

AgrAbility e·Note

May 2021

A monthly update for AgrAbility projects and friends of AgrAbility

National AgrAbility Project News

AgrAbility All-Staff Meeting: Friday, May 28, 12:00 p.m. EDT. Join us for updates from NIFA, an introduction to Osteoarthritis Action Alliance, and more. Look for details in an email soon.

AgrAbility/North Central FRSAN webinar: "African American Farmers: Stress Issues and Solutions." Thursday, May 27, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. EDT. Register at www.agrability.org/online-training/upcoming.



The National AgrAbility Project has started its fourth month of NTW virtual sessions. They have all been recorded and are available on the NAP website [HERE](#). The next session is "Farmer Mental Health Trends, Risk Factors, and Stress Reduction Technique 'Mindful Living'" [More](#)



The NAP is currently planning an in-person Regional Workshop in Montana in collaboration with [Western Regional Agricultural Stress Assistance Program](#). The workshop will be held at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center, August 9-11. [More](#)

The NAP met with its national advisory team for valuable feedback via Zoom on May 10. Also participating were Brad Rein and Victoria Finkenstadt of USDA/NIFA. The team is hoping to have an in-person meeting this July.

Toolbox Spotlight

By following these [Added Step Plans](#), one can produce a device to help reduce strain on knees when climbing on or off the tractor, combine, or other equipment. The step flips up and down with a rope and stays in place while driving. (Those who don't need the extra step can simply leave it folded up, stepping on it in place.) The online instructions include a list of supplies needed as well as the text and pictures on how to make and mount the step.



State and Regional AgrAbility Project News

California

California AgrAbility staff attended the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers virtual conference, "CA Coming Together," hosted by Ability Tools. Keynote speaker Alex Ghemis spoke about impacts of climate change on agriculture and individuals with disabilities. [More](#)



Staff attended the UC Davis Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety monthly seminar on the topic of "Workplace Sexual Harassment Among (WSH) Men and Women Farmworkers in California, USA, and Michoacán, Mexico." [More](#)



Tips for Aging Farmers & Ranchers
an on-conferencing session
January 14th - April 16, 2021
• Richard Brzozowski - Maine AgrAbility Project Director
• Ann Henderson - Occupational Therapist with Maine AgrAbility
Maine AgrAbility LLC

California AgrAbility attended the 11th AgrAbility National Training Workshop virtual session, "Tips for Aging Farmers and Ranchers." Speakers Richard Brzozowski and Brie Weisman of Maine AgrAbility led an interactive seminar in which participants shared tips for working with aging farmers and ranchers, addressing physical, psychological, medical,

and economic factors. [More](#)

Colorado


Over the past few years, Colorado AgrAbility Project has accepted level-one interns to shadow staff and gain experience with being on farms and ranches to observe CO AgrAbility's method of assessment. [More](#)



Georgia

The entire Georgia AgrAbility team was trained and certified in Mental Health First Aid. In addition, Rebecca Brightwell is certified as a Mental Health First Aid trainer. This training will give staff the skills they need to reach out and provide initial help and support to a farmer who may be developing a mental health problem or experiencing a crisis.

Staff had a meeting with a Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency assistive work technology engineer to develop training for counselors on working with farming clients.

 **Growing On** Dr. Glen Rains participated in a podcast to explain the fundamentals of digging safety. The podcast is part of the Georgia Farm Bureau podcast series called *Growing On* that focuses on current events, agricultural policies, and farmer health/safety.

Staff has been filming the spring cotton planting of a client that received a GPS unit through Georgia Vocation Rehabilitation Agency. The client is already seeing the increase in efficiency that the unit can provide him.



Staff attended the Western Regional Agricultural Stress Assistance Program Networking Quarterly Meeting. It was great to hear about all of the wonderful work that the program is leading.

Indiana



Indiana AgrAbility, the Indiana Chapter of the Farmer Veteran Coalition, and Hoosier Uplands Economic Development Corporation hosted a full-day, in-person workshop for military veterans interested in farming and agriculture on April 7 at Purdue's Feldun Agricultural Center near Bedford, Indiana. Indiana's 9th District Congressman, U.S. Representative Trey Hollingsworth, attended the workshop, made brief remarks, and visited with veterans about their agricultural interests. [More](#)

Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility Project (KAP) staff welcomed Steve Swain with Indiana AgrAbility to their monthly virtual staff meeting to discuss offering KAP customers more information on business planning. [More](#)

KAP Coordinator Tawnie Larson continues to work with SAVE Farm (Servicemember Agriculture Vocational Education) on its wellness committee by providing tips on using people-first language and offering stress-relieving exercises in the classroom and out in the field.

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](#)



During April 2021, both Richard Brzozowski and Anne Devin joined Zoom events for the "So You Think You Want to Farm" educational program to talk about AgrAbility resources for farmers with disabilities in Maine as well as resources specifically for veterans interested in farming in Maine.



