webinars for 2021 and are working with professionals across Ohio to select topics and identify speakers. OAP staff have found that the broad appeal of topics such as caregiver support and rural health have created opportunities for outreach and promotion of Ohio AgrAbility to audiences that have not interacted with Ohio AgrAbility. Meeting over common concerns and interests, such as caregiver support, has helped to raise awareness of Ohio AgrAbility services throughout Ohio.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

March 2021

Pennsylvania

The PA Veteran Farming Project - connecting military veterans, Guard, and Reserve members to resources for farming and agribusiness in Pennsylvania - held its annual winter conference virtually this year in February, and AgrAbility PA was highlighted as one of their key partners. Kendra and Abbie worked collaboratively to capture video footage on a cold, windy day. Take a look [HERE](#) at the video highlighting AgrAbility PA's services and support for veterans who are interested in agriculture.



Staff have been involved in a number of NAP-related activities and virtual events and presentations. Abbie led a NTW unconferencing session focused on worksite assessments on February 9. There was a lot of great discussion and interaction. Topics included virtual vs. in-person assessments, technology pros and cons, safety practices, and more great networking. A video recording of this session can be viewed [HERE](#).

Staff provided an AgrAbility PA presentation to the Lebanon County Council of Human Services Agencies on February 12. The presentation focused on AgrAbility services, the opportunities in agriculture for those with disabilities, and assistive technology on the farm. Members from over 10 different organizations across the county attended the virtual presentation.

Submitted by Kendra Martin

March 2021

Tennessee



"Plant for a Change" is a new business that "cultivates native habitats and sustains greener neighborhoods and is proudly Tennessee's first for-profit plant business co-owned and co-managed alongside individuals with and without intellectual disabilities." Its long-term goal is to provide employment opportunities for wheelchair users to have access to gardening and farming opportunities. They are looking for funding for a

greenhouse - mobile so they can travel and be available at farmers markets, for service interventions, and for training in employment and education. Tennessee AgrAbility staff introduced them to "Mandy's Farm" in New Mexico and to TN Vocational Rehabilitation and the TN Technology Access Centers. Some team members are graduates of the Next Steps at Vanderbilt. It is a four-year certification program for students with intellectual disabilities, providing individualized programs of study in the areas of education, social skills, and vocational training. TN AgrAbility also encouraged them to participate in the upcoming [TN New Farmer Academy](#) that starts hybrid classes in March across the state.

TN AgrAbility Project was contacted by the TN Grain Conference committee for someone to speak on farm equipment. TNAP contacted Brian Robinson with TN Association of Rescue Squads who partners with TNAP on Grain Bin Safety/Rescue Awareness Trainings. He graciously agreed. Please view his presentation [HERE](#).

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

March 2021

Texas

Texas AgrAbility staff is working with occupational doctoral student and intern Meghan Skidmore to deliver educational modules for rural practitioners. Topics include farm & ranch culture, assistive technology, farm & ranch assessments, ergonomics, and more. The modules will be available in an online course and will be submitted for CEU accreditation.

A referral form was developed for centers for independent living and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) migrant and Hispanic farmworker program. The referral forms will be utilized to refer clients to and from AgrAbility for services. The forms were developed in collaboration with non-profit disability services partner BVCIL (Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living) and the TWC Migrant & Hispanic Farmworker State Monitor Advocate.

Submitted by Makenzie Thomas

March 2021

Virginia

The webinar "Injury Prevention for Farmers" on February 16th was very successful with about 30 attendees. The recording will soon be available on the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program and AgrAbility Virginia websites. A live recording was also published to [AgrAbility Virginia's Facebook page](#).

Program Coordinator Garland Mason tested the Facebook live feature for AgrAbility Virginia on February 10. She provided a brief casual overview of the program, and shared that the live feature boosted the posts engagement and reach on social media. Staff will continue to offer live videos on Facebook and/or Instagram to highlight program staff, partners, and client stories.