During April, staff used outreach efforts to engage new audiences in Maine, including sharing resources with Native American tribes and commercial fishermen. Brie Weisman, OT, has started a monthly news post to the Commercial Fisheries News publication. [More](#)

Working in collaboration with Utah and North Carolina AgrAbility programs, Richard Brzozowski introduced the new publication Using Checklists to Increase Productivity on the Farm: tips and tricks for using checklists for daily chores at the farm, while promoting productivity.

Maine AgrAbility has designed fuel identification stickers for use on farm tractors to help prevent potential mechanical issues and production downtime if the wrong fuel is mistakenly used.



Be sure to check out our most recent news and blog posts: [More](#)

Michigan



The First Annual Alpha Gamma Rho (AGR) Golf Outing benefiting Michigan AgrAbility was held on April 17. The golf outing took place at Forest Akers Golf Course at Michigan State University. [More](#)

Michigan AgrAbility staff continue their educational outreach efforts by posting assistive technology ideas to make farming jobs easier for their Facebook visitors. [More](#)

Surveillance for farm-related injuries in Michigan began in 2015. Records from Michigan's hospitals/emergency departments are used to identify farm-related injuries in farmers and farm workers. [More](#)

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility focused its social media efforts on a variety of topics. [More](#)

Additionally, Missouri published its 2021 Mental Health Awareness Month Toolkit in partnership with the Show-Me Farm Safety Committee and Farm and Ranch Alliance Network. The [2021 Mental Health Toolkit is found here](#).

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cole Camp, MO, was excited to welcome two of the Peterson Farm Brothers (<https://petersonfarmbrothers.com/>) to share about farming and faith at the Jaycee Gardens on Thursday, April 22nd. [More](#)

Missouri AgrAbility in partnership with the Farm and Ranch Stress Alliance Network team also hosted its first Q.P.R. (Question, Persuade, and Refer) online Gatekeepers training April 21. [More](#)

April 1, Governor Mike Parson joined the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans and their Families, a partnership through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). [More](#)

Mr. Nahshon Bishop, Mrs. Susan Jaster, Mrs. Kendra Graham, and Mr. David Middleton presented for the National AgrAbility Conference. [More](#)



Other MO AgrAbility events throughout April included a variety of efforts. [More](#)

David Baker, director of Missouri Assistive Technology, presented "Assistive Technology for Learning and Living" at the Brain Injury Association of Missouri Survivor & Family Seminar on April 24. [More](#)

Nebraska



Staff spent two days in two Nebraska towns teaching third and fourth grade youth about sleep benefits relating to agricultural safety and health at Progressive Ag Safety Days.

A staff member attended the District 4 FFA Career Fair and talked with over 400 students about AgrAbility... [More](#)

The Drake University occupational therapy student working this semester with Nebraska AgrAbility is completing a case-study learning module project covering common farm and ranch tasks and culture. [More](#)

North Carolina

NC AgrAbility participates as a board member of the Carolinas Heat Health Coalition, seeking to increase knowledge and provide solutions to one of the most critical issues of climate change.

NC AgrAbility Partnership continues to serve the needs of farmers with disabilities and increase the networking capacity at the state level.

The NC AgrAbility staff is preparing to resume normal activities on campus and outside the campus by July 1, 2021. Activities include regular office work, meetings, and outdoor and indoor events.

Ohio

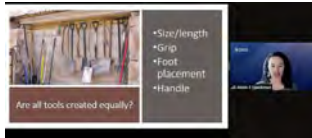
Jim Burnside is a farmer in Central Ohio. After a cancer diagnosis made it harder for him to tend to his cattle, make hay, and grow his garden, he sought help through AgrAbility. Walking for long periods of time and getting up on the tractor were difficult for him. [More](#)



Ohio AgrAbility staff had the opportunity to present an overview of Ohio AgrAbility to Dr. Dee Jepsen's agricultural health and safety class in April. [More](#)

Pennsylvania

Staff members Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer partnered with Penn State Extension's farm stress team to host and teach "Communicating with Farmers Under Stress" in an online workshop format. [More](#)



The duo also presented an NTW virtual session, "Table Talk: Assistive Tech for Women in Ag," on a Zoom session set up by the National AgrAbility Project (NAP). Lots of tips, products, and information were shared among attendees. [More](#)

Staff members spent time in April planning and preparing for a mix of hybrid events (in-person and virtual) with AgrAbility PA's key partners and stakeholders. [More](#)

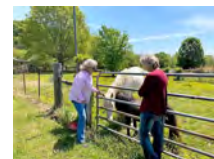
Tennessee

It was a happy day when some of the TN AgrAbility team and the University of TN Extension staff were able to meet in-person for the first time in over a year! Wearing masks and outside a lot, TNAP attended the TN Association of Agricultural Agents and Specialists (TAAA&S) annual meeting and professional development in Memphis. [More](#)



While in Memphis, TNAP celebrated Happy Earth Day with a great visit to a Memphis urban farm with a mission: [Alpha Omega Veterans Services](#) which assists military veterans in reintegrating into society. [More](#)

TNAP received a phone call referral from Mrs. Paula Terhune. She had read the [winter TNAP article](#) and wanted to donate assistive technology from her late husband, Dr. Ronald L. Terhune, M.D., of Arlington, TN. [More](#)



TNAP exhibited at the annual TN Veterans Business (TVBA) Expo and Job Fair with Farmer Veteran Coalition of TN for great networking and partnerships.

Texas

Texas AgrAbility collaborated on an educational blog post for Stress Awareness Month titled "Managing Farm Related Stress and Depression." The article includes information on stress awareness and tips for managing stress and depression on the farm. Check out the [blog post here](#).



Ellie Gandara-Castillo presented to a cultural pluralism in agriculture class on the unique needs of farmers and ranchers with disabilities.

Makenzie Thomas recorded a training video for Extension agents on the services provided by Texas AgrAbility. The video will be highlighted as a professional development topic in May.



Texas AgrAbility staff visited Cleaton's 4E Farms for a follow-up visit after recommendations were funded through Vocational Rehabilitation. The client demonstrated various assistive technologies and shared how they have impacted his ability to continue farming and expand his market garden and nursery operation.

Utah

AgrAbility of Utah staff was happy to attend the Utah Pork Producers Association's Annual Membership Meeting on April 9 in Bluffdale, Utah. A display table was set up and staff visited with and explained AgrAbility to many of the attendees.

On April 15, AgrAbility of Utah staff attended the San Juan County Crop School Conference in Monticello, UT. [More](#)

AgrAbility of Utah staff were able to meet online with staff from the Utah Office of Rehabilitation on April 15 to discuss concerns and answer questions about each other's organizations.

Program Coordinator Randall Bagley and a current AgrAbility client, Ned Nelson, were interviewed by Tom Williams of Utah Public Radio on April 15 during their Access Utah program. [More](#)

On April 26, AgrAbility of Utah was able to virtually attend and explain AgrAbility to 30 members of the Cache Interagency Council. [More](#)

Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia is currently working with 18 farmer clients at various levels of engagement and need, including beginning farmers in Grayson, Patrick, Lunenburg, Chesterfield, and Clarke Counties.

One AgrAbility client in Bland County with cerebral palsy was awarded \$700 through the Easterseals UCP Bellows Fund to purchase a second automatic cattle gate opener.

Program Coordinator Garland Mason is completing the 2021 AgrAbility Virginia program evaluation with expected report early summer.

AgrAbility Virginia and North Carolina AgrAbility have published a weekly radio advertisement throughout April and May during "On the Farm Radio" segments. Listen to them [here](#).

AgrAbility Virginia staff traveled to Richmond and Petersburg at the end of April to visit the Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Rehab Engineering Lab and the VSU Randolph Farm in addition to farm site visits.

AgrAbility Virginia team hosted a "First Friday" informational webinar for Virginia Cooperative Extension agents on May 7.



Washington

The Washington State AgrAbility Project (WSAP) team is constructing a Pathway to Services resource and has provided various entities with a survey and initial inquiry to learn about each other's services. As a result, a coordinated effort to serve Native American farmers and ranchers is underway in partnership with the WSU Tribal Extension liaison.

WSAP has been working with six veteran farms throughout the state and learning how they work as well as how AgrAbility can help. Staff will be making farm visits with a pop-up booth at each location to demonstrate lending library tools.

WSAP has purchased a comprehensive assistive technology lending library for Ferry County, one of the most remote parts of the state and country. This will increase availability and accessibility of AT for farmers and ranchers in eastern Washington.

WSAP ordered masks with the program logo as well as silicone inserts to enhance breathability (low-cost AT solution) for distribution to farmers and farmworkers across the state.

Wisconsin

AgrAbility of Wisconsin held a successful 2021 Virtual Summit with 50 total participants and 30 participants attending on each of the three days. They learned more about FSA programs, farmer health insurance, and how the Wisconsin Farm Center can help with farmer wellness and financials.

As staff looks towards summer, they hope to be able to get back out and see more people in person and attend a few upcoming events.

International AgrAbility Network News

AgrAbility for Africa



On November 1 and 2, the AgrAbility for Africa staff will be hosting the inaugural Annual AgrAbility for Africa Training Workshop that had been earlier scheduled for April 27-28, 2020, at Lake Victoria Hotel, but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic-related restrictions. [More](#)

Staff Changes and Recognition

Maine

This past month, AgrAbility Specialist Ellen Gibson announced her retirement from Maine AgrAbility effective April 14. Ellen was with us from the start in 2010. We truly appreciate all that Ellen has accomplished during her tenure with Maine AgrAbility - her creative ideas, informative blogs, presentations on gardening with limitations, practical checklists, her kindness to and care of clients, and much more. Ellen will be missed by our team and our clients. We wish her the best as she starts a new chapter of life!