Submitted by Virginia AgrAbility Project

March 2021

AgrAbility for Africa



Stanford University's Mechanical Engineering Design Group held a virtual assistive technology fair February 25, and the AgrAbility for Africa staff were invited to attend the lecture hosted by David L. Jaffe, an instructor at Stanford University, titled "Perspectives in Assistive Technology." The event provided the team an opportunity to grow and learn more about assistive

technology innovations and experiences from different professionals and innovators. In addition, the virtual lecture equipped attendees with resources and knowledge to become activists and advocates of assistive technology, helping to better the lives of farmers faced with disability.

In the quest to expand their outreach and growth, and in response to the current coronavirus travel restrictions and the increased cases of farmer exploitation due to undiagnosed medical conditions, AgrAbility for Africa staff are enhancing their communication and education strategies. Motivated by the positive health outcomes related to improved information access, the team is working on advancing disease and injury knowledge awareness along with issues related to vocational rehabilitation care and support. Staff are doing this by distributing agri-health flyers, posters, and other printed resources. The goal is to reduce the increased cases of exploitation of rural farming communities basing on their medical situations. The initiative is meant to provide students, communities, farmers, and farm workers across the country with resources to help them understand many of the different medical conditions and injuries. This education is provided in the hope that it will enable farming communities to recognize the false traditional healers and so-called "prophets" who would take advantage of their medical ignorance to financially exploit them through the promise of miracle cures and healings. AgrAbility for Africa staff are working on a campaign to seek help from friends and partners to support this information publication and distribution program.

Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

March 2021

Upcoming Events

- Name** Rest, Refocus & Recharge-Health & Wellness Series (University of Alaska Fairbanks)
Dates February 21 - March 18, 2021
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <https://news.uaf.edu/health-and-wellness-series-begins-jan-14/>
Sessions being offered in collaboration with the CES Anchorage Outreach Center
- Name** Addressing Military Needs in Agriculture
Dates March 17, 2021 at 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ET
City, State Webinar online
Contact Info/Web link https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Rly4xea8RuCWJtVOqJrRTQ
- Name** How to Help the Pandemic Generation Thrive
Dates March 17, 2022, at 12:00 p.m. ET
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link https://caredotcom.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_K0fiWVfhQRaSPg8KwsBwtw
- Name** The Great Grow Along
Dates March 19-21, 2021
City, State Virtual Event Online
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.greatgrowalong.com/#Tracks>
- Name** Alaska Women in Agriculture. Strong Then, Strong Now
Dates March 20, 2021
City, State Virtual Event Online
Contact Info/Web link Information [here](#).
Register [here](#).
- Name** ASHCA (Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America) Safety Summit
Dates March 22 at 11:00 a.m.-March 24 at 5:30 p.m. ET, 2021

City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <https://www.accelevents.com/e/u/checkout/ASHCASafetySummit/tickets/order>

Name Virtual Forum for Migrant and Community Health
Dates March 22-26, 2021
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <http://www.ncfh.org/virtual-forum.html>

Name Farming Smarter with Assistive Technology
Dates March 23, 2021 from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ET
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <https://mainecite.org/training/webinar-farming-smarter-with-assistive-technology/>

Name Assistive Technology for Brain Injury
Dates March 25, 2021 from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ET
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <https://mainecite.org/training/webinar-assistive-technology-for-brain-injury/>

Name Best Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to Protect Your Lungs
Dates March 31, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. ET
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <https://tinyurl.com/k9vdedhy>

Name Feeding cows with \$5 corn and \$450 soybean meal
Dates April 12, 2021
City, State Webinar online
Contact Info/Web link <https://hoards.com/flex-309-Webinars.html>

Name Midwest Poultry Federation Virtual Convention
Dates May 18-21, 2021
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <https://midwestpoultry.com/>

Name 2021 World Pork Expo

Dates June 9-11, 2021
City, State Des Moines, Iowa
Contact Info/Web link <https://worldpork.org/>

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