Tennessee

Congratulations to TNAP staff Eileen Legault for receiving the 2021 TN Association of Agricultural Agents and Specialists Early Career Award for the Eastern Region.



Congratulations to Dr. Derrick Stowell, UT Gardens Educator and part-time TN AgrAbility staff member who oversees statewide therapeutic gardening workshops for Tennessee Veterans, TNAP customers, and the University of Tennessee and UT Gardens Horticultural Therapy Certificate Program that was recently accredited by the American Horticultural Therapy Association. Program registration will be available pending the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges approval. For more information please visit:

<https://plantsciences.tennessee.edu/horticulturaltherapycertificate/>.

AgrAbility in the News

Click titles below for news stories featuring AgrAbility projects .

- [New resources available for fishing community](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [Farm neighbors care during national Mental Health Awareness Month](#) (AgrAbility of Wisconsin)
- [Governor Mike Parson Joins the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans and their Families](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [Maine AgrAbility offers free fuel identification stickers](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [American Farmer On Thursday's Access Utah](#) (AgrAbility of Utah)
- [Variety of options, resources available for considering health insurance](#) (AgrAbility of Wisconsin)
- [With assistance from AgrAbility, injured farmer returns to a career in agriculture](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)
- [Maine AgrAbility angles resources for those who fish](#) (Maine AgrAbility)
- [University of Missouri Extension releases 2021 mental health toolkit](#) (Missouri AgrAbility Project)

OtherNews

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

- [USDA: American Families Plan honors America's family farms](#)
- [SILO: the First Ever Feature Film about a Grain Entrapment](#)
- [Veteran Farmer Resources](#)
- [New video series to assist farmers with emergency planning](#)
- [New "Cover Crops and Soil Health" Video from SARE](#)
- [Farm finds long-term success with agritourism business](#)
- [Harvest Hosts connects travellers with farms, bespoke locations](#)
- [Nuts about agroforestry in the U.S. Midwest: Can hazelnuts transform farming?](#)

- [10 Self-Care Tips to Help Eliminate Stress and Strengthen Your Mental Well-Being](#)
- [More than 100 small farms get a giant boost](#)

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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May 2021

National AgrAbility Project

The National AgrAbility Project has started its fourth month of NTW virtual sessions. They have all been recorded and are available on the NAP website [HERE](#). For those who haven't registered yet, a schedule with the rest of the sessions and a registration link is available on the NTW tab of the NAP website [HERE](#). For those already registered, they will use the same Zoom link for any session that they would like to attend; one does not have to register for each session.

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

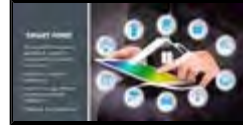
NAP is currently planning an in-person Regional Workshop in Montana in collaboration with [Western Regional Agricultural Stress Assistance Program](#). The workshop will be held at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center, August 9-11. More information will be coming soon. Depending on what is happening with the COVID-19 virus at that time, adjustments may have to be made, but hopefully this event will be possible by then. If anyone is 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 Tess McKeel

May 2021

California

California AgrAbility staff attended the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers virtual conference, "CA Coming Together," hosted by Ability Tools. Keynote speaker Alex Ghenis spoke about impacts of climate change on agriculture and individuals with disabilities. He emphasized that most assistive technology can be connected to climate and disability in some way, and all new climate-related technologies must be accessible. Presenters from MyndVR, Triumph Foundation, FREED, and Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living (DRAIL), among others, led workshops highlighting topics such as assistive technology for connection and companionship with individuals living in assisted living communities, assistive technology for aging in place, and recycling, reusing, and refurbishing assistive technology tools.



Staff attended the UC Davis Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety monthly seminar on the topic of "Workplace Sexual Harassment Among (WSH) Men and Women Farmworkers in California, USA, and Michoacán, Mexico." The seminar was presented by Kimberly Prado, a fourth-year epidemiology PhD student at UC Davis. Kimberly provided a background on WSH, an occupational hazard among farmworkers, and discussed her research among farmworkers in the United States and in Mexico. Focus group findings show that a significant number of women and men farmworkers are frequently exposed to workplace sexual harassment. The study's recommendations included rapid training for new hires and enforcing consequences. Ms. Prado's work also served to inform the UC Davis Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety's education and outreach efforts on this topic. The center created the [Sexual Harassment Prevention pocket accordion](#) that has been distributed throughout California.



California AgrAbility attended the 11th AgrAbility National Training Workshop virtual session, "Tips for Aging Farmers and Ranchers." Speakers Richard Brzozowski and Brie Weisman of Maine AgrAbility led an interactive seminar in which participants shared tips for working with aging farmers and ranchers, addressing physical, psychological, medical, and economic factors. Richard and Brie aimed to provide participants with a better understanding of effective ways to work with aging farmers and ranchers, and resources about aging-related resources. Throughout the seminar, a list of tips for aging farmers and ranchers were compiled to be distributed to attendees.

Submitted by Sara Wat

May 2021

Colorado

Over the past few years, Colorado AgrAbility Project has accepted level-one interns to shadow staff and gain experience with being on farms and ranches to observe CO AgrAbility's method of assessment. This year, staff were approached by Creighton University Department of Occupational Therapy through a Regis University Denver OT program, and were offered two interns whom CO AgrAbility was able to accept.



The interns, Conner Gifford and Megan Eiberger, contacted the AgrAbility office to begin the on-boarding process Goodwill requires for interns to be able to travel with staff and observe on-farm practices. Timing is often everything and this time it worked very well. Candy and Jim were able to offer the ladies several onsite visits so that they could observe the differences in approach between Candy and Jim and to see a spectrum of agricultural operations.



CO AgrAbility was fortunate that with Conner and Megan's openness and availability, opportunities were quite broad, and staff were pleased to provide them more than a single in-person site visit. They were able to observe assessment, participate in follow-ups, and tour farm equipment.

Megan and Conner were able to meet with farmers and get some close experience with several farm animals, including newborns. The focus was on mental health, and many area and national resources were shared with the interns. This was a very new experience for these two young women, and they reported they really enjoyed their time and learned from the experience.

Submitted by Jim Craig

May 2021

Indiana

Indiana AgrAbility, the Indiana Chapter of the Farmer Veteran Coalition, and Hoosier Uplands Economic Development Corporation hosted a full-day in-person workshop for military veterans interested in farming and agriculture on April 7 at Purdue's Feldun Agricultural Center near Bedford, Indiana.



More than 20 veterans and guests learned about pork industry opportunities in Indiana, intensive gardening techniques, soil health, NRCS programs for veterans, and managing farm stress issues. In addition, AgrAbility's occupational therapist intern, Erin Gick, discussed the importance of protecting joints from injury while doing farm work. The group enjoyed a great barbequed pork lunch sponsored by the Indiana Pork Producers.



Indiana's 9th District Congressman, U.S. Representative Trey Hollingsworth, attended the workshop, made brief remarks, and visited with veterans about their agricultural interests.

This workshop followed similar programs held in October 2020 and January 2021.

After so many zoom meetings and online programs over the past year, the chances to get together in-person have been enjoyed by participants, staff, and speakers alike! Additional veteran-focused gatherings are planned for late spring and summer at locations around Indiana.



Submitted by Ed Sheldon

May 2021

Kansas

Kansas AgrAbility Project (KAP) staff welcomed Steve Swain with Indiana AgrAbility to their monthly virtual staff meeting to discuss offering KAP customers more information on business planning. Swain provided materials and links during the discussion and offered valuable tips on working with customers. Kyle Haney from Georgia AgrAbility also provided staff with resources their project utilizes. KAP is thankful for the SRAP collaboration and is looking forward to offering this valuable tool to its customers.

Submitted by Tawnie Larson

May 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.



Most recently, B2B farm students had their first field trip to King Hill Farm in Penobscot, ME, to learn about harvest and storage, including its wash and pack building.



During April, staff used outreach efforts to engage new audiences in Maine, including sharing resources with Native American tribes and commercial fishermen. Brie Weisman, OT, has started a monthly news post to the *Commercial Fisheries News* publication. The [March 2021 article introduced FishAbility](#), a program of Maine AgrAbility, and the [April 2021 issue focused on fishermen and back pain](#).

Be sure to check out our most recent news and blog posts:

- [Osteoarthritis, Gardening and the Hands](#)
- [Farming for the Long Term](#)
- [Small Bites: Deciding Kids Roles on the Farm](#)
- [Small Bites: Reflections of a White Farmer](#)
- [Small Bites: A Strong Foundation is Built on Gratitude and Appreciation](#)

Submitted by Lani Carlson

May 2021

Michigan



The First Annual Alpha Gamma Rho (AGR) Golf Outing benefiting Michigan AgrAbility was held on April 17. The golf outing took place at Forest Akers Golf Course at Michigan State University. About 130 golfers showed up for the event. AGR has been supporting Michigan AgrAbility for over 10 years through Beef Preview Shows, Hog Roast, and Spring Rodeo. Thank you AGR for your support of the Michigan AgrAbility program supporting

the agriculture community!

Michigan AgrAbility staff continue their educational outreach efforts by posting assistive technology ideas to make farming jobs easier for their Facebook visitors. Examples include:

1. A Fabric Raised Bed in the field or inside the greenhouse can increase yields, reduce weeds and other pests, improve soil condition, conserve water, and lengthen the growing season. In addition, it can be reconfigured and relocated. The fabric that forms the bed is a flexible, heavy-duty pond liner material, which reportedly neither leaches chemicals into the ground nor absorbs them from the surroundings. Included with the fabric is a supply of two-foot-long, galvanized-steel ground posts to be located every five linear feet. Configuration of the bed is determined by how one places the posts. Limitations addressed by product: Lower extremity, strength/endurance, back.



2. A 50- or 100-gallon capacity Utility Vehicle Sprayer and Flat Fold Boom, which mounts in the back of a pickup or utility vehicle, can be used to spot-spray fields/pastures, spray cattle or transport water. It can also supply a 10', 14', or 20' Flat Fold Boom that mounts in the vehicle's receiver hitch. It comes fitted with a Flojet Quad pump (operating off the vehicle's electrical system). The unit includes the tank, pump, hose, spray gun and hose wrap. The boom is equipped with spring breakaways and nozzles on 20" spacing.

3. A customizable Snip-N-Drip Soaker Hose System designed for raised-bed as well as in-ground gardens allows one to apply water only where it's wanted. Setting up the system involves: (1) cutting soaker hose to fit the selected garden bed areas, (2) cutting the garden hose to run between the selected areas, (3) then snapping the fittings together. The soaker hose's 'weeping action' is designed to deliver water right to the roots with minimal evaporation or runoff. The System kit includes 50 feet of 1/2-inch soaker hose, 25 feet of 1/2-inch garden hose, a faucet adapter, a quick-connect coupler, eight hose couplers, and an end cap. Limitations addressed by product: Lower extremity, upper extremity, strength/endurance, back.



Surveillance for farm-related injuries in Michigan began in 2015. Records from Michigan's hospitals/emergency departments are used to identify farm-related

injuries in farmers and farm workers. The information is used to plan educational activities and set priorities regarding specific types of injuries and geographic parts of the state to emphasize prevention programs to reduce the number of injuries in the agricultural sector. The data is also used to make referrals to the Michigan AgrAbility program. The Occupational and Environmental Medicine Division at Michigan State University prepares periodic reports on work-related farm injuries in Michigan. The second report on work-related farm injuries in Michigan for years 2017 through 2019 was published on April 19, 2021. The report is available at: www.oem.msu.edu.

Submitted by Joanna Kica

May 2021

Missouri

Missouri AgrAbility focused its social media efforts on:

1. Promoting Stress Awareness Month throughout April by posting about MU Extension programs to help reduce stress.
2. Highlighting distracted driving with MO AgrAbility's Show-Me Farm Safety partners and by encouraging drivers to be more aware during planting season.
3. Promoting NTW workshops.
4. Promoting grain bin safety and selection of safe mask protection during the Stand Up for Grain Safety Week, an annual outreach effort hosted by the National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cole Camp, MO, was excited to welcome two of the Peterson Farm Brothers (<https://petersonfarmbrothers.com/>) to share about farming and faith at the Jaycee Gardens on Thursday, April 22nd. Hailing from Central Kansas, they are known for their popular musical parodies lifting up agriculture and farm life. MU Extension Missouri AgrAbility in partnership with the Farm and Ranch Stress Alliance Network team disseminated AgrAbility and behavioral/mental resources before, during, and after the Peterson Farm Brothers concert.

Missouri AgrAbility in partnership with the Farm and Ranch Stress Alliance Network team also hosted its first Q.P.R. (Question, Persuade, and Refer) online Gatekeepers training April 21. Key components covered included 1) How to Question, Persuade, and Refer some who may be suicidal. 2) How to get help for yourself or learn more about preventing suicide. 3) The common causes of suicidal behavior. 4) The warning signs of suicide, and 5) How to get help for someone in crisis. All QPR participants received a Gatekeepers behavioral/mental health toolkit specific to Missouri that also includes resources for Missouri AgrAbility.

April 1, Governor Mike Parson joined the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans and their Families, a partnership through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The Governor's Challenge is designed to provide intensive technical support and assist states in implementing best practices around suicide prevention for service members, veterans, and their families.

"Although Missouri has already begun to implement suicide prevention efforts, participation in this initiative will allow us to further implement best policies and practices and advance our suicide prevention efforts for service members, veterans, their families, and all Missourians," said Governor Parson.

As part of this initiative, Missouri has developed a team to ensure cross-agency collaboration. Members of the state team include Legislators and representatives from Department of Mental Health, Missouri AgrAbility Project, Missouri Veterans Commission, Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, Department of Social Services, Department of Corrections, University of Missouri - St. Louis: Missouri Institute for Mental health, American Legion - Missouri, St. Louis VA System of Care, , Missouri Office of State Courts Administrators, Missouri Coalition for Community Behavioral Healthcare, and other community providers.

Submitted by Tevin Uthlaut & Karen Funkenbusch

Mr. Nahshon Bishop, Mrs. Susan Jaster, Mrs. Kendra Graham, and Mr. David Middleton presented for the National AgrAbility Conference. This virtual session was held April 20. The presentation covered:

- Safe livestock handling practices
- Designing safe livestock handling infrastructure
- Useful tools for preventing secondary injury

Other Mo AgrAbility events throughout April included:

- Successfully direct marketing meat, Hispanic education and outreach
- How to successfully direct market your meat presentation for the Food Systems Extension Network
- Ash Grove Health Consultant Grand Opening-information on safe farm practices



Submitted by Nahshon Bishop

David Baker, director of Missouri Assistive Technology, presented "Assistive Technology for Learning and Living" at the Brain Injury Association of Missouri Survivor & Family Seminar on April 24. As a Missouri AgrAbility partner, his session featured assistive technology devices and Missouri AgrAbility services to help farmers and ranchers with disabilities. This educational program of the Brain Injury Association of Missouri also featured Missouri AgrAbility as a program partner and Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation in its "Navigating the Workforce" session.

Submitted by Maureen Cunningham

May 2021

Nebraska

A staff member attended the District 4 FFA Career Fair and talked with over 400 students about AgrAbility and how staff members are made up of engineers, gerontologists, occupational therapists, social workers, and those with farming backgrounds. She also chatted with them about how AgrAbility often uses welders and machinists to help recreate products for clients.

The Drake University occupational therapy student working this semester with Nebraska AgrAbility is completing a case-study learning module project covering common farm and ranch tasks and culture. This project will be used in an educational setting for occupational therapy healthcare students to learn more about safety, resources, and prevention of injury when engaging in agricultural work.

Submitted by Susan Harris

May 2021

Ohio

Jim Burnside is a farmer in Central Ohio. After a cancer diagnosis made it harder for him to tend to his cattle, make hay, and grow his garden, he sought help through AgrAbility. Walking for long periods of time and getting up on the tractor were difficult for him. The help of a mobility scooter improves his ability to care for his animals and navigate his farm. He also received PTO adapters and a quick-hitch to make hooking up implements easier. A rolling garden seat and seat cushion help him be able to work comfortably for longer periods of time at his garden. He can also take the rolling seat to other parts of farm if he needs a place to sit and work.



Submitted by Rachel Jarman

Ohio AgrAbility staff had the opportunity to present an overview of Ohio AgrAbility to Dr. Dee Jepsen's agricultural health and safety class in April. The presentation included opportunities for students to get involved with AgrAbility through capstone projects, service work, fundraising, and writing articles for magazines and newsletters. Ohio State students have been generous with their time, effort, and talents in past years, and OAP staff look forward to working with students as Ohio gradually returns to pre-COVID activities and events.

Submitted by Laura Akgerman

May 2021

Pennsylvania

Staff members Abbie Spackman and Linda Fetzer partnered with Penn State Extension's farm stress team to host and teach "Communicating with Farmers Under Stress" in an online workshop format. A wide range of individuals with various involvements in agriculture attended the interactive training.



The duo also presented an NTW virtual session, "Table Talk: Assistive Tech for Women in Ag," on a Zoom session set up by the National AgrAbility Project (NAP). Lots of tips, products, and information were shared among attendees. [Watch](#)

[Abbie](#) explain the use of a top-referred product line: Green Heron Tools' "HerShovel" and "HerSpading Fork".



Staff members spent time in April planning and preparing for a mix of hybrid events (in-person and virtual) with AgrAbility PA's key partners and stakeholders. It is a hopeful time to see some returning events and interactions occurring within the health and safety guidelines set because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Submitted by Kendra Martin

May 2021

Tennessee

It was a happy day when some of the TN AgrAbility team and the University of TN Extension staff were able to meet in-person for the first time in over a year! Wearing masks and outside a lot, TNAP attended the TN Association of Agricultural Agents and Specialists (TAAA&S) annual meeting and professional development in Memphis. Staff toured the amazing [Agricenter International](#) and learned more about all its research and programs. TNAP learned more about the FarmSafe program that was created as a safety training program specifically to educate farmers on critical safety gaps in agriculture and help create safer working environments. The courses are designed to help one operate safely and efficiently on the farm, and are available online now in English and Spanish. For those who prefer instructor-led training, a virtual training platform is available, and classroom sessions at Agricenter International will be scheduled for Summer 2021. For more information, contact the Farm Safe team at farmsafe@agricenter.org. To sign up for the FarmSafe program, go to [Farm Safe - Agricenter International](#). TAAA&S also visited the famous Peabody Ducks and Memphis Botanical Gardens.



While in Memphis, TNAP celebrated Happy Earth Day with a great visit to a Memphis urban farm with a mission: [Alpha Omega Veterans Services](#) which assists military veterans in reintegrating into society. The urban garden highlight was the raised beds and display areas showcasing small space and accessible gardening design. It also featured drip irrigation techniques to utilize water more efficiently, composting, and best practices for soil preparation.

TNAP received a phone call referral from Mrs. Paula Terhune. She had read the [winter TNAP article](#) and wanted to donate assistive technology from her late husband, Dr. Ronald L. Terhune, M.D., of Arlington, TN. He served in the U.S. Army as a captain during the Vietnam War and was a general practitioner of family medicine since 1965. He was also a true southern gentleman and loved farming as a hay/horse farmer.



She said he "would have loved to help other handicapped farmers. " Ron lived a great life that was cut short from side effects of Agent Orange. TNAP made a new friend and picked up a truckload of medical equipment that will help other farmers with disabilities. If any readers have durable medical equipment or low-tech items, they can donate and help others too. State-based assistance for durable medical equipment can come from one of three types of programs (excluding Medicaid). There are Assistive Technology Act projects, protection and advocacy programs, and non-Medicaid (state-funded) nursing home diversion programs. [Tennessee Technology Access Program](#) accepts donated medical equipment and low-tech items so that TNAP can give away and loan the items to people with disabilities who cannot afford them.

Thanks to Dr. Ron and Paula Terhune for donating Ron's medical equipment to TNAP!

Submitted by Tennessee AgrAbility Project

May 2021

Utah

On April 15, AgrAbility of Utah staff attended the San Juan County Crop School Conference in Monticello, UT. Staff were able to give a short presentation, set up a display table, and pass out brochures. San Juan County in southeastern Utah includes the Navajo Indian Reservation.

Program Coordinator Randall Bagley and a current AgrAbility client, Ned Nelson, were interviewed by Tom Williams of Utah Public Radio on April 15 during their Access Utah program. Ned did a great job in explaining how AgrAbility helped him to continue to farm and the [interview can be heard here](#).

On April 26, AgrAbility of Utah was able to virtually attend and explain AgrAbility to 30 members of the Cache Interagency Council. The mission of the Cache Interagency Council 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.

Submitted by Randall Bagley

May 2021

AgrAbility for Africa



On November 1 and 2, the AgrAbility for Africa staff will be hosting the inaugural Annual AgrAbility for Africa Training Workshop that had been earlier scheduled for April 27-28, 2020, at Lake Victoria Hotel, but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic-related restrictions. The Africa Training Workshop will be held in Entebbe, at the Lake Victoria Granada

Hotel, same venue under new management and brand.

Sessions will run from Monday November 1 through Tuesday November 2 from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00p.m. Eastern Africa Time (EAT) each day. Program topics will cover a wide range of relevant, practical knowledge and training from how to leverage resources to direct service to clients, networking with other clients, service providers, and agency representatives. These educational programs will increase individual knowledge, support the use of new technologies, encourage peer networking, and provide a direct service to agricultural workers in need.

During the training, staff will be joined by farmers, ranchers, international and local experts in different fields of Agricultural health, farm management, assistive technologies, and occupation rehabilitation, among other fields.

Submitted by Mutumba Faisal

May 2021

Upcoming Events

- Name** Zoonotic Disease and Pregnancy: A Deeper Dive
Dates May 19, 2021 - 1:00-2:00 p.m. EDT
City, State Free webinar - online
Contact Info/Web link [For information and registration, click here](#)
- Name** Four State Farm Show
Dates May 21-23, 2021
City, State Pittsburg, Kansas
Contact Info/Web link <https://fourstatefarmshow.com/>
- Name** Train the Trainer- Cultivating a Healthy Mind
Dates May 26, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. EDT
City, State Free webinar online
Contact Info/Web link https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ybSnLm1cTxCCHC5zyx9x7w
- Name** Garden Maintenance - Everyone Can Garden! - Vegetable gardening webinar series for people with physical and other limitations
Dates June 1, 2021, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. EST
City, State Virtual event online
Contact Info/Web link <https://equityandinclusion.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/webinars-and-other-events/2021-gardening-physical-limitations-webinar-series>
- Name** 2021 World Pork Expo
Dates June 9-11, 2021
City, State Des Moines, Iowa
Contact Info/Web link <https://worldpork.org/>
- Name** Registration Open for Shell Egg Academy
Dates June 21-25, 2021
City, State Virtual event online

Contact Info/Web link For information and registration, [click here](#).

Name Precision Dairy Conference

Dates June 22-23, 2021

City, State Bloomington, Minnesota - in-person or virtually

Contact Info/Web link <https://precisiondairy.umn.edu/>

Contact person: miendres@umn.edu

Name Agricultural Health and Safety Course for Medical and Safety Professionals

Dates July 13-16, 2021

City, State Virtual event online

Contact Info/Web link <https://www.unmc.edu/cce/catalog/clinicmed/aghealth/index.html>

Name Canning & Preservation Basics - Everyone Can Garden! - Vegetable gardening webinar series for people with physical and other limitations

Dates July 20, 2021, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. EST

City, State Virtual event online

Contact Info/Web link <https://equityandinclusion.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/webinars-and-other-events/2021-gardening-physical-limitations-webinar-series>

Name Garden Clean-Up & Prep for Next Year - Everyone Can Garden! - Vegetable gardening webinar series for people with physical and other limitations

Dates August 31, 2021, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. EST

City, State Virtual event online

Contact Info/Web link <https://equityandinclusion.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/webinars-and-other-events/2021-gardening-physical-limitations-webinar-series>

Name World Dairy Expo

Dates September 28 - October 2, 2021

City, State Madison, Wisconsin

Contact Info/Web link <https://worlddairyexpo.com/>